

Title of report	Best Value Report 2018-19
Public/confidential	Public
Action	For discussion
Summary/purpose of report	This report presents the 2018-19 Best Value report for the Committee's consideration.
Recommendations	The Committee is asked to: 1. consider the 2018-19 Best Value Report.
Link to Strategic Plan	The information in this report links to all outcomes of the Strategic Plan.
Link to the Risk Register	Risk 5: The SSSC does not have sustainable resources to support the delivery of strategic plan objectives
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Documents attached	None

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Scottish Ministers expect all Accountable Officers of the Scottish Administration and other Public Bodies to comply with the duty of Best Value placed upon them. Compliance with the duty of Best Value (as described in the Scottish Public Finance Manual (SPFM)) is an auditable requirement and subject to scrutiny.
- 1.3 The duty of Best Value, as set out in the SPFM, is:
- to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in performance whilst maintaining an appropriate balance between quality and cost; and, in making those arrangements and securing that balance
 - to have regard to economy, efficiency, effectiveness, the equal opportunities requirements and to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 1.4 Scottish Ministers have issued “[Best Value in Public Services; Guidance for Accountable Officers](#)”. This guidance is intended to support Accountable Officers and Board Members to focus on
- i. continuous improvement which will help ensure sustainable economic growth for the people of Scotland, and
 - ii. delivery of the outcomes required of all public services as articulated in the [National Performance Framework](#).
- 1.5 The guidance sets out1.6 The five Best Value themes are:
- Vision and Leadership
 - Effective Partnerships
 - Governance and Accountability
 - Use of Resources and
 - Performance Management.
- 1.7 The two cross cutting themes are:
- Equality and
 - Sustainability.
- 1.8 An assessment of how the SSSC meets each Best Value theme has been carried out by the EMT and is described in Section 2 of this Report.

2. THE BEST VALUE THEMES

- 2.1 This section takes each of the Best Value themes, sets out the expectations on public bodies and then outlines how the SSSC assesses it is meeting the criteria.

2.2 Vision and Leadership - Expectations

- 2.3 The "Vision and Leadership" theme focuses on how a Best Value organisation achieves an open and inclusive leadership style, with a clear vision and sense of purpose, securing continuous improvement and improved outcomes with transparent, accountable processes and robust governance.
- 2.4 A Best Value organisation will have in place a clear vision and strategic direction for what it will do to contribute to the delivery of improved outcomes for Scotland's people, making Scotland a better place to live and a more prosperous and successful country. The strategy will display a clear sense of purpose and place and be effectively communicated to all staff and stakeholders. The strategy will show a clear direction of travel and will be led by senior staff in an open and inclusive leadership approach, underpinned by clear plans and strategies (aligned to resources) which reflect a commitment to continuous improvement.

2.5 SSSC Assessment

- 2.6 The SSSC meets its Best Value expectations through the following:

- development of a comprehensive Strategic Plan (current version 2017-20) with specific cross referencing of our strategic outcomes and strategic priorities to the Scottish Government's national outcomes. Work has commenced on developing the 2020-23 Strategic Plan. This is complemented by an Annual Strategic Delivery Plan, a Financial Strategy and Directorate Plans for each directorate
- during 2018/19 we have embedded our new Strategic Performance Reporting framework and improved our Monthly Operating Performance Reporting (MOPR) process. This is how we demonstrate and measure the impact of our work
- exploring different improvement methodologies, including EFQM and improvement science. During 2018/19 we have been building on the EFQM Committed to Excellence Award achieved in 2017/18 by undertaking self-evaluation work in preparation for submitting an application for the Recognised for Excellence Award
- developing a new leadership and management framework for the whole organisation, based on the Continuous Learning Framework and Step into Leadership
- we implemented a new management structure to align this with the delivery of our strategic outcomes. A new Chief Executive was appointed during the year

- Codes of Conduct for Council Members and staff are in place.

2.7 Effective Partnerships – Expectations

- 2.8 The “Effective Partnerships” theme focuses on how a Best Value organisation engages with partners in order to secure continuous improvement and improved outcomes for communities, not only through its own work but also that of its partners.
- 2.9 A Best Value organisation will show how it, and its partnerships, are demonstrating effective collaborative leadership in identifying and adapting their service delivery to the challenges that people who use services and communities face. The organisation will have a clear focus on the collaborative gain which can be achieved through partnership working and community engagement in order to achieve its strategic outcomes and priorities.

