SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

	Item	Purpose	Papers	Owner
1.1	AOB			
1.2	Apologies			
2.	Declarations of Interest			
3.	Board Member Updates			
4.	**Minutes/Committees**			
4.1	Minute of Meeting held on 31st January 2024	Approval	Attached	
4.2	Workplan			
4.3	Matters Arising			
4.4	Audit & Risk Committee • Draft Minute of Meeting held on 28th February 2024	Noting	To follow	
	Reports			
5.	Chief Executive's Report	Noting	Attached	NH
6.	Draft Budget 2024/25	Approval	Attached	EM
7.	Budget Monitoring Report	Approval	Attached	EM
8.	OPR	Approval	Attached	LB
9.	Corporate Plan Draft SCRA Business Plan	Approval	Attached	LB
10.	Programme Board Update Report	Noting	Attached	LB
11.	Annual Workforce Planning Report	Noting	Attached	SD
12.	People Strategy 2024-27	Approval	Attached	SD
13.	Environmental Annual Report	Approval	Attached	EM
14.	Health and Safety Annual Report	Noting	Attached	SD
15.	Review of Risk Policy	Approval	Attached	EM
16.	New Risks			
	Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 19th June 2024			

Present:

Michelle Miller (Chair)
Suzanne Vestri
Jim Edgar
Martin Toye
Kay Barton
Lorraine Moore
Ying Zhang
Hazel Smith
Becca Fairless

In Attendance:

Neil Hunter (Principal Reporter/Chief Executive),
Ed Morrison (Head of Finance and Resources),
Ross Mackenzie (Finance Manager)
Susan Deery (Head of Human Resources),
Alistair Hogg (Head of Practice and Policy),
Lisa Bennett (Head of Strategy and OD),
Helen Etchells (Senior Operational Manager),
Paul Mulvanny (Senior Operational Manager),
Monica Sweeny (UNISON Branch Secretary/Reporter),
Ian Donaldson, (Deputy Director Children's Rights, Protection and Justice, Scottish Government)
Nick Rougvie , (Childrens Hearings Sponsor Team Leader, Scottish Government)
Pamela Armstrong (Governance Officer, Minutes)

		Timescale	Action
1.1	**AOB** None		
1.2	**Apologies** Helen Etchells (Senior Operational Manager), Paul Mulvanny (Senior Operational Manager)		
1.3	**Declarations of Interest** There were no declarations of interest.		
2.	**Minutes/Committees**		
2.1	**Minute of meeting held on 13 December 2023** Agreed subject to agreed changes.		

		Timescale	Action
2.2	**Board Action log and Workplan** The action log and workplan were reviewed.		
2.3	**Matters Arising** All matters arising are covered within the agenda.		
	Reports		

3.	**Staff Survey results 2022**
	The PR/CE introduced results of the SCRA 2023 staff survey.
	
	Noted:
	• Overall, the staff survey shows modest improvements across most core areas. The lowest scoring items remain confidence in raising issues with the senior team, followed by pay and ability to challenge the way things are done in SCRA. Even so some, albeit small progress was made in all these 3 lowest scoring indicators.
	   o I feel confident in the future of SCRA.
	   o Confidence in SCRA to manage future change.
	   o Challenging the way things are done in SCRA.
	• A key area of focus in the past year was completion of the revised partnership agreement a renewed focus on staff engagement, participation, and perspective, prioritising further improvements in a sense of openness and transparency and shortening lines of communication.
	• We need to continue to focus on the multiple variables that contribute to morale in the workplace – control, autonomy, engagement, influence, well managed change, optimism for the future, wellbeing, manageable workload, and reward.
	• We need to continue to focus on the multiple variables that contribute to morale in the workplace – control, autonomy, engagement, influence, well managed change, optimism for the future, wellbeing, manageable workload, and reward.
	
	Issues arising during discussion:
	• The Board noted the improvements made in some areas and the acknowledgement that there is more to do moving forward.		

			Timescale	Action

	• The challenge for the senior team has been, retaining visibility on a consistent basis. The challenge of doing that, whilst maintaining workload and pressures. • Line managers have created a positive culture within their own teams. Line managers, Reporter Managers, their Support Managers, and Head Office Managers, are a critical resource to the organisation. • The 54% completion rate is among the highest over the past 14 years. The Staff Survey group will further consider how this can be improved. • The EMT continue to encourage open dialogue across the organisation. • The staff group get a great deal of reassurance from the Board being visible and present to them and understanding some of the issues that they're facing. • A further draft of the results will be presented to the March Board. • An action plan will be developed after further discussion during H&W group. **Agreed:** • The PR/CE and Head of HR/Workforce to present further updates on actions arising from the 2023 Survey results following consultation with the Health and Wellbeing Group

Agreed row timescale / action: **March 24** / **NH/SD**

4.	**Strategy and Planning**

4. **Strategy and Planning**
The Head of Strategy and the Corporate Planning and Performance Manager introduced report, providing the Board provide with a first draft Corporate Plan for 2024/27 and a first draft Business Plan for 2024/25.

Noted:
- The plan presented provides the most up to date position in terms of thinking and planning for the next three years - far more detailed planning is in place in relation to programme work, internal strategies.
- In developing this draft, we have considered the improvement work that we have planned for, the work that we see developing from the Scottish Government's response to Hearings

		for Children and the work requiring to be undertaken to prepare us for implementation of the Care and Justice Bill and recognition of the legal status of UNCRC – and the potential implications of that. • Programme Protect, when initiated in 2023, set out ambitious plans that set us up for work to be undertaken through the lifetime of this (2024/27) plan and the programme management framework that we put in place in 2023 will see through delivery of this Corporate Plan. • Following the Board meeting in January, this plan will be updated accordingly to reflect views/comments and will then be shared with colleagues within Scottish Government for onward sharing with policy departments, for comment. • The Corporate Plan and related Business Plan will be considered at Challenge and Review in February where a robust review will be conducted on affordability and prioritisation if required. This follows a financial review within the EMT workshop session in January where consideration was given to resourcing in recognition of the current financial climate. **Issues arising during discussion:** • It is important to consider the use of language to ensure the audience understand the meaning of terms used within the plan. • Board Members are invited to share any comments on the plan offline. The plan will be brough to the March meeting of the Board for approval. **Agreed:** • To approve the approach to development of the Corporate Plan 2024/27		
5.	**Finance and Resources**			
5.1	**Budget Planning 2024/25** The Head of Finance and Resources introduced the report recommending the Board note the draft budget plans for 2024/25. Ian Donaldson, Deputy Director Children's Rights, Protection and Justice, participated in the follow-on discussion.			

		Timescale	Action
	Noted: • The Scottish Government budget process has again resulted in one year funding settlements for public sector bodies. The Finance Minister's Draft 2024/25 Budget Plan was published on 19 December 2023. SCRA continues to have a standstill revenue budget allocation, creating a gap. • The Deputy Director of Childrens Rights, Protection and Justice has acknowledged this gap and requested that SCRA work closely with the sponsor team from January 2024 to agree the funding gap and develop assurances that will allow the Board to sign off another large unfunded budget pressure which would again be addressed in the Autumn and Spring Budget Reviews. • At this stage SCRA will receive standstill funding for 2024/25. Additional funding up to the level of agreed need will be confirmed in the March GiA letter and provided in the 2024/25 Autumn and Spring Budget Reviews. • In the interim discussions will re-commence with Sponsor Team following the Board meeting about the size of the budget gap linked to progress or otherwise with the implementation of the CCJB and the Scottish Government's response to the Hearings for Children recommendations. • The Chair, Principal Reporter and the Board will seek to ensure the March GiA letter contains sufficient comfort to allow the Board to approve a draft revenue budget in March 2024. • The continuing one-year nature of funding settlements and the increasing revenue budget gap creates risks in setting the revenue budget for 2024/25 due to the uncertainty of funding in future years. An updated five-year Financial Plan will be presented to the Board in September 2024. **Issues arising during discussion:** • Scottish Government (SG) are conscious of the pressure that the budget settlement creates for SCRA, and a range of public bodies. The pressures that are created are a shared risk, not just for individual organisations but for the Scottish		

		Timescale	Action
	Government. • The discussions that will happen over coming weeks and months will include delivery plans and the timescales for delivery and expectations that Ministers have of those time scales and what flexibility the Scottish Government and SCRA can find in terms of their work plans. **Agreed:** • To agree scenario 3 as the target budget for EMT Challenge and Review and for discussion with Sponsor Team following the Board meeting.		
6.	**Review of Policies 2023** **Overview of Policies Annual Report** The Governance Officer introduced the report recommending the Board. • Note the programme of policy reviews undertaken in 2023. • Review and agree the schedule planned for 2024 and the proposed delegations for approval. **Noted:** • All policies are available to staff via Connect (SCRA's intranet). • To comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) all new/revised policies, processes and/or practices require an EHRIA. Significant progress has been made in ensuring this compliance and strong joint work has been established with the SCRA Equalities Review Group who offer support, quality assurance and direction as well as oversight of plans and refinements to negate or reduce any assessed impacts. • The HR Sub-Group of the National Partnership Forum deals with policies that affect employment and/or that may have an impact on staff at work. • Health and Safety policies are monitored and tracked by the Health & Safety Committee. **Issues arising during discussion:** • All SCRA policies will go through an equality impact assessment.		

