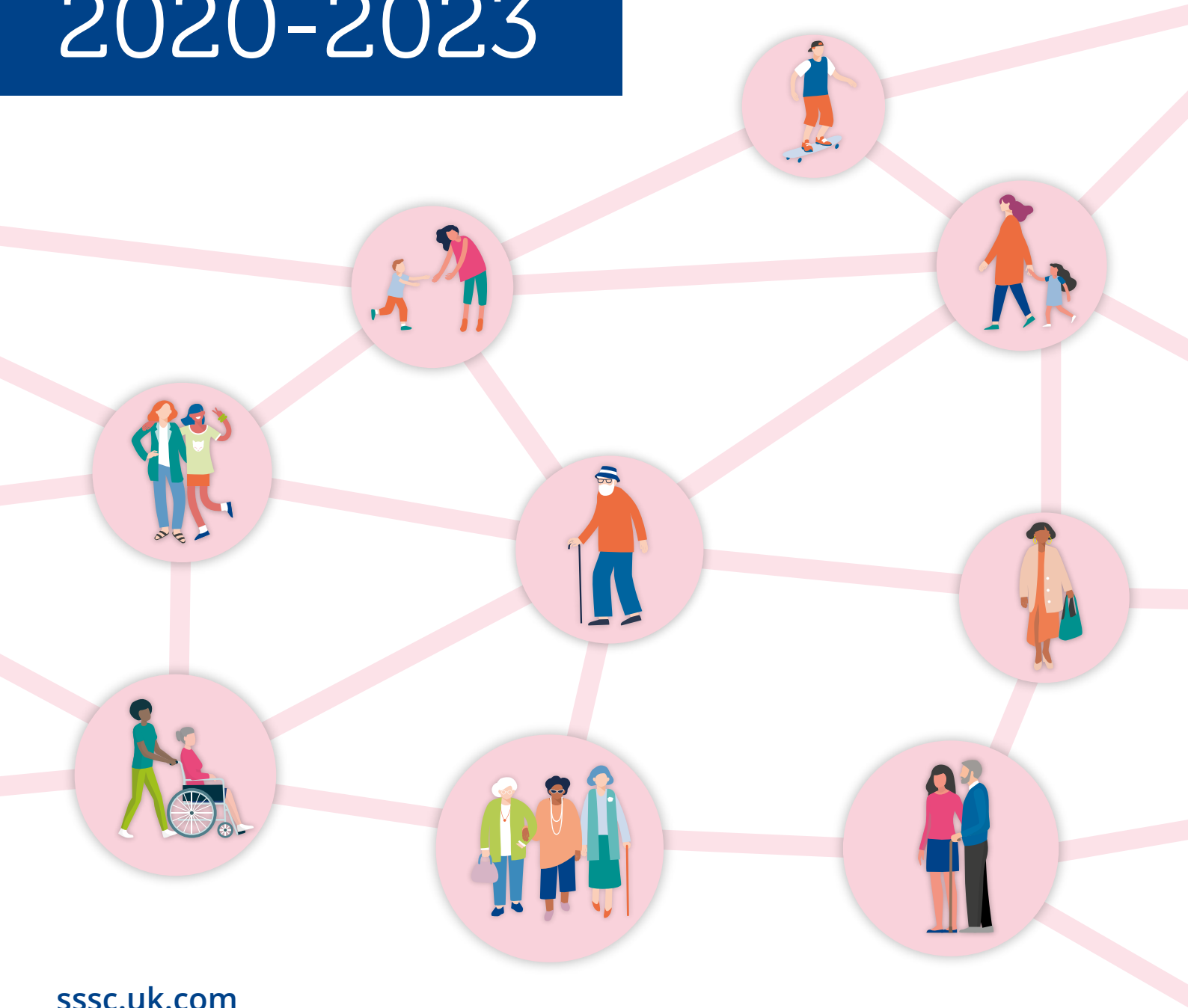


Strategic Plan 2020-2023



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Introduction

Every day, people working in social services across Scotland support millions of people of all ages to improve their life chances. Our vision is that the people of Scotland can count on social services being provided by a trusted, skilled and confident workforce and that through our work, we protect people who use social services and strengthen the professionalism of this workforce.

We believe that listening to and bringing the voice of people connected with social services into our work is key to achieving our vision to be a public service that makes a positive and lasting contribution to improving the quality of Scotland's care services.

Our strategic plan for 2020-2023 sets out our priorities for the next three years. In designing this plan, we involved as many people as possible including thousands of registrants and, importantly, people with lived experience. Thank you to everyone who contributed experiences, views and ideas to help us set our course and drive our work forward.

Over the next few years, our work takes place against a backdrop of considerable social and cultural change for Scotland following the UK's exit from the EU, as well as ongoing change in the way social services are available and how people access and use these vital services.

Scotland's progressive policy of social care and health integration and the reform of adult social care will have an impact on the various roles in social services. The SSSC will play an important role to ensure that the social service sector is of equal importance in the integration of health and social care. We will work closely with the Scottish Government, the Care Inspectorate, NHS Education for Scotland and other key partners, ensuring that our regulation and workforce development roles are responsive, proportionate and relevant for people working in social services and the people who use those services.

We welcome the recent publication of the Independent Care Review and will be part of the significant changes that will take place for all of Scotland's care experienced children and young people. The SSSC is committed to being part of the change. We will listen, learn and do the right thing by care experienced children and young people. We will keep the promise.

The next three years also mark milestones for the SSSC. 2020 is a significant year as we reach the point of completing the set-up of the Scottish Social Services Register when over 160,000 people, all working in different types social services, will be registered. This is the culmination of a long held ambition for Scotland's social service workforce. These aren't jobs for just anyone – to be able to carry out one of these roles, people must hold the right values, skills and qualifications.