2.10 SSSC Assessment

- 2.11 The SSSC meets its Best Value expectations through the following:
- we have formal partnerships with our counterpart organisations across the UK; Care Council Wales, Northern Ireland Social Care Council, the Health and Care Professions Council and Skills for Care
 - we have formal collaborative partnerships with other national bodies in Scotland; the Care Inspectorate, NHS Education for Scotland, the General Teaching Council Scotland, the Scottish Courts Service, Iriss and Disclosure Scotland
 - we have a close working relationship with the Care Inspectorate, which includes participating in shared service arrangements. A shared services strategy and service level agreements are in place. The strategy and service level agreements are to be reviewed in 2019/20. During 2018/19 we decided that in order to take forward our digital transformation programme we needed to end the SSSC/Care Inspectorate shared ICT service.
 - several successful shared support services initiatives are up and running with the Care Inspectorate and OSCR and we use the Scottish Government banking service and SEAS financial system. We expanded the shared services with OSCR during the year
 - as a national organisation we do not formally engage in community planning partnerships. However, we engage with their constituent members where appropriate
 - through the shared service with the Care Inspectorate we participate in the Central Government Procurement shared service

- we have developed partnerships with sector umbrella groups such as Scottish Care, Coalition of Care Providers Scotland, National Day nurseries Association which help us in obtaining feedback and input into our service delivery. During 2018/19 we employed an officer to take forward intended improvements in how we involve people who use social services and carers in our work
- we are a member of the Scottish Regulatory Forum which is a group of professional regulators who meet to share best practice in regulation in Scotland.

2.12 Governance and Accountability – Expectations

- 2.13 The “Governance and Accountability” theme focuses on how a Best Value organisation achieves effective governance arrangements, which help support executive and non-executive leadership decision-making, provide suitable assurances to stakeholders on how all available resources are being used in delivering outcomes and give accessible explanation of the activities of the organisation and the outcomes delivered.
- 2.14 A Best Value organisation will be able to demonstrate structures, policies and leadership behaviours which support the application of good standards of governance and accountability in how the organisation is improving efficiency, focusing on priorities and achieving value for money in delivering its outcomes. These good standards will be reflected in clear roles, responsibilities and relationships within the organisation.
- 2.15 Good governance arrangements will provide the supporting framework for the overall delivery of Best Value and will ensure open-ness and transparency. Public reporting should show the impact of the organisations activities, with clear links between the activities and what outcomes are being delivered to customers and stakeholders.
- 2.16 Good governance provides an assurance that the organisation has a suitable focus on continuous improvement and quality. From an external perspective, good governance will show itself through an organisational commitment to public performance reporting about the quality of activities being delivered and commitments for future delivery.

2.17 SSSC Assessment

- 2.18 The SSSC meets its Best Value expectations through the following:
- annual review of the corporate governance arrangements
 - the SSSC has published and regularly reviews its Counter Fraud and Corruption Policy and Whistleblowing Policy
 - whistleblowing policy is in place, with a named Council Member that staff can contact
 - internal audit recommendations are acted on and fully reported

- Progress against the Strategic Plan is reported to Council bi-annually (October and March); progress against the Annual Strategic Delivery Plan is reported, through our Monthly Operational Performance Reports (MOPR), to the Executive Management Team (EMT) and Operational Management Team each month. MOPRs are available to Council members and any issues identified by EMT are reported to Council on an exceptions basis.
- we publish all Freedom of Information responses on our website, and all Council reports and minutes are likewise published (subject to exceptions where confidentiality is required)
- a programme of continuous development is in place for Council Members to ensure they have the knowledge and tools they need to challenge officers effectively
- we publish our Annual Report and Accounts which provides commentary on meeting our strategic priorities and our operational and financial performance
- we have models to determine the resources required and how these resources need to be deployed in accordance with the number and type of registrants and the timing of their initial registration and re-registration
- Audit Scotland through our external audit process identified governance issues with our digital transformation programme and had concerns about openness and transparency with respect to our Policy Forum. These concerns were set out in a Section 22 report that was considered by the Scottish Parliament's Public Audit and Post-legislative Scrutiny Committee. We have learned lessons from this criticism and developed an action plan. We will continue to implement improvements during 2019/20.