		Timescale	Action
	• Human Rights and Island assessments have been incorporated into the quality impact assessment form. **Agreed:** • To approve the schedule planned for 2024. • To include in the report if impact assessments have been completed against individual policies.	**Dec 24**	**PA**
7.	**New Risks** While no new risks were identified, further consideration will be given to the level and degrees of risks currently being managed.		
	Date of Next Meeting Wednesday 20 March 2024, by Teams		

Board Action Log as at March 2024

Meeting/ Item	Action	Timescale	Owner	Comments	Status
Jan 24 **Overview of Policies Annual Report**	To include in the report if impact assessments have been completed against individual policies.	Dec 24	PA		Not yet due

SCRA Board Meeting Workplan December March 2024

Business Item	Wed 23/01/24	Wed 20/03/24	Wed 19/06/24	Wed 18/09/24	Wed 18/12/24
Strategic/Corporate					
Policy & Influencing Report			✓		
Research Programme					✓
Risk Register			✓	✓	✓
Governance					
Audit Committee Minutes		✓	✓		✓
Committee Annual Reports			✓		
Remuneration & Nominations Committee Minutes			✓		✓
SCRA Standing Orders Review (Next due March 2025)				✓	
Finance					
Budget Monitoring Report		✓	✓	✓	✓
Draft Budget	✓	✓		✓	✓
Annual Report & Accounts					
Financial Strategy				✓	
Planning				✓	
Draft Corporate, Corporate Parenting & Business Plan	✓	✓ (BP)			✓
Draft Annual Report					
Annual Workforce Planning Report		✓			
Communications Plan			✓	✓	
Performance					
Organisational Performance Report		✓	✓		✓
Operational				✓	
Locality Performance Reviews					✓
Chief Executive's Report		✓	✓		✓
Complaints Review			✓		
Inclusion Annual Report			✓		
Environmental Annual Report		✓			
Overview of Policies Annual Report	✓			✓	✓
Health & Safety Annual Report		✓			
Procurement Report				✓	

Business Item	Wed 23/01/24	Wed 20/03/24	Wed 19/06/24	Wed 18/09/24	Wed 18/12/24
Property Strategy			✓		
Keeping the Promise update		✓	✓	✓	✓
Staff Survey	✓	✓			
Role of the Reporter (TBC)					
Agile Policy (Next review Sep 2024)				✓	
SCRA Framework Document (next review 2024)				✓	
SCRA Whistleblowing Policy (next review Dec 2024)					✓

SCOTTISH
CHILDREN'S REPORTER
ADMINISTRATION

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

Chief Executives Report

Accountable Director: Neil Hunter   **Date:**   20 March 2024

Recommendation:

1.   To note the Chief Executives update report

Reason for Report   At request of Board

Resource Implications   In line with revised budget

Strategy   In line with Corporate Plan

Equalities Duties   Indicate whether an Equalities and Human Rights Impact assessment (HRIA) is required and has been completed. Describe in the body of the report any issues/findings/adjustments that have been made.

Equalities   Impact   Assessment Required/Completed

☐   Yes

☒   No

Issues/action points:-

Consultation

Document Classification   Open

1.   Staff Partnership

1.1   A series of in depth workshops have been organised between SCRA and UNISON. Two of the three planned workshops took pace over February and March with the final workshop planned for September/October 2024.

1.2   These sessions have been extremely useful for both the senior team and SCRA Branch members. The focus has been on

- Resources and SCRA sustainability
- SCRA future purpose, strategic ambition and planning priorities
- Models of improvement and change management being adopted by SCRA
- Programme and project structure, design and delivery, investment and resourcing
- Alignment of SCRA's current activity to Keeping the Promise and progressing Hearings for Children
- Workforce development and support

1.3   The workshops are timely given the level of change ahead for SCRA and the wider Hearings system and the prolonged financial uncertainty that the organisation continue to face. Issues impacting on the workforce were very much to the fore. Key commitments made over the course of the workshops are:

- To prioritise an input to the Partnership Forum on SCRA's future digital plans – particularly in relation to digital enablement of our future work
- Ensuring Improved communication across senior team and branch in relation to ongoing strategic thinking and planning
- More support for stewards and managers in continuing to work in partnership with high levels of mutual regular engagement, sharing of thinking and collaboration in planning
- Joint work on promoting the benefits of trade union membership and partnership work across SCRA – with a programme of work to support the relaunch of the Partnership Agreement across 2024

2.   Staff Survey 2023

2.1   The Board received a report in January 2024 on the results of the staff survey covering the period Jan – Dec 2023. Overall the results showed modest improvement in many areas. Three key areas remain of the most critical priority for SCRA

- Moral
- Reward
- Workload
- Resources
- Managing change

2.2   The Principal Reporter led 3 Team Brief sessions in February involving over 60 SCRA staff as well as detailed discussions with the national Health and Wellbeing group as well as UNISON and the senior team. The Team Brief and additional data from the staff survey is shown here.

2.3 The team brief sessions focussed on the headline results, analysis and the existing action plan which was developed in response to the 2022 staff survey. The key themes emerging from these various discussions were:-

- Temporary contracts remain a common concern across the service and staff would like to see action to reduce the use of temporary staffing further
- Staff recognised the ongoing issues of morale – and there was unanimity that this was a key barometer for SCRA – but also that many aspects of work and life influencing morale –
  - o the cost of living and pay,
  - o uncertainty about SCRA's future and finances,
  - o the stresses and strains of our day to day work for children,
  - o the capacity of our partner agencies and
  - o sense of not being able to do our best all the time for children
- there was a strong sense of support for giving people more variety in their work, through learning opportunities an access to new skills, clearer career paths in this area of highly specialist work
- a need for more precision on future questions on bullying, harassment and victimisation – with a clearer focus on timeline measurements, with some staff feeling the question invited more historical reporting than contemporary issues

2.4 The majority of the discussion on the 2022 action plan confirmed that it was focussing on the right areas and that SCRA should continue to make progress on each of those areas:

- Pay and reward
- Workload and resources
- Morale
- Managing change

2.5 The Staff Survey Action Plan for 2023 has been updated and is shown at appendix A.

3.   Managers Event

3.1 A 2 day managers event took place on 3 and 4 March with a great turnout of managers from across the organisation. It was an intensive but productive 2 days with inputs from Scottish Government on Hearings for Children, managing change, change orientated conversations with staff, leadership resilience as well as sessions on SCRA's Corporate Plan, Target Operating Model and Programmes and Projects (further detail in Board agenda item 10) We await formal evaluation from participants – but immediate feedback seemed positive.

3.2 What was very clear from the 2 days was that we have a talented and committed group of leaders and managers in SCRA who are now increasingly looking forward with a sense of purpose, optimism and increased understanding on what SCRA's journey might look like over the next few years.

4.   Reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC)

4.1 We updated the Board in September 2023 on our planned programme of survey work for those SCRA buildings identified that fell into the affected timeline and profile to determine whether RAAC is present. An initial desktop assessment of the estate was carried out for both our owned and leased properties. Following this a total of 11 physical surveys/investigations were carried out by the specialists commissioned by the Property Team. Of these inspections 3 properties have been recommended for further examination and opening up of hidden aspects for further assurance, although none of the properties are deemed high risk. A summary of the findings for our estate has been sent to the Scottish Government for information. The position for four leased buildings have yet to be confirmed with landlords and we are pursuing these. The remaining 18 buildings are not considered to be within scope as the timelines for construction either predate or post date use of RAAC.

5.   Scottish Government Liaison

5.1 Our routine Accountability meeting was held on 19 February with the standard focus on issues of:-

- System operation and resilience
- Practice and legislation
- HSWG recommendations, planning/progress/timelines
- Finance
- Corporate and business plans
- Board member appointments
- Quarterly Organisational Performance/Monthly Overview Reports
- Risk

5.2 Much of the ongoing dialogue with SG colleagues, has quite naturally focussed on issues of budget and financial planning, with meetings with the Director for Children and Families the Minister for Children. Young People and Keeping the Promise having taken place in mid-March. Whilst both meetings have been reassuring and supportive of SCRA's position in relation to budget setting they have not materially changed the position of the organisation in relation to the 9th flat cash settlement in 11 years or the projected £8.5m deficit being faced by the organisation. The senior team will be presenting a budget to the Board at agenda item 6 which takes into account some of the issues discussed with officials and the Minister in relation to risk, planning for the future and phasing of forthcoming legislation which will have a material impact on SCRA operations and capacity.

6.   Race Equality programme

6.1 As part of SCRA's wider commitment to Diversity and Inclusion we held a full day workshop on Racism and Race Equality. This was the first in a number of planned activities as part of SCRA's programme of work aimed at promoting anti-discriminatory practice in all aspects of our work. In relation to Race equality/anti-racist practice we are partnering with Dark Matters. The outline schematic at **appendix C** is guiding us through the next few stages of developing a programme of work for the next 3 years.

6.2 This builds on the extensive organisational training programme which has just recently concluded its first phase – focussing on the SCRA Inclusive Behaviours Standards

and Framework being delivered in partnership with the Employers Network for Equality and Inclusion (ENEi)

7.   Spotlight – Operational Development Team

7.1   In 2023 SCRA established an Operational Development (OD) team in order to provide 'boots on the ground' support, learning opportunities, logistical support, skills development and transitional support to locality teams. The team was formed from a merger of remnants of our virtual hearings team (established during the pandemic) and digital helpdesk (established to support CSAS implementation in 2021. The OD team are a highly visible and mobile team providing an intense level of integrated holistic support. Whilst initially funded for 12 months, such has been the feedback from teams that the organisation has extended this to 2027 in order to invest further in the innovative approach and will keep this under review as we move further into change and transition.