Reaching this point allows us to bring even more focus to developing the workforce, now and for the future, including skills, qualifications and career pathways. We have a central role in delivering the Scottish Government's National Health and Social Care Integrated Workforce Plan in collaboration with government and our partners.

And in 2022 we will celebrate 20 years of the SSSC Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers. Back in 2002, the Codes set out the high standards of practice expected across the social service workforce for the first time.

We know what we want for the people using social services and that is a workforce they can count on. Over the next three years we will work to make sure that people who use social services, social service workers and their employers are confident in the service we provide and value our work.

Lorraine Gray

Lorraine Gray
Chief Executive

S. Campbell

Sandra Campbell
Convener

'These aren't jobs for just anyone – to be able to carry out one of these roles, people must hold the right values, skills and qualifications.'

Lorraine Gray, Chief Executive



'The SSSC will play an important role to ensure that the social service sector is of equal importance in the integration of health and social care.'

Sandra Campbell, Convener



Who we are and what we do

→ Our vision

→ What we do

Our vision

Our vision, as the regulator of the social service workforce in Scotland, is that the people of Scotland can count on social services being provided by a trusted, skilled and confident workforce.

We want to live and work in a Scotland that values its social services and the workforce that delivers those services to our most vulnerable citizens. To deliver our ambition, we will focus on our two main areas of work. The first is protecting the public by registering the workforce and acting where someone falls short of the standards we have set. The second is to provide resources and support needed to develop the workforce, attract people to the sector and make sure the workforce has the skills and professional knowledge needed to meet the demands of the changing landscape of social services.

We deliver our work in a way that is customer-focused and evidence driven – making the best use of available technology to provide a seamless service that is based on the intelligence we hold. As a public sector body, we recognise the importance of best value services that are well-governed and effectively monitored.

'We deliver our work in a way that is customer-focused and evidence driven – making the best use of available technology to provide a seamless service that is based on the intelligence we hold.'



What we do

We protect the public by registering social service workers, setting standards for their practice, conduct, training and education and by supporting them to improve their professional development. Where people fall below the standards of practice and conduct, we can investigate and take action.



→ We publish the national codes of practice for people working in social services and their employers.



→ We register people working in social services and make sure they adhere to our codes of practice.




→ We promote and regulate the learning and development of the social service workforce.



→ We are the national lead for workforce development and planning for social services in Scotland.





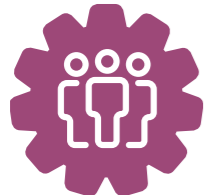
Our contribution to the Scottish Government National Outcomes

→ Scottish Government National Outcomes

→ Working with our strategic partners

Scottish Government National Outcomes

We contribute to delivering the Scottish Government's aims for Scotland. Our work aligns with key National Outcomes within the National Performance Framework and demonstrates how we support registrants, employers and policy makers to deliver high quality and safe care and improve services.



We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe.

Through our social care workforce regulation and development activities we will support the workforce to deliver the Scottish Government's aim that people are happy and fulfilled and Scotland is seen as the best place in the world to grow older.



We grow up loved, safe and protected so that we realise our full potential.

The social care workforce we register aim to do all they can to ensure our children and young people grow up in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding. Through our learning and development workstreams we will support the professional recognition and resources needed to do this work.



We have thriving and innovative businesses with quality jobs and fair work for everyone.

We develop and support the social service workforce so that it attracts and retains new talent. Our aim for the sector is to provide good quality care, fair work, training and employment support for all.



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
gov.scot

National Performance Framework

Our Purpose, Values and National Outcomes





Working with our strategic partners

Our strategic partnerships influence social care across Scotland through bringing together organisations that have an impact across care and health, as well as reaching people working in services from early years through to old age. Our ambition is to deliver a joint approach to providing high quality, safe social services. The right organisations working together adds value, combining resources and meeting strategic national priorities with input from those who are most affected.

We have several partnerships that are central to delivering our outcomes. This includes work with the **Care Inspectorate, Skills Development Scotland, the Scottish Funding Council and Community Justice Scotland**. We work across several areas to support the integration of health and social care. Our commitments with our partners at **NHS Education for Scotland** will drive developments for the social care and health workforce in integrated settings. These joint opportunities will also allow us to streamline sector development resources and tools to make them suitable for integrated teams and the delivery of social care services across several agencies.

'We work across several areas to support the integration of health and social care.'



Opportunities and our future

→ Population predictions

→ What is the social service workforce worth to Scotland?

→ The policy landscape

Population predictions

The Scottish population is both ageing and increasing. By 2043, Scotland's population is expected to grow by 2.5% to 5.57 million. The latest population projections, based on mid-2018 population estimates prepared by the Office of National Statistics, indicate that the proportion of people who are of pensionable age is increasing, reaching 22.9% by mid-2043. This will increase the need for a skilled social service sector and create a challenging environment for delivering effective and safe care. While the future will present new risks it also brings with it the opportunity to change and improve.

By 2043 Scotland's population is expected to grow by 2.5% to

5.5 million



'While the future will present new risks it also brings with it the opportunity to change and improve.'

22.9%

of Scotland's population will be of pensionable age by mid-2043





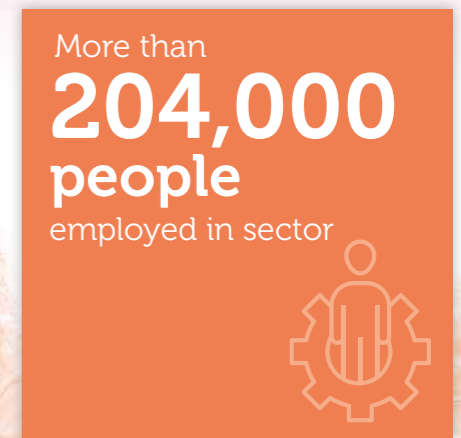
What is the social service workforce worth to Scotland?

