

**SCOTTISH SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL**  
**PEOPLE STRATEGY**  
**2021 – 2024**

**A shared vision – a shared commitment**

At the time of writing this People Strategy, we (the SSSC staff) are still working from home during a global pandemic. We have demonstrated that we are a people focused, agile, innovative and collaborative organisation. With the right people and the right technology, we have not only got through this difficult time, we have also seen positive change. It is important that we build upon these positives as there is likely more change to come.

In the last year we have relied on technology more than ever. Because of our significant investment in 2019, we were able to work from home from day one. We must continue to develop our digital skills and use technology in ways that enhance what we do and keep up to date with the latest developments.

We have an ambitious strategic plan and there is a significant change agenda within our areas of work with the planned introduction of the National Care Service as set out in the Independent Review of Adult Social Care (2021).

We must respond to any recruitment challenges so that we remain a great place to work and we need to do this with a good rewards package and a great working environment.

Staff are skilled, professional and passionate about the work we do. Across the organisation there is a shared commitment to achieve our vision.

We will work together to make the SSSC a great place to work, where everyone is supported and provided with the tools and infrastructure to do their best work as we know that is what motivates us all – we come to work to do a great job that makes a real difference.

This People Strategy sets out our ambition for our people and our organisation.

Lorraine Gray (Signature)

Chief Executive

## **THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT**

### **Our vision**

The people of Scotland can count on social work, social care and early years services being provided by a trusted, skilled and confident workforce.

### **Our strategic outcomes**

1. People who use social work, social care and early years services are protected by ensuring the regulated workforce is fit to practise.
2. The SSSC supports and enhances the development of the regulated workforce to deliver high standards of practice and drive improvement.
3. Our workforce planning activities support employers, commissioners and policy makers to deliver a sustainable, integrated and innovative workforce.
4. The social work, social care and early years workforce is recognised as professional and regulated and valued for the difference it makes to people's lives.

### **Our organisational characteristics**

We will:

- always focus on the needs of our customers
- produce evidence and intelligence that helps us, and others make the right decisions
- work to improve every area of our organisation
- ensure we are respected and valued by our stakeholders
- make the SSSC a place where people want to work
- work in partnership with others to deliver outcomes.

### **Our values**

We listen, learn and do the right thing.

- **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. Our vision, values and organisational characteristics are at the heart of our People Strategy.

## **STRATEGIC THEMES OF OUR PEOPLE STRATEGY**

### **Strategic Theme 1**

#### **Effective leaders and managers**

Develop creative, ambitious and business focused leaders who can inspire and motivate the teams they manage so they can achieve our strategic outcomes, respond to change and continually improve the way we work.

To do this, we must recruit the right leaders who share our ambition and values and have the right skills. We must invest in them to ensure that our senior leadership team provides strong, clear and inspirational leadership. At the same time, our managers will have the confidence and skills to address any staffing issues that arise.

Our leaders and managers are the champions of our values and behaviours and are responsible for making sure that we all demonstrate those values and behaviours as they are important in every aspect of work.

#### **Actions**

- Continue our leadership and management training.
- Explore the requirements for all future managers to have or work towards a management qualification (this is what we require in the sector).
- Ask for staff feedback on senior leaders in the organisation in relation to how they promote the values.
- Introduce 360-degree appraisal for senior leaders (executive managers and operational managers).
- Analyse the information from our development and performance framework to inform future developments.

### **Strategic Theme 2**

#### **Recruit and develop excellent people**

Our high performing culture relies on the strength of our people. As a result, attracting, recruiting and retaining the very best talent is central to our success. To do this we must demonstrate it's a good place to work. And part of this is highlighting our whole rewards package to you, as existing staff and to people who will join us in the future.

People development, leadership, talent management and succession planning are essential in addressing workforce challenges, shaping the current and future workforce to deliver our strategic plan.

We need a culture which requires all of us not only to perform to our full potential but to demonstrate the organisation's values and behaviours.

We know from experience that talent already exists within the SSSC and giving the chance for our people to grow is a win-win situation for everyone. Providing opportunities for you to move up or, just as importantly, across functions makes sure we have a motivated workforce to help meet our strategic outcomes.

Our recent 18-month Evolve Programme sets the foundation for this **People Strategy**, with the following strands of work.

**Reach:** be part of life changing work – how we will attract great talent and demonstrate that the SSSC is a great place to work.

**Onboard:** joining the SSSC – providing a corporate induction, including digital skills induction.

**SSSC + me:** nurturing your potential – capture and convey the performance, capabilities skills and competencies all our staff need and identify how we develop each of you to make sure we continue to have a sustainable and successful organisation.

**Aim:** managing and developing our talent – we will provide a process that is embedded in our organisational culture that allows departments to examine and analyse their workforce and plan to meet changing workforce demands and succession planning.

**See:** employee engagement - a platform for you to access existing employee benefits, discover new ones and lead innovation at the SSSC.

**Moving on** from the SSSC - a clear process to capture information when you leave, with a focus on producing practical management information that influences our organisational culture.

The implementation plan from this strategy will build on the Evolve programme.

### **Actions**

- Build on the work we have done to improve our recruitment including developing an employer value proposition to attract the best talent by showing what SSSC can offer.
- Explore further options for external accreditation as a good employer.
- Review our organisational and role design and our rewards strategy over the next three years.
- Develop and implement a behavioural framework that will apply to all ensuring consistent standards of behaviour.
- Focus our learning and development activities on the things that will support the delivery of our strategic outcomes and priorities.