7.2   The team have been drawn from across the organisation are highly experienced and skilled. They are filling a real gap in the organisations commitment to support operational staff through the change process – with tangible and practical supports. Establishing the team was made possible through the 2023/24 budget setting process and the extension to its work further supported by the proposed 2224/25 continuation of budget provisions. The OD team 'plan on a page' is shown at **appendix D.**

| Appendix A – staff survey 2023 action plan |

1.	Pay and reward – key actions	Progress	Status	Next Steps
a	We will continue to try and maximise year on year cost of living increases for SCRA staff within the parameters of Ministerial policy.	2 x pay deals have been successfully negotiated during cost of living crisis. Whilst well below headline inflation have been at the higher end of that allowable by Scottish Ministers	Achieved until 2024/25	Reassess SG position at 2025/26
b	We will examine with SG pay policy the potential to separate incremental progression (to those entitled to progression) from annual cost of living increases should negotiations remain protracted in future years	Agreed	Achieved 2023/24	Closed
c	We will undertake a full pay and reward benchmarking exercise with UNISON as part of our 23/24 pay discussions. We will use the results of this benchmarking to assist with our ongoing discussions with the SG regarding pay policy	Underway with UNISON	Ongoing and will feed into the Review of the Role of the Reporter	Benchmarking exercise findings will now roll forward into role of Reporter Review for assessment of remedies and progress
d	We will bring a proposal to the Board in September 2023 seeking approval to review the role of the Children's Reporter in light of the (likely) recommendations of the Hearing System Working Group recommendations. We will create an	Approved by Board September 2023	Project Team being assembled Q4 2023/24 – aim to complete whole review and business case Q4 2024/25	Continue as planned

	internal team from across SCRA to assist with this review, will do so in partnership with UNISON and will seek external capacity and assistance where necessary.			
2	**Workload – key actions**	**Progress**	**Status**	**Next steps**
a	We will seek to maximise the investment required to fulfil the workload requirements for SCRA arising from the Childrens Care and Justice Bill. We will proactively work with SG on a stable and sufficient financial framework for implementing the HSWG recommendations	Full assessment has been captured in CCJB financial memorandum. Circa £900k revenue transitional arrangements secured in 2023/24. Balance planned in budget scenarios for 2024/25 for consideration and Board Jan and March 2024	Ongoing (CCJB) Still to commence (HFC) – SG policy position delayed to Dec 2023	CCJB implementation is factored into budget plans 2024/25
b	We will continue to make resource shifts between operational teams to improve alignment between assessed demands and staffing, using our existing resource allocation framework	Delivers as required throughout 2023/24 – EMT continue to regularly monitor workload versus resource ratios approving short and long term resource shifts where required.	Ongoing	Revised approach to anticipatory/predictive data analysis to assess whether we can get ahead of changes and fluctuations in demands – being assessed
c	We have secured the extension of the vast majority of fixed term posts for 23/24 and will seek opportunities to integrate these roles through turnover in establishment.	Achieved – reliance of fixed term posts greatly reduced. Significant stabilisation across all roles	Significant progress – continue to monitor	Further progress to be made in 2024/25 on commencement of CCJB and new investment stream. Recruitment to new

				posts will focus on permanency and dealing with legacy 'true temps'
d	Having achieved assimilation of the Standard Operating Model across the service, we have further committed to ongoing improvement to our organisation wide 'Target Operating Model'. This will include optimising ways of working between Reporters and Locality Support Administrators, reducing where possible unnecessary transactional work.	Ongoing – Target Operating Model work has commenced. Operational Development Team has been established to act as dynamic conduit between Localities, SOM's and Digital Team priorities	Underway – Target Operating Model – 2025/26. Incremental improvement and developments ongoing	Underway – now a core element of SCRA programme Award of external contract to provide capacity and expertise.
e	We will embark on a programme of activity in 2023/4 aimed at stabilising our operational model and movement toward improving overall efficiency and effectiveness in our work – including a focus on better understanding and improving the intersectionality of operating procedures, processes, practice requirements and CSAS functionality in order to tackle the concerns about reducing administrative transactions.	As above – in addition Digital Work Programmes 3- 6 planned out for 2024/25. Digital Champions developed across localities creating synergy with Digital and OD team	Ongoing through digital work packages 3 – 6 in 2024/25 and Operational Development Team plan 2023/24. Will be expanded to align with next corporate planning cycle and support to develop and implement TOM	2024/25 will see the commencement of a major piece of work under the auspice of the Programme Board – focussing on the revisions to the organisations Target Operating Model (TOM) as a vehicle for capturing operational, practice. technological and improvement/reform led changes

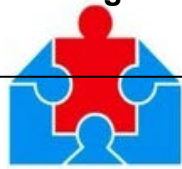| 3.	Morale	Progress	Status	Next Steps
a	We will continue to build on the successful programme of work on health and wellbeing across SCRA – with a focus on individual and collective health, team building, respect, kindness and a positive organisational culture	Health and Wellbeing programme now very well embedded across SCRA. Wellbeing Champions and wellbeing plans in all areas of the organisation	Ongoing and showing strength and dynamism – highly rated in staff survey	Ongoing – continue to review investment, outcomes and impact as well as developments/good practice across public and private sector employers
b	We will continue to build on the clear improvements in our multi-channel, multi-mode communications work, continue to commit to a culture of openness and transparency, increase the visibility of the Senior Team and the Board	All channels of communication developed and regularised – highly retd in staff survey	Capacity continues to in part inhibit engagement and uptake in minority of staff	Ongoing priority for 2024/25
c	We continue to try and work the highest principles of engagement and consultation in Partnership with UNISON. In 2023/4 we will work within the National Partnership Forum to refresh and update any aspects of the Partnership Agreement to ensure these principles are as visible across SCRA.	Partnership Agreement refreshed and updated jointly by SCRA and UNISON	Series of UNISON SCRA workshops will kick of programme of visibility and implementation (1 Feb 2024)	Ongoing priority for 2024/25
d	We will deliver a comprehensive plan of support and training in support of the delivery of the Locality Support Administrator job description, roles and responsibilities	Commenced March 2023	Under constant review in terms of impact, reach and sufficiency.	Ongoing – with additional support from Operational Development Team across all localities.

		Progress	Status	Next steps
e	We will build upon the progress made in recent staff survey results on areas such as direct support from line managers, working in a supportive team and job/role enjoyment	Ongoing through management development programme	Ongoing – remains highly rated in staff survey. Need to assess ongoing support and capacity for managers across SCRA as signs of stress and stretch emerge	Managers development programme
f	We will improve the visibility of the senior team across the organisation and develop more opportunities for SCRA staff to connect directly with senior team members	A programme of work to move EMT meetings around Scotland. EMT members to increase both planned and spontaneous time in both locality and head office teams – attending team based events and activities and/or basing themselves across the organisation to improve meaningful opportunities for formal and information engagement and general visibility.	Ongoing	EMT meetings in Ayrshire and Tayside/Fife are being planned – and will roll our further over 2024/25. These will incorporate engagement events with teams. This will build on the existing programme of work of the Senior Operational Managers
4	**Managing Change**	**Progress**	**Status**	**Next steps**
a	We are putting place a comprehensive programme of training for all managers on the Scottish Government Quality Improvement model. This is already driving improvements and inclusive tests of change at team and locality level.	Complete – many QI projects have now become tests of change as part of ongoing work under Programme Board. Feedback from managers has been encouraging.	Complete – assess next phase.	In place – clear evidence of impact.

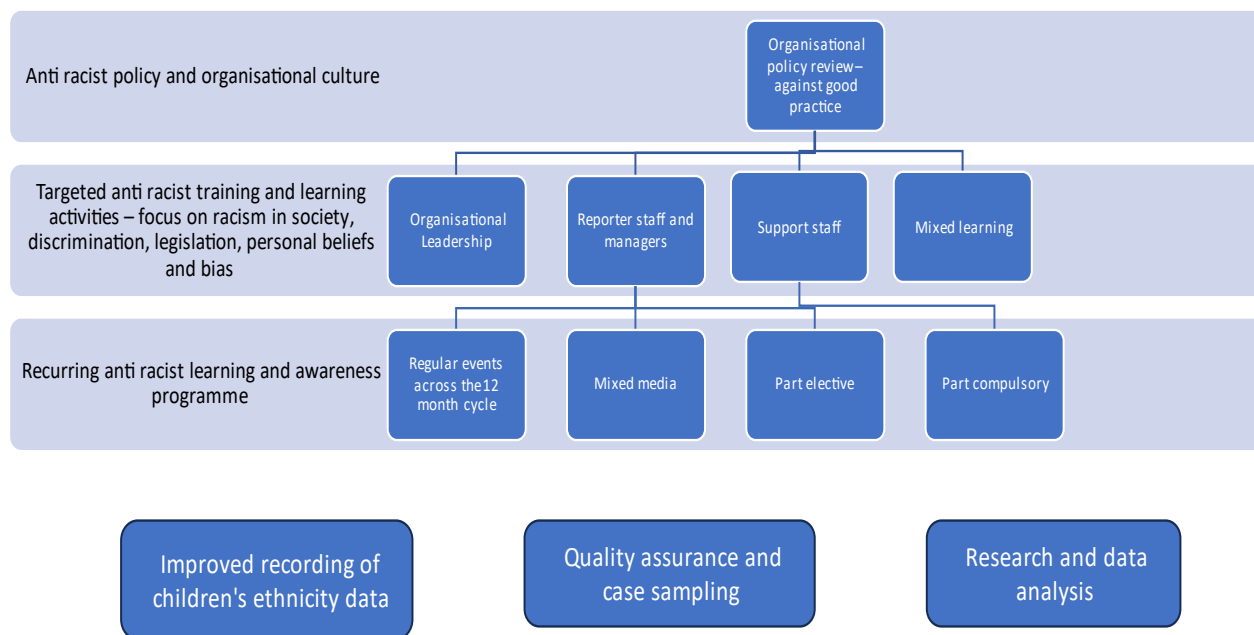|		Small cohort has entered SCiL programme		
b	Over and above this we have recommended the Professional Managers Award after a suspension during the pandemic	Ongoing – cohort 3 now in place. Feedback positive and dynamic	Continue to invest in future cohorts as required	Ongoing commitment
c	We are implementing a comprehensive package of measures to establish a programme board and project management structure across SCRA, including investment in staff to support these arrangements. This work is aimed at providing more coherence, managed and well planned approach to managing change across SCRA and the wider Hearing System at an unprecedented time	Extensive programme board structure now developed overseeing 3 x core programmes – Care/Connect and Protect aligned to Corporate plan priorities and structure to 2027	Underway – staff group in place – programmes of work scoped and developing quickly	Ongoing – well established and clear evidence of traction and impact.
d	Following an in-depth survey of SCRA skills, undertaken by an independent expert organisation, we will deliver a targeted programme of learning and skills development with the aim of improving the confidence and effectiveness of the 15% or so of the workforce who expressed a need for more intensive help and training	Range of training, mentoring coaching being delivered by Operational Development Team – priority 1 is the 15% of staff with self acknowledged ongoing learning and skills development needs	Ongoing – assess resources for 2024/25 in budget setting process.	See spotlight on OD team at para 6 above – now extended by 3 years to 2027.