The social service workforce is one of the largest employment groups in Scotland with one in every 13 people working employed in social services. That is more than those working in the health service.

The sector employs more than 204,000 people which represents approximately 8% of all employment in Scotland. Our research into the value of this workforce indicates that adult social care alone contributes £3.4 billion to the Scottish economy (**Economic Value of the Adult Social Care sector - Scotland**).

Our research will support wider work under the Reform of Adult Social Care Programme. This will help people understand and value social services, which support people to live well at any age and contribute to our economy.

'Our research will support wider work under the Reform of Adult Social Care Programme.'



The policy landscape

Engaging with national initiatives means we will continue to influence policy relating to social services. Driving a proactive workforce planning approach to promote social services as a positive career choice, we continue to extend the range of qualifications and widen access to social care career pathways to improve the quality of social care.

The Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) Act 2019 includes a duty on providers to ensure they have qualified and competent staff in social care services. We are a key delivery partner, along with the Care Inspectorate in supporting the implementation of the Act.

The vision for the Scottish Government's **Reform of Adult Social Care Programme** contains five statements which include 'the way we value and understand social care support' and 'the way people access support'. We will be involved in all the workstreams and activities to drive benefits of reform through the development of the sector. Significantly, our research on the economic value of the sector is informing future activity around how we value and understand social care.

'Significantly, our research on the economic value of the sector is informing future activity around how we value and understand social care.'



Forthill Out of School Club, Dundee

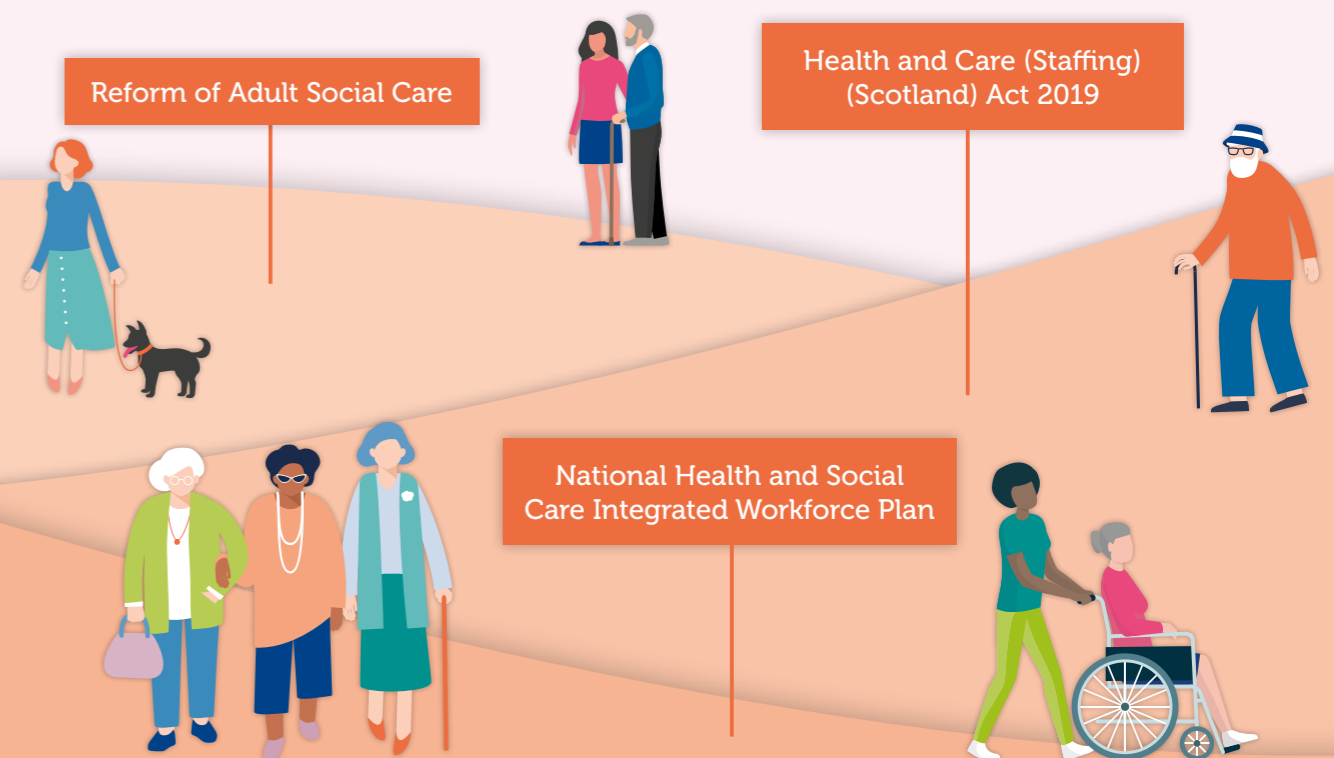
Workforce planning

The **National Health and Social Care Integrated Workforce Plan** sets out the steps required to enable better workforce planning to support improvements in service delivery and redesign and we lead key recommendations, including the development of a professional framework for social workers.

The workforce intelligence we provide continues to support employers and commissioners to build a sustainable workforce. We contributed to a national study examining the social care labour market, which will inform our future workforce planning activity. By developing integrated data platforms with our partners, we are moving the SSSC to be a national resource for workforce planning.