2.19 Use of Resources – Expectations

- 2.20 The "Use of Resources" theme focuses on how a Best Value organisation ensures that it makes effective, risk-aware and evidence-based decisions on the use of all of its resources.
- 2.21 A Best Value organisation will show that it is conscious of being publicly funded in everything it does. The organisation will be able to show how its effective management of all resources (including staff, assets, information and communications technology (ICT), procurement and knowledge) is contributing to delivery of specific outcomes.

2.22 SSSC Assessment

- 2.23 The SSSC meets its Best Value expectations through the following:

- during the year we had our latest Investors in People (IiP) assessment. This resulted in the maintenance of our SILVER accreditation status. We have prepared an action plan based on the results of this assessment to help us achieve GOLD status over the next assessment cycle. We also had an initial assessment against the Investors in Young People (IiYP) Standard and have prepared an action plan with a view to meeting this standard in the future
- we have models to determine the resources required and how these resources need to be deployed in accordance with the number and type of registrants and the timing of their initial registration and re-registration
- we have a procurement strategy in place. We have a shared service arrangement with the Scottish Government Procurement Directorate to deliver procurement expertise and capacity when required. Competitive practice is our norm. Our policy is for all contracting opportunities to be advertised on the Procurement Scotland portal. Non-competitive action is exceptional and a specific approval process is required
- in mid-February 2019, significant elements of our digital transformation strategy were implemented. This included the re-implementation of our core registration system Sequence on the Dynamics 365 platform, the integration of Sequence with a new case management system to support our Fitness to Practise processes, a new website, a new ICT infrastructure and network, migration to Windows 10, the implementation of Microsoft Office 365 and the issue of new ICT equipment to all our staff. All of this work is intended to deliver efficiencies and improve customer service. We will finalise the associated benefits realisation plan in 2019/20 and then use this as a basis for regular reports to Resources Committee
- although our Sponsor Department are only in a position to confirm our funding position less than six months prior to the start of the next financial year, budgets are prepared on a rolling three-year basis. Our financial strategy looks at net expenditure and funding forecasts for the next seven years
- we have a strategic risk register in place and this is reviewed at least annually. Work is continuing to improve risk management throughout the SSSC.

2.24 Performance Management – Expectations

- 2.25 The “Performance Management” theme focuses on how a Best Value organisation embeds a culture and supporting processes which ensures that it has a clear and accurate understanding of how all parts of the organisation are performing and that, based on this knowledge, it takes action that leads to demonstrable continuous improvement in performance and outcomes.

2.26 A Best Value organisation will ensure that robust arrangements are in place to monitor the achievement of outcomes (possibly delivered across multiple partnerships) as well as reporting on specific activities and projects. It will use intelligence to make open and transparent decisions within a culture which is action and improvement oriented and manages risk. The organisation will provide a clear line of sight from individual actions through to the National Outcomes and the National Performance Framework. The measures used to manage and report on performance will also enable the organisation to provide assurances on quality and link this to continuous improvement and the delivery of efficient and effective outcomes.

2.27 SSSC Assessment

2.28 The SSSC meets its Best Value expectations through the following:

- the Council and its Committees use self-assessment to review their own performance annually
- we report bi-annually to Council and in our annual report on our performance in delivering our strategic priorities
- our Monthly Operational Performance Reports (MOPR) process monitors fluctuations in performance so that we are more able to identify emerging trends and take action at an early stage if required
- risk is reviewed at each Council, Committee, Executive Management Team and Operational Management Team. There is a process to escalate or delegate the management of risk to the appropriate level within the SSSC
- a need has been identified to improve the regular performance reporting and review process in relation to our shared service arrangements with the Care Inspectorate.

2.29 Cross-cutting theme – Sustainability – Expectations

2.30 The “Sustainability” theme is one of the two cross-cutting themes and focuses on how a Best Value organisation has embedded a sustainable development focus in its work.