Appendix B – managers day graphic

Appendix C

An anti racist programme for SCRA

Anti racist policy and organisational culture

Organisational policy review – against good practice

Targeted anti racist training and learning activities – focus on racism in society, discrimination, legislation, personal beliefs and bias

Organisational Leadership

Reporter staff and managers

Support staff

Mixed learning

Recurring anti racist learning and awareness programme

Regular events across the12 month cycle

Mixed media

Part elective

Part compulsory

Improved recording of children's ethnicity data

Quality assurance and case sampling

Research and data analysis

Appendix D – Organisational Development Team – Plan on a Page 2024/25

Team Development	Helpdesk	Business Partners	People	
• Roles • Team Development • Personal Development • Well Being	• First Response • Analyse and Identify Themes	• Support Locality Management Teams • Support Locality Digital Champions	• Induction - Reporter and Support • Training Calendar – Reporter and Support Training Videos • Bespoke/Tailored Training • Digital Skills • New Operational Processes (see below)	Digital Champions • Locality Structures, Roles and Practice • Training and Toolkits • DC Network

Standard Operating Model (CSAS)	Connect		Protect	Care
• Reviewing and Updating SOM • Assessing Change Requests • Work Package Testing • Work Package User Guides • Work Package Training Videos • Work Package Briefings	• Information Exchange & Data Sharing • Document and Data Management • Case Transfer • Digital Systems Development • Sibling Case Processing • Digital Engagement with Children & Families • Auto Population	Communication with Children, Families and Professionals • Hearing Notifications • Hearing Outcomes • Court Notifications • Court Outcomes • Investigation and Decision Making • Manage DCP Approvals Process	• Target Operating Model • Baselining/Measurement & Data • Process Mapping • Partner Proportionate Referral • Reporter Pre-Referral Work • Unborn Babies • Referral and Investigation Processes • Relational Work at Referral • Scheduling Hearings • Papers for Hearings • SCRA in Hearings • Chair Meeting Child Before Hearings • Grounds • Court Callings	• Language that Cares • Participation for Children • Keep The Promise Improvement Activity • Reports

OPERATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

Programmes Update

Head of Service:	Lisa Bennett, Head of Strategy/OD
Date:	20th March 2024
Report Author:	Lisa Bennett

Recommendation:

1. **To note the progress and planning of the programme work within SCRA**

Reason for Report:	For Noting
Resource Implications:	In line with plans
Strategy/Service Plan Implications:	Approved Corporate Plan / Business Plan delivery
Consultation:	KTP Programme Manager
EHRIA Duties:	Impact assessments are undertaken at individual project level
Document Classification:	Not protectively marked

1	Introduction	
	1.1	The purpose of this report is to update the Board on the Programme Management work – its governance arrangements, the progress against plans and on our approach to change and transition.

2	Governance and Oversight	
	2.1	**Approvals and Reporting**
	2.2	The programme framework has now been in place for a year. It has seen the initiation of Programme Protect, the integration of Care Programme (previously Keeping the Promise) and is now working to ensure alignment to the Connect Programme (digital)
	2.3	The Programme Board meets every six weeks and Strategic Programmes Group (SPG) is planned in line with this.
	2.4	September Programme Board saw both, the alignment of programmes Care and Protect, alongside the closure of stage one and proposals for stage two for both.
	2.5	With approvals to move into stage two, high level plans were presented the November Programme Board (PB)
	2.6	It was noted in the update to December Board that, whilst much of the Care programme, and most of the Protect programme was approved in principle, we were awaiting sight of the Scottish Government's response to the Hearings for Children report in order to take these forward into detailed planning.
	2.7	The Scottish Government published their response late December allowing both programmes to proceed in the New Year with more detailed plans for approval at February PB meeting.
	2.8	Along with approval of plans, Programme Board in February also received two progress update reports to review – for Protect & Care, and for Connect – **these can be seen at Appendices 1 and 2.**
	2.9	The reporting for Programme Board is now focussed on exception and high level objectives and programme approvals with everything else managed within programme meetings and, if required, Strategic Programmes Group aligned to set tolerances.

	2.10	**Programme Framework Review**
	2.11	An audit of the Programme Management Framework and its readiness to take on future change and delivery gave us Substantial Reassurance in September. It has been agreed through the Strategic Programmes Group to now conduct our own internal review of the framework, our operating procedures and our structure – knowing far more now about our plans, priorities, and timeframes – to ensure that we are set up to meet the needs of this next phase. This is good practice for any programme that is undertaking a staged process to delivery.
	2.12	This review will begin in April and will involve all roles within the programme providing insights, learning and feedback. The June update report will include an update on this work.

3	**Programme Updates**

	3.1	**Programme Protect**
	3.2	A key deliverable of the Protect Programme, and arguably the deliverable that sits above and encompasses all programme activity, is the development of SCRA's Target Operating Model (TOM).
	3.3	EMT has taken part in two workshops now to consider what is in scope for the TOM, to work through some key questions to help the team to identify areas for exploration and testing, and to consider the procurement of an external supplier to work with us in developing it.
	3.4	There is a far greater understanding within the team now of what comprises a TOM, the steps that we need to take to get there and, importantly, being comfortable with this being an iterative process and that there will be interim operating models on the journey to a future state model taking in transformational change that the reform may bring.
	3.5	A number of different visuals have been developed with accompanying presentations to breakdown in different ways what a Target Operating Model is, how it is developed and how everyone can play into that. **Some example visuals can be seen at Appendix 5 (a-d)**
	3.6	Along with the visuals around Change and Delivery planning, these were developed in consultation with the SPG and used with the National Partnership forum and at the managers event.
	3.7	Work with managers on providing this understanding about the development of the TOM has been received very positively with feedback that is feels like a sensible thing to be doing, that they appreciate the bottom up approach and that they are more confident now to speak to staff about it – using the materials that we are providing.

	3.8	The next steps for the TOM development is: • Programme Team having an away day to workshop the planning journey to get there – taking into account what they already have and know and what will emerge over the next period • Bespoke training is being developed with Elite Training and the project team will receive this to support their development • Procurement of an external supplier to provide expert advice and 'critical friend' challenge in the next stages.
	3.9	**Care Programme**
	3.10	**Hearings for Children** The Scottish Government published their response to the Hearings for Children report just before Christmas. The response gave each of the recommendations a status in terms of their acceptance.
	3.11	The Breakdown was as follows: • Accept – 63 recommendations • Accept with conditions – 26 recommendations • Require exploration or consultation – 42 recommendations • Do not accept – 7 recommendations
	3.12	SCRA received this report with an embargo attached to allow time to digest and prepare communications with internal staff ahead of publication. **Appendix 12 gives a summary presentation of key messages**
	3.13	As we did when the Hearings for Children report was published, we very quickly absorbed and analysed the information - colour coding the breakdown, developed a summary of the response and a presentation to use with managers the next morning – to allow them to be one step ahead of their teams the next day, to answer any questions that may arise.
	3.14	The response was hugely supportive of the Reporter role, the work that we have been undertaking to date in response to the recommendations and clearly demonstrated the input from our staff engagement.
	3.15	Work has since been undertaken to map all project work across to the Government's response to ensure that our project work is speaking directly to the asks whilst continuing to drive internal efficiency and quality improvement. **Mapping document can be seen at Appendix 3**
	3.16	Scottish Government, through the planning group have extracted the recommendations that have a) been accepted, accepted with conditions or require further exploration and b) don't require legislative change and have grouped these into proposed workstreams. Agencies have been tasked to report back on; if there was work already underway to address these, work planned or any comments.

3.17	We have provided Scottish Government with our own analysis of this alongside the internal mapping work demonstrating the breadth of the projects underway.
3.18	A meeting was held with Scottish Government to discuss these and consider best how to present the workplans to the redesign Board. We have been encouraged to submit our full workplan to the re-deign board to sight them on this.
3.19	The Re-design Board has now met twice – 17th January and 13th March. They will oversee the plans to take forward the recommendations as per the Scottish Government response.
3.20	• **Appendix 7 – Minute of first re-design board** • **Appendix 8 – Agenda of second re-design board** • **Appendix 9 – Workstream proposals for re-design board** • **Appendix 10 – Workplan for re-design board to consider, completed by organisations – mapping of progress/response**.
3.21	**Keeping the Promise Improvement work**
3.22	As noted previously, the work that is being undertaken in SCRA largely mapped across to the HFC recommendations and those with an accepted Government response – in selecting the work that we have in the Route Plan for Keeping the Promise we were mindful of the key asks from Children and Young People and the likelihood of these asks being accepted.
3.23	A great deal of improvement work has been taking place, driven by this, by our Voice of Experience Group and through work initiated by the now stood down, participation group in SCRA.
3.24	Progress against these projects has been reported as seen through progress reports to PB and has been showcased at various staff events however a fuller progress report was prepared and sent to the Promise at their request in February – to describe the work that had been undertaken in the past 12 months. This report has also been shared with Scottish Government and gives a very comprehensive update on everything that has been going on. **Attached at Appendix 4**
3.25	A series of spotlight communications has been put on our external website to highlight areas that we have been working on: Spotlight on ... our Keeping The Promise improvement activity - SCRA 15.02.24 Understanding My Hearing - Before, During & After - SCRA 27.02.24