Alongside this, we work with Skills Development Scotland with the focus on improving entry routes and pathways for careers into the sector and developing initiatives for sustainable foundation, modern and graduate apprenticeships.

'By developing integrated data platforms with our partners, we are moving the SSSC to be a national resource for workforce planning.'



Children and young people

We are involved in the **Independent Care Review**, being part of the workforce group. The Review's findings were published in early 2020 and identified lasting change for the care system for children and young people in Scotland. Our role in this has been to consider the whole workforce, how the different professions interact with each other and how they are supported and trained to do this.

We now have a driver to ensure we hear the voices of children, young people and their families in our regulation processes. Our work will support change in the development of social care staff to focus on nurturing, caring and building relationships with care experienced children and young people they provide services to. Over the coming years our partnership approach to the Independent Care Review recommendations, with the Care Inspectorate and other regulators, will ensure care experienced children and young people in Scotland are loved and cared for.

The expansion of **Early Learning and Childcare** in Scotland is a key driver and, working with the Scottish Government and key partners, we promote career opportunities and are defining routes into these rewarding roles, as well as career pathways and progression for the sector. We use our registration data for Day Care of Children to monitor numbers in the workforce to support future workforce planning and analysis.

We currently comply with the duties set out under Section 2 of the **Children and Young People (Scotland) 2014 Act**. Scotland will incorporate the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)** into law. We are preparing for this and will consider the resulting national approach, promoting awareness to employers and the workforce of what this will mean for them and for children and young people. With an ongoing comprehensive review on the **National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland** and implementation of the **Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act 2019**, we are expecting further opportunities for us to influence developing approaches for child protection training and learning across the sector that will support the workforce to meet their responsibilities.



Our Executive Management Team pledge to #keepthepromise following the Independent Care Review

We are continuing to develop our support to the Scottish Government's delivery of the **Youth Justice Strategy 2015-2020**, through participation in the Developing Capacity and Improvement Group which led on the creation of a workforce development approach.

We will report on how we embed and demonstrate the principles in all our regulatory work across the organisation. Our quality assurance role within higher education will promote compliance with the UNCRC and develop learning resources to support the social service workforce and link to the SSSC Codes of Practice. Through our work we will also emphasise the legal obligation to respect children's rights that goes beyond what is required by the Children and Young People (Scotland) 2014 Act.

We continue to demonstrate how we meet our statutory obligations, which include being a Corporate Parent and meeting our duties under the **Equality Act, the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018** and the Children and Young People (Scotland) 2014 Act.

'Our work will support change in the development of social care staff to focus on nurturing, caring and building relationships with care experienced children and young people in Scotland'

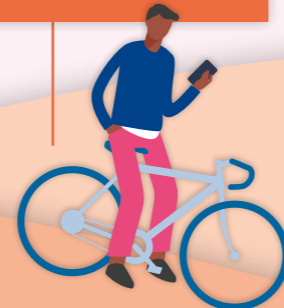
Independent Care Review



Early Learning and Childcare (ELC)



Children and Young People (Scotland) 2014 Act



United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)



Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act 2019

Youth Justice Strategy 2015-2020

National Guidance for Child Protection in Scotland



Equality Act, the Islands (Scotland) Act 2018



Our strategy

→ Strategic outcomes

→ Delivering the outcomes

→ Strategic priorities that support delivery of this plan

Strategic outcomes

Outcome
1 People who use services are protected by ensuring the regulated workforce is fit to practise.

Outcome
2 The SSSC supports and enhances the development of the regulated workforce to deliver high standards of practice and drive improvement.

Outcome
3 Our workforce planning activities support employers, commissioners and policy makers to deliver a sustainable, integrated and innovative workforce.

To show our progress, we will measure:

- the percentage of people using services who experience high quality care from a qualified and registered workforce
- the percentage of the workforce who believe that the work of the SSSC improves their practice
- the percentage of those who use our resources that report positively on the effectiveness of workforce planning activities.



Regulation

Outcome 1 People who use services are protected by ensuring the regulated workforce is fit to practise.

We have a key public protection function to deliver by ensuring the regulated workforce is registered and fit to practise. This new Strategic Plan marks a turning point for us since we were established in 2001. The legislation set out who we had to register and regulate and the order we did it in, starting with social workers. The phases that followed included people working in care home services for adults, residential childcare and day care services for children. In 2017, we began the final phase, registering workers in care at home and housing support services. By the end of September 2020, we will have covered all the categories of social service workers set out in the legislation and registered more than 160,000 people.

We continue to support new workers with their registration as they join the workforce. The social service sector and the roles of social service workers have changed since we started registration in 2003. We are now planning for the future of the Register, how it is structured and managed and how it corresponds with the registration of services with the Care Inspectorate to make registration as simple and as effective as possible. This means that employers and workers will spend less time completing applications for registration, improve processing time and become part of the regulated workforce more quickly.

We want registrants who are going through the fitness to practise process to have appropriate support. Evidence shows us that individuals have more successful outcomes when they engage in the process. Our plan is to develop and further enhance a range of support mechanisms to allow individuals to be as involved as they wish to be.

We will reach a key milestone in September 2020 as we conclude the final phase of registration, from then on registration of the regulated workforce becomes everyone's business. We will celebrate the achievement of registration of the workforce with activities that highlight the changes seen in social care services over the past 20 years.

Over the next three years we will:

- work with our stakeholders to focus our regulatory function where it is needed
- improve our engagement with the sector so everyone is clear about their regulatory responsibilities to work in social care
- improve the fitness to practise support and information we provide
- work closely with the sector to design a future Register and processes that are simple, effective and straightforward, listening to the needs of the workforce and employers.