- Enhance knowledge exchange and collaboration across the organisation as we move to a different way of working.
- Design and develop a talent management framework which will give us an open and transparent way of identifying, selecting and deploying outstanding talent.
- Automate more of our people processes so we can focus on higher value work.

### **Strategic Theme 3**

#### **A healthy and inclusive organisation**

We want to provide a healthy, happy and purposeful environment for all that promotes our wellbeing and allows us to do our best work.

In the last year, we developed seven wellbeing principles and trained 26 mental health first aiders. Our internal messages have had a strong focus on wellbeing, self-care and an understanding of the challenges we have all faced. Throughout the pandemic you have demonstrated outstanding commitment to the organisation, to the social service workforce and people who use services.

We are committed to equality, diversity and inclusion. Our work promotes human rights and the core principles of dignity, fairness, equality, respect and autonomy. We published our fifth report on mainstreaming the equality duty and set out our equality outcomes for 2021-2025.

To grow and transform as an organisation, we must create a safe working environment where we feel able to discuss and ask for support to ensure both our physical and mental wellbeing.

As we come through this global crisis, we want to build on what we have learned.

#### **Actions**

- Work towards Gold Healthy Working Lives.
- Promote our seven wellbeing principles through a staff led campaign.
- Promote our mental health first aider role and review what this has achieved.
- Provide training through an e-module on the Equality Act 2010 and the implications for the organisation.
- Roll out 'Fairness for all' learning sessions to raise awareness of fairness and equality.
- Identify how we can promote the SSSC as a diverse and inclusive workplace through the Reach strand of our Evolve programme.

## **Strategic Theme 4**

### **Informed, involved and engaged employees**

We want to continue to strengthen our employee engagement. To achieve our strategic outcomes and vision we all need to pull together and have a shared understanding of what we want to achieve.

An engaged workforce is clear about the overall aims of the organisation, where we each see how our own role fits into the bigger picture and where we are all committed to our purpose.

We all want to feel listened to, valued, involved, informed with different opportunities and ways to feedback.

In an engaged workforce, colleagues are accountable for results and enjoy working hard to get things done. An engaged workforce sees value in their work - we are proud of what we do and we like of how we do it.

#### **Actions**

- Develop an internal communication strategy involving staff in the design.
- Build on the new approaches we have developed during the pandemic.
- Develop our two-way communication methods to suit new ways of working.
- An annual survey on our internal communication activities.
- Develop online methods for staff to give instant feedback.
- Visible responses to staff feedback.

## **Strategic Theme 5**

### **Investing in young people**

At the SSSC we are committed to developing the future workforce and future leaders. We have achieved accreditation as an Investor in Young People. This is something we are very proud of. We are equally proud of the young people who work with us and who bring so much to the organisation.

#### **Actions**

- Re-establish our young people mentoring scheme where a senior member of staff mentors a young member of staff.
- Introduce a young people's forum.
- Include views of young people in our recruitment campaigns.
- Ensure an HR member of staff has a dedicated remit for young people.
- Find more opportunities to include more apprentices in our organisation.

## **Strategic Theme 6**

### **An agile and innovative workforce**

We will build on our agile working approach so we continue to support our people in a modern, flexible environment. We will make sure that our staff can work in a ways that allow them to do their best work. And we will continue to build a culture that encourages innovation and focuses on output, with wellbeing at the heart.

You are our most valuable resource. We will listen to what you need, make sure you have the tools to do your job, wherever you choose to work and we will respond to emerging challenges or opportunities that this way of working presents.

To do this, we must continue to invest on our systems, facilities and people policies so that they are aligned and support an agile and innovative workforce.

### **Actions**

- Review any HR and Health & Safety policies to support agile working.
- Build wellbeing discussions into regular one-to-ones/supervision discussions.
- Continue to invest in our digital tools and support.
- Review our recruitment reach and impact.
- Adapt our office space to support agile working.

## **OUR SHARED COMMITMENTS**

**We each have a role to play and a commitment to make to each other and to the organisation, which in turn makes a commitment to all of us.**

The SSSC will:

- treat you with respect and courtesy
- promote and celebrate inclusion, equality and diversity
- provide constructive performance and development frameworks
- share evidence around our decision making
- listen and take account of all views
- acknowledge and recognise your achievements
- ensure workloads are reasonable and achievable.

As a manager I will:

- model the SSSC's values in leading my team and how I go about my work
- meet with you regularly
- provide clarity on roles and responsibilities and the ways of working in the team
- celebrate your successes and communicate the team's progress

- raise issues proactively and constructively and support you to resolve them, addressing conflict where it happens
- make time to discuss your development needs and support you to create a career development plan and provide opportunities for your development
- look for ways to involve you in decision making
- listen openly and without judgement to your feedback and ideas for improvement.

As a staff member I will:

- take responsibility for my performance
- support your colleagues and show kindness and respect for others with different working patterns and styles
- look for ways to improve the organisation
- promote my own health and wellbeing and use my annual leave
- keep my manager informed of progress and problems
- raise and resolve issues constructively and promptly and work to find solutions.

## **DEMONSTRATING SUCCESS IN ACHIEVING OUR STRATEGIC THEMES**

We will publish an annual report to show our progress which will include:

- feedback from staff surveys
- the results from external staff surveys
  - Civil Service Survey
  - Investors in People
  - Investors in Young People
- diversity statistics
- staff turnover
- sickness absence
- disciplinary and grievance levels
- progress on Healthy Working Lives
- complaints relating to dignity at work
- internal promotions and career development
- leadership and management training
- recruitment intelligence
- Investment in training and development activity
- Values in Practice awards.