		[SCRA's Hearing Room Improvement Programme - next phase - SCRA](#) 28.02.24

4	**Change Readiness**	
	4.1	**Change and Transition Planning**
	4.2	Currently we have in place a robust programme structure – to plan, explore, test and evaluate and to take the projects through these stages in a coordinated and integrated way.
	4.3	Last year was mainly focussed on exploration of what the project would take into its scope, developing this into plans, and receiving approval to proceed into the next stage.
	4.4	2024/25 will begin to see some early work begin to be implemented – rolled out nationally following evaluation and decisions of approach.
	4.5	Learning lessons from the past, utilising learning from training and considering a broader psychology of change, we are developing an approach to change and transition focussed on people.
	4.6	In February the Strategic Programmes Group held a workshop to focus on two key issues – the Target Operating Model (update at section 3.1), and Change and Transition planning.
	4.7	Our approach to change and transition will consider how people receive change, what they need to support them, the model that we will use and how far from where they are we are asking them to go.
	4.8	We are working across all projects to map out delivery points, points of interaction with operations, points to be avoided etc. We are also looking at how we develop our local change leaders – our managers – to be the critical transition point.
	4.9	Evidence tells us that the people closest to the change and closest to those being impacted by change are the people best place to lead it – with skills, support and knowledge.
	4.10	We have developed a series of visuals to help support the discussions around change and delivery planning. Within SPG we worked through these with Unison – to get a sense of what staff are looking for – what would be helpful and supportive, giving enough information to feel informed but not so much that they feel overwhelmed.
	4.11	**Some examples of the draft visuals can be seen at Appendix 6 a-c**
	4.12	We introduced our proposed approach to delivery planning to the National Partnership forum and to the managers at the recent management event – and were met with positivity and encouragement – that this was an

		approach that felt inclusive, that felt supportive and felt like we were listening to what people in the teams really need to help to prepare and support them.
	4.13	Our Change, Transition and Delivery strategy is now being further developed for approval.
	4.14	**Communication** Change Readiness is very much linked to good communication.
	4.15	At the recent managers event we tasked the managers to consider different methods of communication – what should come from us, from them – what needed consistent messaging, what needed in depth explanation etc.
	4.16	We are analysing findings however the general sense was to provide them with as much information as we could – but with key points, summary versions to allow them to brief and support their teams.
	4.17	There was recognition that often too much communication can cause as much anxiety as too little – that there is a risk of overwhelm or confusion.
	4.18	The managers are keen to use the visuals, summary versions and then only get into specifics as we get nearer to delivery points – so this would mean staged, bite sized chunks of information throughout the year supported by posters/podcasts/webinars etc.
	4.19	**A high level communication went out to all staff in November to provide a programme update – Appendix 11.**
	4.20	**Learning and Development**
	4.21	It is essential that the people who work in and around the programme continue to develop the skills required to take forward the work in robust but creative ways.
	4.22	All project managers have now completed Prince2 training – the methodology used within the programmes to manage governance and delivery.
	4.23	All project managers have undertaken Quality Improvement training – with the Programme manager also completing Scottish Improvement Leaders qualification.
	4.24	The Head of strategy and the Programme Manager have both also qualified in Managing Successful Programmes and Change Management to ensure approaches at a portfolio level are in place and that we are considering Change in the context of complex change across multiple layers and programmes.

	4.25	In undertaking this learning, we have been able to reassure ourselves and the Programme Board that what we have in place, complies, in places meets with best practice, and is fully justified in its structure.
	4.26	We have also been able to use this learning to look for areas that could be improved upon and will be considered within the review at point..
	4.27	To make best use of the new learning that we have received and to encourage sharing of knowledge, we have started a 'lunch and learn' for the team – starting 15th March. If successful and helpful to people, we will then look to roll this out further.

5	**Recommendation**	
	5.1	**To note the progress and planning of the programme work within SCRA**

6	**Appendices**	
	6.1	- Appendix 1 – Progress Report – Care and Protect - Appendix 2 – Progress Report – Connect - Appendix 3 – HFC / SCRA Projects Mapping Document - Appendix 4 – Keeping the Promise update report - Appendix 5 (a-d) – Draft visuals to describe the Target Operating Model - Appendix 6 (a-c) – Draft visuals being developed to demonstrate delivery planning - Appendix 7 – Minute of first re-design board - Appendix 8 – Agenda of second re-design board - Appendix 9 – Workstream proposals for re-design board - Appendix 10 – Workplan for re-design board completed by orgs. - Appendix 11 – Communication to all staff - Appendix 12 – presentation prepared following SG response to HFC to be used with managers and staff.

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

ANNUAL WORKFORCE REPORT

Accountable Lead: Head of Human   **Date:**   20 March 2024
                         Resources

Recommendations:

1. **To note the workforce metrics for 23/24**
2. **To note the workforce activity during 23/24 and plans for 2024/25 in line with Year 1 of the 2024/2027 People Strategy.**

Reason for Report: **For Board discussion**

Resource Implications: **Within approved budgets**

Strategy: **Corporate Plan**

                                Business Plan

                                People Strategy

                                Operational Strategy

Consultation: **Executive Management Team**

                                UNISON

                                HR Sub Group

Equalities Duties   **EHRIA completed**

                                Outcome - a positive impact on all staff regardless of protected characteristics with a clear focus on wellbeing and attracting a more diverse range of applicants to SCRA and supporting their development and progression.

Document Classification: **Not Protectively Marked**

Executive Summary

This Workforce Report for the period April 23 to March 24 provides a high-level overview of key workforce data and the relevant trends to inform SCRA's workforce planning priorities for 2024/25 as well as the development of the new three year People Strategy 2024/27.

In addition, this report provides an overview of initiatives and strategies that have been put in place to support our people over the last year. The format follows the employee lifecycle as outlined in our 2020/24 People Strategy

Our employee life cycle

- **Recruitment and Retention**: We want SCRA to be a great place to work
- **Reward:** We want to be an organisation that people are proud to be part of.
- **Workload**: We will ensure that workloads are fair and manageable
- **Health and Wellbeing**: We want to empower our people to make choices about their work, health and wellbeing.
- **Development**: We want to develop and grow our people
- **Engagement**: We will listen to staff and act on feedback

The following table reflects 'at a glance' changes to our workforce over the reporting period February 23 to February 24. Gender Pay Gap reporting is for 2022 and 2023 respectively.

		February 2023		February 2024
Headcount		486	↓	481
Full-time equivalent		424.26	↓	423.81
Part-time Headcount	Male	8	=	8
	Female	213	↓	198
Female Headcount		432	↓	428
Under 25 Headcount		12	↑	14
Over 55 Headcount		155	↓	147
Absence	Short term	1.69%	↓	1.5%
	Long term	3.37%	↑	4.3%
Turnover		8.8%	↓	6.4%
Declared ethnicity %		1.85%	↑	2.5%
% in senior roles (G2)	Females	38%	=	38%
	Global Majority	0%	=	0%
Gender Pay Gap %	Mean %	23.8 % (2022)	↓	22.6% (2023)
	Median %	27.5% (2022)	↑	29.7% (2023

1. Introduction

1.1 The Annual workforce report for 2024/25 provides the reader with an overview of our workforce and achievements for the year 2023/24. The report also outlines the aims of the first year of the 2024/27 People Strategy.

1.2 The regular team brief sessions held by the Principal Reporter/Chief Executive, the results of the 2023 staff survey, our partnership working with UNISON and the feedback we have from our management networks provide significant data and intelligence about how the workforce feel about working in SCRA and how committed they are to its vision, values and objectives. Our staff tell us that they continue to enjoy their job with SCRA and that we have great terms and conditions. However, there are continuing themes which SCRA must seek to improve on over the coming years which are – ***reward – workload – morale***.

1.3 Our new Programme Framework is developing well and will involve staff in local pilots and projects in our improvement journey as we respond to the Hearings for Children report, the incorporation of UNCRC and the implementation of Children's Care and Justice Bill (CCJB). The investment in the skills and knowledge of the programme team is providing assurance and confidence in our ability to manage change and our planned communications strategy will alleviate some concerns about the impact on teams in terms of planned and pending changes to process, roles and service delivery.

1.4 The investment in our workforce over the next 12 months will focus on ensuring we have a skilled and confident workforce, through learning and development, resilience and wellbeing, increasing digital capabilities, reviewing what roles and responsibilities we need now, and in the future, as well as supporting our managers and our people to be able to manage change.

1.5 Whilst we are clear in our workforce ambitions, as outlined in our People Strategy, the plan has to be flexible and responsive to any challenges which arise. It will be reviewed regularly, in partnership, to ensure its continued fit with the business, purpose and objectives of other supporting strategies.

2. Recruitment and Retention

2.1 There were **53 internal recruitment exercises which led to 37 external recruitment adverts**. This is a small increase on the previous year however there has been an increase in the level of external recruitment advertising which is in part due to the new Locality Support Administrator role which has had the effect of a limited internal pool to recruit from. Additionally we have had occasion to readvertise some Reporter vacancies, as there has been a reduction in quality applications as well as applicants withdrawing from the recruitment process, as we start to experience the impact of national skills shortage in some areas, particularly the North and East of Scotland, coupled with our fixed term contract offering in these areas.

2.2 SCRA has committed to increasing the diversity of its workforce, with a particular focus on the underrepresented Global Majority and other groups, such as applicants with a disability. Whilst we see some improvement, we have yet to make a significant impact in this area and recognise that there is more specific work that needs to happen to achieve some positive results. An in depth review of our recruitment and selection processes has been undertaken, which highlights some areas of really good practice but also makes some recommendations for further improvements to our approach. An action plan will be considered by SCRA's Race Equality Network and will be led by the Human Resources Team.

2.3 A lot of what underpins enhancing our approach to recruitment, with a more modern and efficient way of managing applications as well as improving our equalities data capturing is the development of our e-recruitment platform, which is now complete. The platform sits within our e-hr and payroll system and is currently being piloted on head office vacancies before being rolled out to Localities with training for recruiting managers.

2.4 In February 2024, there were **58.9 fte employees** working on fixed term contracts with end dates ranging from March 2024 to March 2027. This is an increase of 15.1 fte from the same time in 2023 and equates to around **12.2% of all employment contracts in SCRA**. However this is made up of true temporary contract staff as well as permanent staff who have temporary secondments/promotional opportunities across the organisation. The number of true temporary employees (i.e. with no substantive role in SCRA) is 26.2 fte (6.3%). As an organisation we feel it is reasonable to manage with a level of fixed term contracts at around 5% - 6% to cover business as usual requirements. However we also continue to carry a number of fixed term positions aligned to the separate funding stream in advance of the full funding available for CCJB resources. Whilst we commit to continuing the reduction in our use of fixed term contracts over the next 12 months, seeking to recruit and retain trained staff into substantive vacancies as they arise and taking some managed organisation risk in relation to some contractual positions, we are cognisant that elements of our funding position can only be secured on an annual basis at this point in time.

2.5   Turnover for the 12 month period from 28/02/22 is **6.4%** which is a reduction of 2.4%. Turnover is returning to pre-pandemic levels and reflects SCRA's ability to extend fixed term contracts and as a result of only a small percentage of staff leaving due to the ending of fixed term contracts.

2.6   Agile Working has embedded across SCRA and the staff survey tells us that this is key to staff finding a good balance between home and work life. Whilst there are still some areas that teams indicate need some focus, such as continuing to ensure team cohesion and strong team relationships, we believe that overall our organisational culture and staff wellbeing has benefited greatly from this new way of working. Regardless of agile working, SCRA has a long history of supporting staff to work flexibly, and we have an extensive range of opportunities including full-time, part-time, job share, term-time, compressed hours and secondments available to staff. Our levels of flexible working have remained constant at 39% of all staff working part-time, of which 96.3% of those are female. Whilst we remain committed to promoting and offering flexible working patterns, we are cognisant of the impact that this can have on perpetuating a predominantly female workforce.