How will we measure our performance?

Reduce the average time taken from a person starting their employment to being registered with the SSSC.

The average time taken to process a fitness to practise case is maintained at less time than organisations we benchmark against.

Increase the percentage of the workforce who engage when they are involved with the fitness to practise process.



Developing the workforce

Outcome 2 The SSSC supports and enhances the development of the regulated workforce to deliver high standards of practice and drive improvement.

Our activities will focus on leading work to develop the workforce and the social service sector. The social service sector is passionate about the care they provide and we will enhance the support and learning resources we develop to deliver high quality practice.

Our work will enhance and develop the social service workforce in Scotland. We promote and regulate the learning and development of the social service workforce and support professional development. By setting standards for their practice, training and education, we drive improved quality of care and support for people who use services. Increased access to learning and the development of a new continuous professional learning (CPL) process will bring about evidenced continued professional practice.

Along with our colleagues in England, Wales and Northern Ireland we are part of Skills for Care and Development, the sector skills council for social service workers. We work in partnership with employers to develop the capability of the social service workforce. This includes ensuring that the National Occupational Standards (NOS), which underpin qualifications for registration, meet the needs of employers and undertaking a review of the NOS if it is required.

Over the next three years we will:

- work closely with Scottish Government policy makers to ensure that support for workforce development reflects current and developing policy
- work with the sector and our partners to ensure qualification standards and the SSSC Codes of Practice continue to meet the current and future needs of employers, the workforce and public sector reform
- continue to develop innovative learning resources that support registration and continuous professional development of the workforce
- work collaboratively with partners to improve the digital capability and capacity of the workforce
- through our partnerships that drive quality assurance, support the social service workforce to drive improvement across the sector.

How will we measure our performance?

Actively monitor the percentage of the workforce who have the qualifications required for their registration.

Increase the percentage of the workforce using our learning resources to achieve continuous professional learning.

Percentage of those reporting positively that our development activity is delivering the support required by the workforce.

'Increased access to learning and the development of a new continuous professional learning (CPL) process will bring about evidenced continued professional practice.'

Workforce planning

Outcome 3 Our workforce planning activities support employers, commissioners and policy makers to deliver a sustainable, integrated and innovative workforce.

Working with our partners, we will support the redesign of services to meet the changing needs of Scotland's population and develop an understanding of the skill demand and workforce supply across the workforce.

Our joint publications with the Care Inspectorate on vacancies in the sector and safer staffing aim to provide understanding of the skills gaps and recruitment issues facing employers and the risk this creates for the provision of safe care services. Our work will support employers, commissioners and policy makers to drive workforce planning to deliver quality care, at the right time, in the right place by the right people.

By developing tools and resources for workforce planning we can contribute to creating Scotland's sustainable social care workforce.

'By developing tools and resources for workforce planning we can contribute to creating Scotland's sustainable social care workforce.'

Over the next three years we will:

- continue to enhance career pathways and promote social services as an attractive career
- support and lead recommendations of the National Health and Social Care Integrated Workforce Plan
- publish official statistics, workforce skills and data reports to support the needs of those involved in planning
- work in partnership to implement Health and Care (Staffing) (Scotland) legislation to develop workforce planning methodologies and tools
- be a delivery partner in the programme of adult social care reform.

How will we measure our performance?

Monitor the delivery of the SSSC's commitments under the National Health and Social Care Integrated Workforce Plan to schedule and evaluate satisfaction with the outputs.

Percentage of those reporting positive awareness of workforce planning resources and report that resources are effective.



Strategic priorities that support the delivery of this plan

To achieve our ambitions, we will continue to drive innovation in the way we work. Our **Digital Strategy 2020-2023** will continue the transformation of our internal systems and processes, which will in turn drive innovation in the products we produce for the workforce. Our digital transformation will bring about cost saving and of equal importance will provide a better and more personalised service to our customers.