2.31 The goal of sustainable development is to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life without compromising the quality of life of future generations. Sustainability is integral to an overall Best Value approach and an obligation to “act in a way which it considers is most sustainable” is one of the three “public bodies duties” set out in section 44 of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.

2.32 The duty to act sustainably placed upon Public Bodies by the Climate Change Act requires Public Bodies to routinely balance their decisions and

consider the wide range of impacts of their actions, beyond reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and over both the short and the long term.

2.33 The concept of “sustainability” is one which is still evolving. However, five broad principles of sustainability have been identified as:

- promoting good governance
- living within environmental limits
- achieving a sustainable economy
- ensuring a stronger healthier society and
- using sound science responsibly.

2.34 SSSC Assessment

2.35 The SSSC meets its Best Value expectations through the following:

- annual review of the Council’s governance arrangements
- the Convener works closely with Scottish Government to plan Council Member succession and compliance with public appointments requirements
- annual reporting of environmental performance compared to carbon targets
- working with Scottish Government to build sustainability into procurement practices and develop a procurement improvement plan
- the SSSC promotes environmental responsibility through initiatives such as workplace recycling and our cycle to work scheme
- the Healthy Working Lives Group involves staff from across the organisation and promotes healthy living through awareness of food choices, smoking cessation, mindfulness and stress management tools for managers and staff
- it was agreed during the year to include “Sustainability Implications” sections in all Council and Committee reports. This will be implemented in 2019/20.

2.36 Cross-cutting Theme – Equality – Expectations

2.37 The “Equality” theme focuses on how a Best Value organisation has embedded an equalities focus which will secure continuous improvement in delivering equality.

2.38 Equality is integral to all our work as demonstrated by its positioning as a cross-cutting theme. Public bodies have a range of legal duties and responsibilities with regard to equality. A Best Value organisation will demonstrate that consideration of equality issues is embedded in its vision and strategic direction and throughout all of its work.

2.39 The equality impact of policies and practices delivered through partnerships should always be considered. A focus on setting equality outcomes at the individual public body level will also encourage equality to be considered at the partnership level.

2.40 SSSC Assessment

2.41 The SSSC meets its Best Value expectations through the following:

- review programme of modernising the SSSC's core employment policies and practices
- workforce monitoring reports prepared for consideration by the Council's Resources Committee
- through supporting the Government's Youth Employment Strategy, providing opportunities for young people including direct employment by the SSSC, modern apprenticeship opportunities, and high-quality work experience placements
- we have published our equalities outcomes and equalities mainstreaming reports
- we have an active Equalities Working Group which coordinates the SSSC's legal responsibilities and best practice activities to promote diversity and advance equality of opportunity
- all Council Members and staff participate in a rolling programme of equalities training
- we have signed up to the government's commitment to 50:50 by 2020 and are working with other public bodies to improve diversity on boards.

4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 This report presents the SSSC's approach to delivering Best Value and being a sustainable and respected public service organisation. The report shows how the SSSC meets the Scottish Government's seven Best Value criteria.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 It is recommended that the Committee considers and notes the SSSC's Best Value performance in 2018/19.

6. LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN

- 6.1 The development and implementation of the Strategic Plan and the monitoring of our performance in delivering our strategic outcomes and priorities are an integral part of Best Value.

7. LINK TO RISK REGISTER

- 7.1 By its very nature, Best Value impacts on all risks within the strategic risk register.

8. RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Use of resources is one of the Best Value criteria considered by this update report.

9. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 Equality is one of the Best Value criteria considered by this update report.
- 9.2 An Equality Impact Assessment has not been carried out. This is not a new or updated policy, guidance, practice or procedure.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Ensuring that systems, processes and governance of the SSSC are in accordance with guidance issued by Scottish Government and comply with relevant law is part of effective governance which is one of the Best Value criteria considered by this update report.

11. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- 11.1 There are no immediate implications for stakeholder engagement as a result of this report but it is a core element of our strategic planning processes in order that the service we provide to our stakeholders is as good as it can be.

12. IMPACT ON USERS AND CARERS

- 12.1 Continuously striving to deliver Best Value enhances the SSSC's capacity to contribute to improving the lives of people who use care services and their carers.