2.7   ***89% of our employees are female and 11% are male*** – which is unchanged from 2023. The majority of our support roles are undertaken by female employees, which in itself has a significant impact on SCRA's reported gender pay gap, and whilst the gap reduced slightly in 2023, it remains significantly higher than we would want it to be. There are only four members of staff earning below £26k (2 of which are Modern Apprentices) – 3 of which are female.   This low number reflects the focus on increasing pay in the lower grades but also the work to consolidate the Locality Support roles.

2.8   Whilst the average ***length of service is 13.8 years***, a marginal increase of 0.3 years from 2022/23, 26.2% of our workforce has over 20 years' service, of which 8.5% have 30+ years' service. This shape provides a wealth of experience amongst our people.

2.9   The average age of staff is just under 47 years of age, which is similar to last year. However, ***46% (221 headcount) of staff are currently over the age of 50, with a further 10.2% (49 headcount) over the age of 60***. The age profile of our staff remains as a strategic risk in terms of succession planning and the potential loss of skills and experience. The composition of those over the age of 50 can be further broken down as follows:-

- Frontline Support Staff – 33% (-4%)
- Frontline Reporter Staff – 33% (+3%)
- Head Office/Management – 34% (+1%)

Locality and Head Office Managers are actively considering what this might mean for them in terms of succession planning.

2.10 The agreed core establishment at February 2024 is broken down as follows and in comparison with previous years:-

Role	2023/24	2022/23	2021	2020
Caretaker/Security (role no longer exists)	0	0	0.6	1.2
Support Assistant (Reception) (role no longer exists)	0	0	33.98	34.03
Locality Support Administrator	128.8	130.64	96.22	95.38
Locality Support Manager	20.01	19.75	19.75	20.06
Assistant Reporter	37.44	35.55	35.59	35.54
Reporter	111.51	112.49	114.04	113.35
Senior Practitioner	20.6	20.1	18.6	17.01
Locality Reporter Manager	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.11
Business Manager	2	2	2	2
Operational Development Team	2			
Area Assistant	0	0.8	1	1
EMT (including PR/CE)	8	8	8	7
Head Office roles (management)	67.02 (25.1)	61.54 (20.8)	60.44 (Mgt 16)	55.94 (Mgt 13.9)
Total	**417.88**	**411.37**	**410.72**	**402.62**

2.12 The core establishment has increased by 6.51 fte over the past 12 months through reshaping and restructure. The core establishment is further supported by two Modern Apprentices and a number of other non-core roles. SCRA are also hosting the Our Hearings Our Voice Board which comprises two core established posts.

2.13 Management roles make up 18.1% of all posts across the organisation (an increase of 0.83% from last year).

2.14 Head Office represents 17.5% of the establishment - an increase of 2.6% on 2022/23. However, a significant percentage of those staff are front facing business partners who support statutory requirements such as production of accounts, property provision and procurement, or transactional staff for example payroll and IT systems management.

2.15 SCRA did not offer any voluntary exit packages to staff throughout 2022/23 and we were appropriately funded by SG to retain the additional Reporters and Assistant Reporters, who were recruited in 2020 to support COVID-19 recovery, and in advance of the implementation of Children's Care and Justice Bill. However, we absolutely recognise that the planned programme of work to

review roles, particularly our core role of Reporter, will likely require us to reshape our current resources to match our need. We have agreed to remain flexible in our consideration of voluntary exit opportunities for staff to allow us to do that. Whilst any voluntary exit scheme requires to be resourced appropriately, SCRA will consider any opportunities to consider options for staff as and when they arise. It is likely that any voluntary exit scheme would be targeted at specific roles or areas of the business and would only be progressed in consultation with UNISON. Our overall focus, however, is to maintain and retain our skilled workforce so that we are able to plan and prioritise the programme work, implementation of Children's Care and Justice Bill and how we meet the Hearings for Children recommendations as well as meeting the outcomes of the 2024/25 business plan.

3. Reward

3.1 2023/24 was again a difficult pay offer year for workforces across the public sector. The Scottish Government Pay Policy as originally published no longer met the expectations of workforces and the flexibilities expanded throughout the year to include multi-year deals across the public sector.

3.2 As a result SCRA again experienced protracted pay negotiations with both SCRA and UNISON seeking to maximise the pay offer to staff recognising the current financial crisis, which was hitting employee's pockets hard through food and energy price hikes. We were pleased to secure a two year pay deal for staff at the very upper limits of what was accessible across the public sector. Having the pay deals agreed until 2025 brings some stability to workforce expectations and employee relations around pay.

3.3 We have concluded the pay benchmarking exercise for the role of Reporter which was agreed as part of the 2022/23 pay offer. The results from the exercise will help to inform the outcome of the review of the role of the Reporter and the development of a potential business case to Scottish Government for investment in the role to ensure comparability with counterparts in other public sectors.

3.4 The 2023 staff survey results indicates a marginal increase in staff feeling that their salary was comparable with other roles but at only 1 in 3 staff agreeing with this it is still one of the lowest staff survey responses we received. A more positive result is the increase to 74% of staff being satisfied with the overall terms and conditions package that SCRA offers which reflects the progressive and positive employee policies and supports that we continuously review and align to best practice.

3.5 Whilst SCRA will always be subject to the SG public sector pay policy it is important that we continue to look at the subject of reward in its broadest sense. We aim to ensure that staff have rewarding and challenging roles, feel empowered and skilled in their roles, have opportunities for promoted and alternative roles, as well as the ability to get involved in organisational decision making around change and other developments.

4. Workload

4.1 Like pay, concerns about workload and capacity came out strongly in the staff survey. Whilst we saw a decent increase in staff telling us that they had an acceptable workload, just under a fifth of the workforce still believe that their workload is unacceptable. We have made some robust resourcing decisions over the past 12 months based on evidenced workload data that has seen resources being moved to where the resource is required to meet more challenging workloads – thereby reshaping the allocation of the establishment. We will remain flexible in how we do this to best support teams and encourage cross team support in addition to more substantive changes in resource allocation.

4.2 We retained the additional funding from Scottish Government which we received in 2021 to maintain our additional skilled workforce in anticipation of the implementation of the Children's Care and Justice Bill and the expected increase in referrals received as part of that new legislation. We are in a period of resource growth as the additional resources required, beyond the retained funding, were accepted in the financial memorandum that accompanied the Bill. The timescales of the implementation of the Bill will require a six months lead in time for SCRA to ensure quality recruitment, selection, induction and training to support the successful implementation.

4.3 Regardless of the actions being taken in the immediacy, the importance of understanding workloading at the macro level and taking action to improve this has become a significant focus in SCRA's strategic priorities. The 2024/25 business plan and the new programme management framework, point towards developing the most effective and efficient operating model that we can deliver on and that may improve the workloading concerns for staff. This includes:-

- Understanding our target operating model and how that impacts on roles
- Ongoing analysis of our workload data and distribution continuing to make the right decisions on resource allocation
- Digitally upskilling staff to be more confident in the use and application of systems
- Full exploration of operational efficiency seeking to improve internal processes (standard and target operating models), digital supports and interactions
- Optimising systems

4.4 In some Localities, we see absence having an impact on workload and any long-term absence can be felt keenly by those staff who have to cover workloads. It is important therefore that whilst we continue to focus on improving our internal processes and models, we do not lose sight of managing the core elements of attendance at work.

5.   Health and Wellbeing

5.1   Short term sickness absence for 2023 (as at 31st December 2023) was **1.5%** (down 0.19% from 2022), well within our 2% target. Our continued focus on sickness absence maintains the positive impact on short term absence. Long term absence is less predictable and our absence rate of **4.3%** (up by 0.93% from 2022) is more than double our target of 2%. All long term absence is managed between the line manager and HR Business Partners, ensuring that appropriate external occupational health advice is secured, and regular discussions take place with staff who are absent in a bid to return to work as quickly as possible.

5.2   This absence rate is the equivalent of ***12.5 days per employee***, which has increased in 2023 by around one day. This is higher than the CIPD's[1] reported absence rate for public sector employers at 10.6 days per employee.

5.3   The highest recorded reason in 2023 of **32%** of all absence was attributed to psychological absences, which include stress symptoms, anxiety, depression etc. This is an increase on 2022 of 12.65%[2]. It should be noted that the next largest reason for absence was Musco skeletal with 11.07%.   The highest proportion of psychological absences are in the Reporter, Senior Practitioner and Assistant Reporter roles. This proportion has increased by 25% on 2022 and are detailed in the following table.

	Psychological Absences			
	2023	2022	2021	2020
Head Office	4.6%	17%	21%	1.86%
Manager	2.4%	7.55%	5%	2.79%
Reporter	72.2%	50.25%	41%	49.92%
Support	20.8%	25.20%	33%	45.43%

5.4   The complexity of some of the circumstances for staff has required SCRA to seek bespoke therapies and specialised counselling as recommended by Occupational Health. We have seen an increase in the budgetary spend on these issues and will continue to support these where we can and where they have positive outcomes for staff.

5.5   In response to these increasing numbers, SCRA relaunched its Wellness Action Plans.   These are individual plans that focus in on individuals own mental and physical wellbeing and how that can be affected by work.   The action plans have been adopted from the specialist body MIND and take a holistic approach to identify any supports, conversations and reasonable adjustments that support staff to be the best they can be at work.   The plans belong to the individual staff member and should they wish to do so they can choose to share these or talk to them in their supervision sessions with their line manager. In addition, we listened to the staff feedback from the secondary

---

[1] CIPD Health and Wellbeing at work Report 2023
[2] At the time of writing, there were 4 long term psychological absences – 1 Reporter, 1 Assistant Reporter and 2 Locality Support Administrators. Support plans were in place for all absences.

trauma awareness sessions about how we can proactively support staff with the complex and often upsetting information they see/read as part of their work. SCRA will implement a programme of psychological support/surveillance which will offer staff in operational and head office roles the opportunity to complete an assessment by specialist Optima (Occupational Health Provider) staff who will determine what supports/actions, if any, individual staff members may require. We will encourage staff to take up this offer of support.