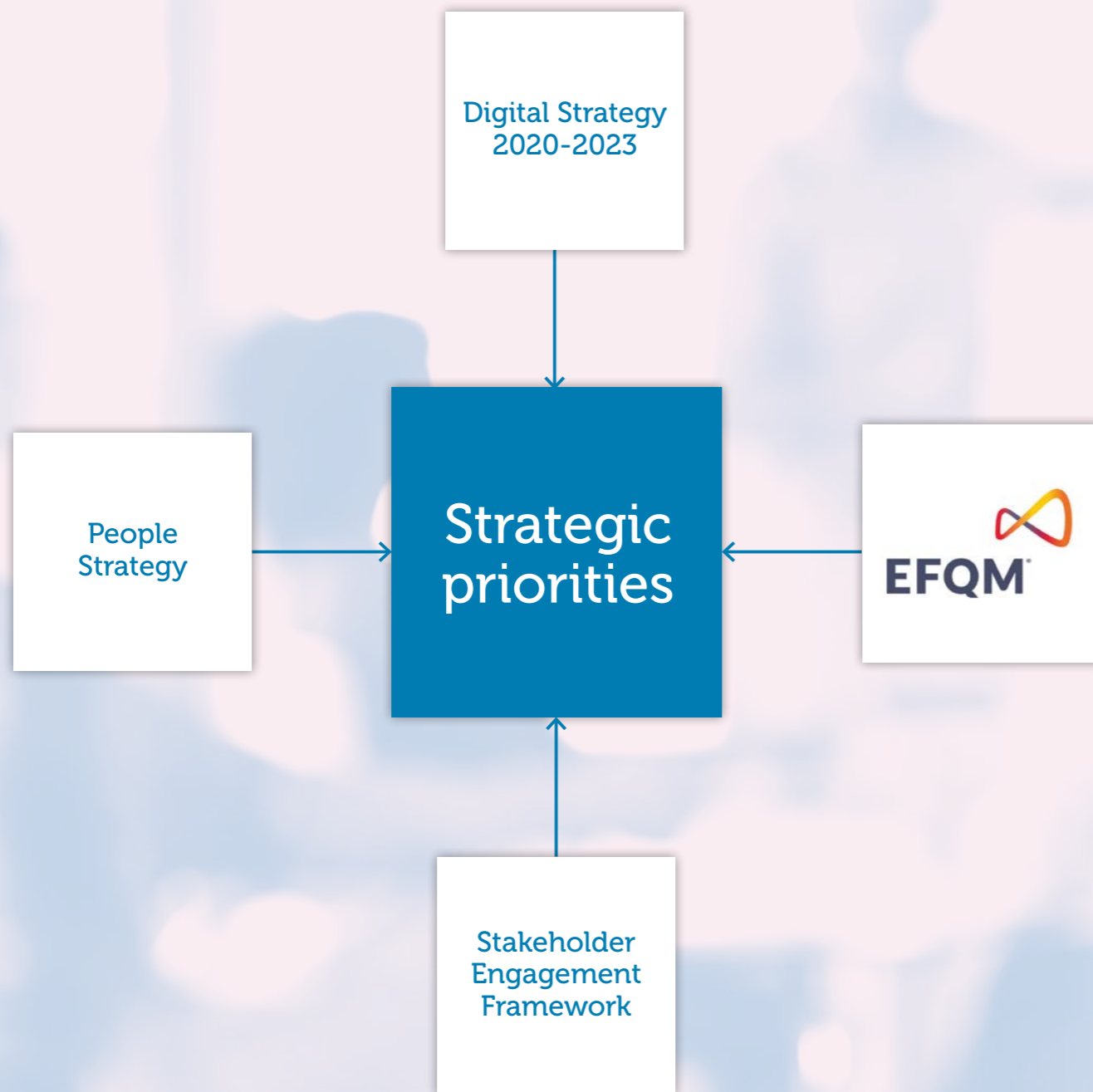
Our **Stakeholder Engagement Framework** builds our evidence base and the knowledge needed to improve our customer journey. We know effective engagement is an essential part of implementing improvements and understanding how we are meeting our customers' evolving needs. We use feedback to challenge and shape our business, projects and strategies. Our response to engagement will see us applying innovative practices within our organisation for regulation and workforce development.

Increasing our use of intelligence and research will produce the evidence for making changes to our processes and allow us to support our staff. By sharing our intelligence, data and research with our stakeholders we can facilitate robust decision making and support growth in the sector.

We will change ways of working that do not fit our focus and not do things because 'that is the way we have always' done things. In partnership with our Care Inspectorate colleagues, we will deliver innovative approaches to leadership for our own staff. This relationship will also see us providing collaboration for improvements in the delivery of social care across Scotland.

Our internal **People Strategy** will enhance our recruitment and support the SSSC to retain the most talented people, who have the skills to create an innovative and forward-thinking organisation. We plan to focus organisational development efforts on our internal workforce and continue to strive towards our **Gold Investors in People Award** and build on our **European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM)** work to achieve **Recognised by EFQM** status. We will create a culture that staff feel comfortable to challenge the status quo, leading to them driving redesign and improvements. We are committed to investing in our own workforce the same way we are invested in the external workforce.

'We know effective engagement is an essential part of implementing improvements and understanding how we are meeting our customers' evolving needs'



Our organisation

→ Our organisational characteristics

→ Guided by our values

→ How we work

→ Our funding

Our organisational characteristics

These characteristics describe how we will work to deliver our outcomes in this Strategic Plan.

- **Always focused on needs of our customers**
Everyone at the SSSC is committed to work to meet the expectations of our customers. Our staff are encouraged to use their knowledge and expertise to 'do the right thing'. We value feedback and learn from it and we are honest and open when things don't go well.
- **Produce evidence and intelligence that helps us, and others, make the right decisions**
We invest in systems and ways of working that allow us to fully understand and use the information we hold. We know our frontline staff understand the issues facing our customers, and that our managers listen to the views of their staff and act. We provide quality information and evidence that will enable people to use it in their decision making.
- **Work to improve every area of our organisation**
Feedback from our customers tells us that overall, they receive an excellent service from our staff. The focus of improvement is on how we ensure our staff continue to deliver a good service. Our quality of service is driven by providing excellence in all that we do. Our digital strategy drives increased capability in our own workforce and the workforce of the sector.
- **We are a respected and valued organisation**
Our reputation as a champion of public protection is important to us and behaving with the highest levels of integrity is fundamental to who we are. Our stakeholders clearly understand the positive difference the SSSC makes to people who use services, the people who deliver these services and the people who fund our organisation. In turn we treat everyone with respect, fairness and openness.

- **People want to work at the SSSC**
The SSSC can only achieve its outcomes with dedicated and talented staff. We invest in our staff and effectively manage the talent within the SSSC. We create an organisation in which staff can flourish through interesting and rewarding work. All our staff know the important role they play in protecting some of Scotland's most vulnerable people. Our staff are our greatest ambassadors for the organisation.
- **Work with others to deliver our outcomes**
By delivering best value, we will use our resources in the most effective way and work in partnership with others. We will not always be the lead partners and our partners will welcome our willingness and openness to work collaboratively.



Guided by our values

In everything we do, we believe the people of Scotland have the right to be safe when accessing social care services.

We do this is by listening, learning and then doing the right thing.

We regulate and develop the social service workforce to be trusted, skilled and confident.

Our organisational characteristics provide our values as an organisation.



- **Work together**
At the SSSC we treat each other with kindness and respect and value the contribution every member of staff makes.



- **Accept responsibility and accountability**
We recognise the trust placed in us to ensure the safety and wellbeing of people who use social services and that is our guiding mission.



- **Recognition and respect for others**
We value the social service workforce and the life changing work they do. Our work increases recognition of their role and further develops that role. All our stakeholders contribute to our success and we recognise and respect their views.

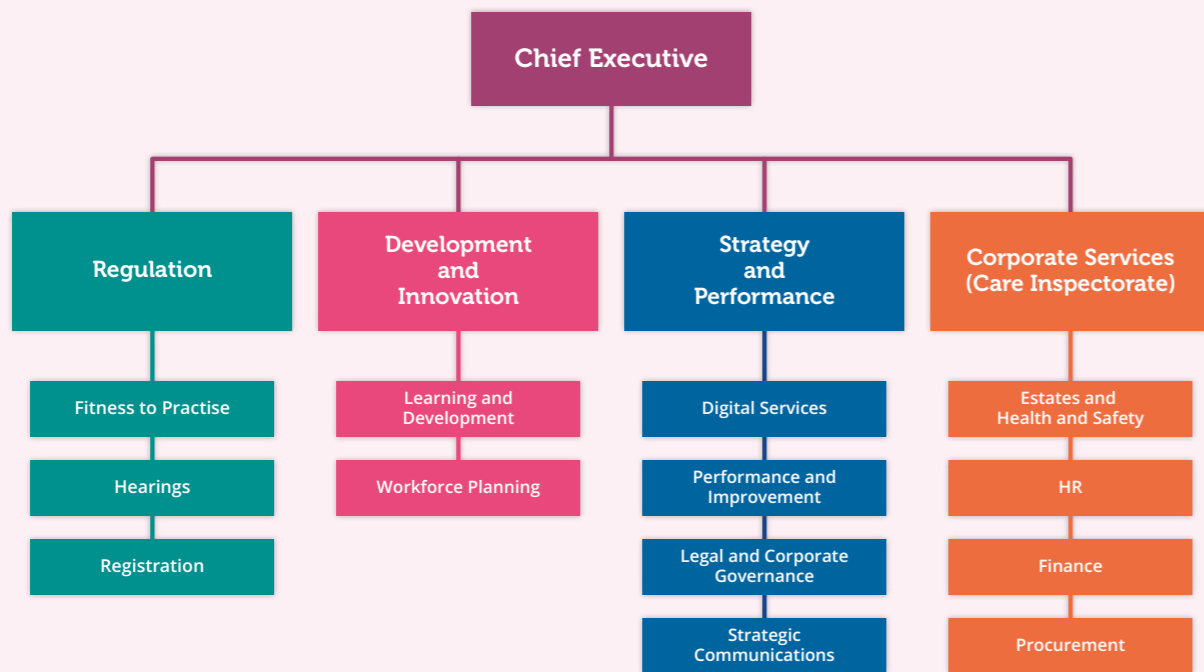
How we work

We are a Scottish Government non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Office of the Chief Social Work Adviser at the Directorate for Children and Families. We are governed by a council of 10 members, including a convener, who are appointed by the Scottish Government.

We have 248 full time equivalent employees based in our offices in Dundee. Our staff cover the whole of Scotland to meet with registrants and stakeholders, to deliver learning and development events and to conduct hearings.

Our staff are split between four directorates to deliver our business functions. We also share some corporate services with the Care Inspectorate, such as human resources, procurement, finance and estates.

'Our staff cover the whole of Scotland to meet with registrants and stakeholders, to deliver learning and development events and to conduct hearings.'