5.6   Our Inclusion and Diversity Plan has a significant impact on the wellbeing of our workforce. SCRA's Mainstreaming Report and plan will be presented to the June Board. We recognise that we have made insufficient headway in increasing the diversity of our workforce over a number of years and we continue to commit to making improvements to attract and recruit applicants from under-represented groups. As previously noted, the HR Team have undertaken an in depth review of our recruitment practices and whilst there is evidence of good practice, there are a number of areas we can make improvements on such as:-

- Providing information on reasonable adjustments
- Consider alternative selection methods that are more appropriate for candidates with neurodiverse conditions
- Engage with local communities and charities/organisations that work with people from the Global Majority
- Consider the placement and language of our recruitment adverts
- Further anonymising our application form

5.7   In November 2023, SCRA ran another equalities monitoring exercise 'Free to be Me' to improve the data collection of our current workforce so that we could:-

- Better understand our workforce demographics and where we should concentrate action and resource to better support and respond to your needs
- Measure the diversity of our workforce, and how that compares to the Scottish population (and areas where we need to improve)
- Explore any trends and whether potential disadvantage or discrimination exist
- Inform policy, decision-making and make improvements through our inclusion and diversity programmes and action plans
- Provide targeted information, support and positive action initiatives (e.g. menopause awareness and resources, mental health initiatives, etc)
- Comply with the law - all employers are responsible under the Equality Act 2010 for protecting their employees from discrimination, victimisation and harassment at work
- Measure and report progress in meeting SCRA's equality outcomes and to inform equality impact assessments

5.8   In February 2024, our workforce is comprised as follows:-

- **Disability**: We are a "Disability Confident" employer with 5.41% of our staff having declared a disability although we believe the actual figure covered by the Equality Act 2010 will be higher. This is an increase of 0.51% on 2022. We retained our Disability Confident Employer status and continue to work

towards becoming a Leader. Occupational Health continue to work with our managers and staff to identify the reasonable adjustments that could be implemented to provide the appropriate support for each individual at work. A reasonable adjustments guidance note is being developed so that staff and managers recognise the supports available.

- **Ethnic Origin:** Our ethnicity data shows the majority of our staff are white 62.2% (consistent with 2022), with 2.5% (increase of 0.35%) recording Global Majority status and 35.34% (down 38%) of staff have chosen not to declare.

- **Marriage and Civil Partnership:** The majority of our staff are married/in a civil partnership/living with a partner/are widowers/in relationships at 50.3% (up 5.3%), with 16.8% being single (down 0.2%) and 32.8% (down 13%) of staff choosing not to declare or recording 'other'.

- **Pregnancy and Maternity**: SCRA currently have 15 staff on maternity/adoption leave. For many years now, we have had 100% of our staff returning to work following adoption/maternity/ paternity leave.

- **Religion and Belief**: The majority of SCRA staff - 72.6% (up 0.7%) have not disclosed their religion/belief, 6.4% (down 1.4%) recording they have no religion/belief with 21% (up 0.7%) stating that they do have a religion/belief.

- **Sexual Orientation**: We know that in terms of sexual orientation: 71.1% (up 0.3%) of staff have chosen not to declare, 26.8% (down 0.4%) are heterosexual and 2.1% (down 0.4%) are LGBT.

- **Gender Reassignment**: No staff have advised of their transition or intent to transition their gender.

- **Care Experienced:** SCRA recognises care experience as a 10th protected characteristic, and 0.6% staff indicated that they are care experienced. Further development work as part of the recruitment module in Itrent will help to enhance this data.

5.9   We are implementing our Inclusive Standards and Behaviours Framework which describes how we can all contribute to upholding SCRA's values when carrying out our work. Training which has been delivered to approx. 80% of our staff will have been delivered by March 2024. Further development work will take place with our managers in April 2024. The six standards range from how we work and communicate together to delivering a quality service to children and young people. The standards will sit alongside SCRA's code of conduct and supervision frameworks.

5.10 The mental health and wellbeing of our people is at the core of all our strategies including our corporate and business plans. In 2023 we saw a very active health and wellbeing agenda led out across the organisation including creative and considered approaches by local health and wellbeing groups which have become completely embedded in locality culture and included in locality plans. Local health and wellbeing groups are led by staff, for staff and ensure that staff

days or initiatives offer a mixture of fun activity, mindfulness, yoga, networking, sharing, listening, offering support and connecting with each other. Their impact is incredible.

5.11 A significant effort has been put in to promoting and encouraging staff to consider their own and others mental wellbeing. The programme of work in 2023 can be summarised as follows:-

- We have provided refresher training for our growing cohort of mental health first aiders.
- We retain a focus on the financial wellbeing of our staff given the ongoing cost of living crisis and ensure that our financial wellbeing page on our intranet is updated and relevant in providing information, guidance and supports to our staff.
- The Mental Wealth Group supported and promoted Mental Health Week – the theme was anxiety and asked colleagues to share their experiences and check in with each other in the aim to reducing the stigma/barriers around anxiety, depression and stress related symptoms.
- We launched a new Right to Disconnect Policy and accompanying FAQ, which recognises that disconnecting from work is vital to a healthy and sustainable work-life balance, and to support personal resilience
- SCRA offered another Big Team walking / fitness challenge which invited staff to virtually walk from Edinburgh to Paris over the course of 5 weeks. By the end of the 5 weeks challenge a total of 26,024 miles / 41,882 km had been stepped with 28 teams and 159 individual members of staff involved. As part of the challenge and in conjunction with Ecologi, SCRA planted 32 trees (one for every five participants that took part). This partnership helped offset our carbon impact and was well received by those who participated.
- The mental wealth group promoted "Time to Talk" day on 1st February.
- SCRA also promoted World Menopause Day on the 18th October. The purpose of the day is to raise awareness on the menopause and support options for improving health and wellbeing. Staff were encouraged to visit the menopause toolkit on Connect for information and resources on the topic. SCRA's Menopause Group had an information stall at the Staff Event held in September which was well attended by staff.
- SCRA offered a free flu vaccination to staff for the seventh year.

5.12 Trauma informed practices are important across the sector within which we operate. Whilst our approach to Trauma is linked to a learning programme, the roots of our approach are within our wellbeing strategy. The overall approach to the delivery of trauma training has been to initially focus on our staff through secondary trauma input ahead of the trauma informed and trauma skilled elements of the programme. The Programme is aligned with the National Trauma Training Framework.

5.13 Secondary Trauma sessions focus on the signs and symptoms of secondary trauma as well as the supports available within SCRA and through our Occupational Health Providers. These sessions have now been delivered to all Localities and we have taken learning from these sessions into how we develop the next phase of trauma informed practice.

5.14 Trauma informed e-learning – the NES e-learning modules are available on our e-learning platform. This will be mandatory for staff to undertake, and completion is a requirement for the NES Trauma Skilled Training course.

5.15 NES Train the Trainer session – SCRA has a number of staff now trained as trauma train the trainers and the next programme of staff awareness raising is currently being developed in line with the framework.

5.16 This comprehensive approach to trauma awareness raising and training is progressing well. SCRA now needs to consider how we embed trauma practice into our decision making which will become the focus of this work over the next three years.

6. Learning and Development

6.1 In 2023/24, we delivered 121 learning and e-learning events with staff receiving a total of 7,143 hours of training (an increase of 2000 hours across the workforce) based on 1721 separate attendances. On average, staff attended 3.5 learning events in 2023/24. Our aim is to continue to increase engagement in learning events across all staff groups in 2024/25. The events in 2023/24 included:-

- Inclusive Standards and Behaviour Training
- GDPR Refreshers
- Professional Management Programme
- Manager Events
- Neurodiversity Training
- British Sign Language Taster Sessions
- Practice Training
- Domestic Absence training
- Health and Safety Training and e-learning
- Inclusion and Diversity e-learning
- Scottish Improvement leaders Programme

6.2 The 2023/25 Learning Plan has been developed in line with the Learning and Development Strategy. This was developed by the Learning Network which is comprised of staff who have some role in identifying and delivering learning across the organisation. The plan includes:-

- Trauma training to help staff translate understanding and knowledge into practice, including increasing the number of train the trainers
- Support the Programme Framework with identifying skills gap and plans to close the gap
- British Sign Language training
- Neurodiversity training for frontline staff
- Professional Managers Development Course for aspiring managers
- Programme of Practice Training for practitioners
- Programme of Health & Wellbeing training

- Management Development programme of training to include resilience, Hearings for Children, change management, performance management, inclusive behaviours framework aligned with our refreshed dignity at work policy as well as mentoring training for those managers who may be interested.
- Digital upskilling for staff
- Masterclass for managers on supporting employees with cancer
- Annual GDPR and Cyber Security training
- Refresher training for SCRA's Mindfulness Champions
- Refresher training for SCRA's Mental Health First Aiders
- Core skills training for all staff including violence in the workplace, coaching training, mandatory health and safety and EDI training.

6.2 Another focus for our leaning and development programme is increasing the digital confidence and capability of our workforce in working across all of our systems and processes. SCRA's Operational Development Team have developed a training plan/calendar that offers a three tiered approach to closing the digital skills gap we currently have, particularly in moving the 15% - 20% of staff who are struggling with our systems and the 30%-40% who are still developing into confident and comfortable users of our systems. The three tiers are as follows:-

Tier 1 Group, in person, training on our communication tools such as MS Teams, One Drive, Audio visual technology etc.

Tier 2 Group, in person, training on our systems such as CSAS and Sharepoint

Tier 3 Signposting staff to Microsoft Training Tools

6.3 The Operational Development Team will undertake a survey in Quarter 4 of 2024/25 to assess the impact of this training and measure the expected improvements in our workforce's digital capacity.

6.4 Work will continue into 2024/25 to improve the recording of personal developments plan on our e-hr system. This is important for a number of reasons but mainly so that individuals can record their own learning and build a portfolio of their own achievements but also so that we can report from these plans and build our strategic learning programme around the needs of the workforce to close any skills gap and to ensure good succession planning.