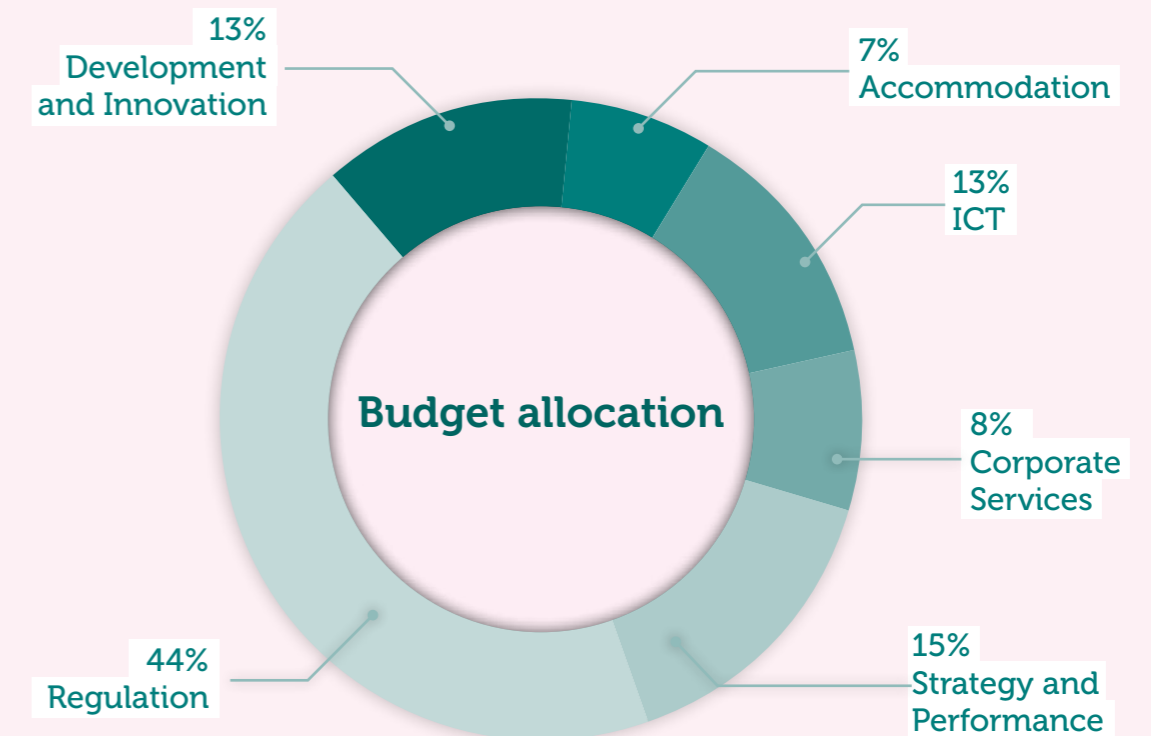
Our funding

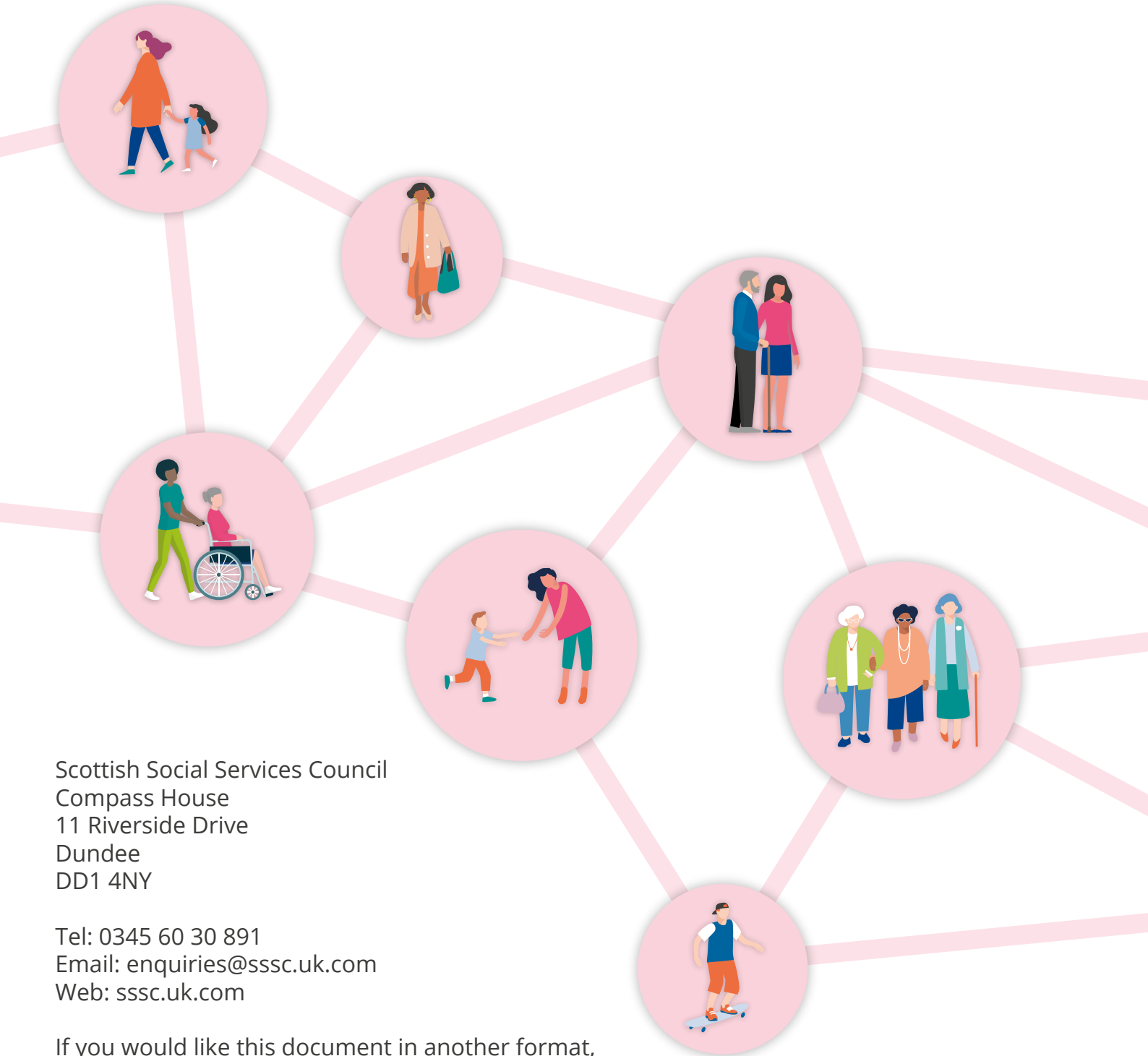
We have an annual budget of approximately £21m to deliver our work. This is made up of an allocation from the Scottish Government, registration fees and specific grant funding that is awarded during the year which totals around £15m. Our typical budget allocation during a financial year is illustrated in the diagram below.

Operational costs*:	2016/17 £m	2017/18** £m	2018/19 £m	2019/20 £m
Funded by fees	2.059	2.744	4.632	5.314
Funded by grant in aid	10.465	10.866	9.414	10.099
Total operational funding	12.524	13.61	14.046	15.413
% Funded by fees	16.44%	20.16%	32.98%	34.48%

* operational costs exclude expenditure on bursaries, practice learning, specific developments (eg digital transformation) and expenditure funded by specific grants

** part year impact of fee increase





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