7. Engagement

7.1 Engagement can take different forms and during 23/24 there were many opportunities for staff to engage with work across the organisation. There are a number of regular networks and working groups that lead out on specific activities such as the IG Leads Group, Court Network, Business Efficiency Group, HR Sub Group etc. However, there are have also been many opportunities over the year for staff to engage in the work of Keeping the Promise and the resultant Hearings for Children report, as well as in the

increasing number of workshops that have been required to inform the project work of our Care, Connect and Protect improvement programme.

7.2 Partnership working is strong across SCRA and is the root of our organisation development, consultation and collective bargaining processes. As part of the 2022 staff survey action plan, SCRA and UNISON committed to reviewing the Partnership Agreement to further strengthen our commitment to work together. We held two partnership development days in early 2024 to finalise the review and to ensure that both parties were clear on our corporate vision and programme framework. We continue to encourage staff to join the SCRA UNISON branch so that they can feel the benefits of this strong partnership and have their voices represented at the most strategic levels.

7.3 As part of the partnership agreement, the National Partnership Forum meets quarterly, chaired jointly by the Principal Reporter and UNISON Branch Secretary. There are a number of sub-groups – the Health and Wellbeing and Staff Survey Group, the Inclusion and Development Steering Group and the HR Sub Group. The HR Sub-Group focus on employment policies and practices within SCRA and during 2023/24 the group agreed the new Inclusive Standards and Behaviours Framework and a new Right to Disconnect Policy. The group also reviewed the following policies so that they reflect best practice, fairness, inclusion and transparency:-

- Travel Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Learning and Development Policy
- Job Evaluation Policy
- Probation Policy
- Flexible Retirement Guidance
- Guidance on claiming time and travel expenses

7.4 The Management Development Programme saw a number of events throughout the year focusing on organisational strategy, change management and communications and opportunities to engage in skills development in areas like constructive conversations and leadership resilience. Managers are involved in the planning for their development sessions and work is underway for the next LRM network which is being held in May 2024.

7.5 The Staff Event held in September 2023 saw around 200 staff members attend the first organisational wide event since 2019. Feedback was positive on the content of the day, where there were updates from Sheriff Mackie on the Hearing System Working Group Report, Programme and Corporate Plan updates and opportunities to attend a variety of workshops in the afternoon ranging from LGBT awareness sessions to change readiness. Staff appreciate the opportunity to come together and network with colleagues from across the organisation.

7.6 The Principal Reporter/Chief Executive's staff engagement sessions following the publication of the regular organisational Team Brief communication continue to prove very popular with a broad range of staff attending each session. Staff have the opportunity to discuss the organisational topics (and other areas should they so wish) that have been communicated from the PR.

7.7 SCRA remains committed to undertaking an annual staff survey which was run in December 2023. The feedback from the staff survey has been analysed in some depth by the PR/CE and has been communicated to the Board and to staff. Whilst there have been some positive improvements in the following areas, it has been agreed that the staff survey action plan will continue to focus on workload, reward and morale in 2024.

8. The Year Ahead

8.1 SCRA clearly recognises that in order to achieve its outcomes as outlined in the 2024/25 Business Plan and the first year of our new People Strategy, it is important that we invest in our workforce. There is a strong focus in this report on continuing the growth in our learning culture and upskilling of our workforce, focusing on the wellbeing of our staff, increasing the diversity of our workforce and continuing with strong partnership working and regular opportunities to engage.

8.2 SCRA's 2024/27 People Strategy aims reflect that we want SCRA to be a place where:-

- We recognise that our colleagues are our greatest asset
- Our work is rewarding and makes a difference
- We are ready and can respond to change and we know what that means in how we deliver our roles
- We are supported to develop ourselves, enhance our skills and increase our knowledge
- We value diverse backgrounds, skills, and personalities
- We treat each other as equals with respect
- We develop a culture that is flexible, responsive and promotes the wellbeing of our employees

People Strategy Aims

8.3   Attached at Appendix 1 is the high level activity plan from the People Strategy that we will seek to achieve across the 2024/25 year.   This work will be supported and supplemented by our HR Sub Group work, our Programme work and our equality, diversity and inclusion work.

8.4   Whilst these plans commit us to work to these objectives, we recognise that we need to remain flexible in our approach and may prioritise other actions throughout the year as required in response to workforce needs, programme developments and any as yet unknown external factors.

8.5   This workforce plan and its implementation will be discussed and delivered in partnership with UNISON.

9.   Recommendation

9.1   The Board are asked to note the current workforce metrics and approve the workforce plan for 2024/25.

SCRA's 2024/25 High Level Workforce Plan – 2024/25

Recruit and Retain our People	Timescale	Lead
Conduct an annual strategic workforce plan to inform future workforce planning and address identified issues/priorities, particularly in respect of hard to fill posts and those staff groups that are currently under represented.	April 2024 and then annually	Head of Human Resources
Consistently use the gender decoder tool on our recruitment adverts and consider placement to attract more male applicants to consider a career in SCRA. Seek to increase the male population of our support roles by 5% over the next 3 years.	Ongoing	Human Resources Manager
Work with recruitment providers to extend the reach of recruitment adverts to under-represented groups. Seek to increase applicants from the Global Majority and applicants with a disability by 5%	March 2027	Human Resources Manager
Implement e-recruitment for all vacant posts following a pilot testing the approach – training provided to recruiting manager via eLearning/guidance	June 2024	Human Resources Manager
Develop career pathways for Locality Support Assistants to be able to progress to future Assistant Reporter roles, ensuring enriching career opportunities for support. As at 2024, we expect that the numbers of Assistant Reporters to increase during the three year People Strategy period.	December 2024	Human Resources Manager
Undertake a review of the role of Reporter and associated roles to ensure that the role reflects the emerging expectations on the role and that the pay for the role reflects those expectations	April 2025	Head of Human Resources
Use data available to assess workload impacts, making appropriate decisions about workload allocations and resources locally – seeking to ensure a fair and acceptable workload for all staff	Ongoing	SOMs/HR Managers
Develop a range of potential supports for staff who choose not to stay with SCRA for whatever reason which may include improved exit interview procedures, potential future exit schemes, career coaching and publication of external opportunities	Ongoing and dependent on organisational need	Head of Human Resources

Developing our People	Timescale	Lead
The Learning Network will publish an annual learning plan, developed from engagement with colleagues, Locality/Team plans as well as information derived from personal development plans recorded on Itrent. This will include options for eLearning, face to face training, external courses and supports for further education as well as the regular practice training offerings.	September 2024 then annually	Human Resources Manager
The OD Team will deliver a digital skills training programme, aiming to close the digital skills gap identified. Measure against the 2022 baseline to identify organisational improvement in our digital capacity.	Ongoing March 2025	Operational Development Lead
The Care, Connect and Protect Projects will ensure that all workforce impacts are fully considered in the transformational change programme, so that skills and knowledge gaps can be planned for in pre-implementation stages	Ongoing	Head of Human Resources/Senior Operational Managers
We will launch the revised Supervision Framework which now incorporates the annual performance review, personal development, and wellbeing discussions within the framework. Managers and staff will be provided with clear guidance on recording supervision activity and personal development plans on Itrent. We will monitor and review the engagement with these expectations to ensure improved recording for reporting purposes.	April 2024 April 2025	Human Resources Manager
In conjunction with managers across SCRA, we will develop the next phase of the management development programme. This will be a mixture of soft skills development as well as more direct management training	December 2024	Human Resources Manager
We will offer a Professional Managers Programme for future managers to ensure succession planning for key management roles	March 2025	Human Resources Manager
We will implement a resilience framework programme for all managers so that they can support and manage themselves and their teams during the next period of change	March 2025	Human Resources Manager
We will pilot a 360º feedback process for the Senior Team to ensure that priorities for individual and team development can be identified.	April 2025	EMT/Human Resources Manager
We will communicate learning opportunities on Connect such as webinars, focus groups, podcasts, external modular opportunities as well as eLearning courses	Ongoing	Human Resources Manager

We will develop our eLearning content, increasing the offering and visibility of the platform as well as empower staff to engage with the variety of short internal and external courses that are available.	Ongoing	Human Resources Manager

Engaging our People	Timescale	Lead
We will ensure that there are opportunities for all staff to engage with the Care, Connect and Protect Programmes so that the changes to our operating model, roles and practices and procedures are developed based on the knowledge, experience, and input from our people	Ongoing	Project Managers
We will promote partnership working with UNISON, providing updates to teams on the benefits and expectations of staff and managers to work in this way. We will encourage membership of SCRA's UNISON through regular communication to ensure everyone has a voice	June 2024 Ongoing	Head of Human Resources/UNISON Branch Secretary
We will include UNISON, as our key internal partner, in our organisational and workforce decisions and changes to ensure that staff's views are fully represented in those decisions.	Ongoing	All Managers
Our management networks will meet bi-annually in addition to the regular LRM /LSM Network meetings so that all our leaders are engaged in organisational developments and management development	Ongoing	Business Integration Manager/All Managers
We will expect our managers to hold regular team and individual supervision sessions so that all staff have the opportunity to develop good team relationships and be updated on management information and to share their own views and thoughts on personal, team and organisational issues	Ongoing	All Managers
Communicating with our workforce is very important and we will deliver a programme of staff engagement including team briefing sessions, annual staff survey, focus groups, workshop, podcasts, Connect and other media to be as open and transparent in our communications as possible and to ensure that staff have a number of opportunities to engage with developments across the organisation.	Ongoing	EMT/Communications Manager/Programme Manager/Project Managers
Our Senior Team will regularly hold their monthly meetings in Locality Offices, providing an opportunity for the senior team to work alongside colleagues locally	Ongoing	EMT

Supporting our People	Timescale	Lead
We will develop a Wellbeing Strategy to further promote SCRA's wellbeing offering to staff and expect that the delivery of this people strategy will have a positive impact on the wellbeing and morale of staff	December 2024	Human Resources Manager
We will continue to develop supports required to fully embed the Inclusive Behaviours and Standards Framework, including the consideration of bystander training to help staff have the confidence to raise any issues that they may witness but are not directly impacted by	March 2025	Inclusion and Diversity Manager
We acknowledge the importance of employee recognition and as such we will deliver constructive conversations training and develop managerial guidance for managers to role model the positive impact recognition can have in relation to employee achievements, acknowledging effort and providing constructive criticism.	March 2025	Head of Human Resources/Human Resources Manager
We will implement a framework of proactive trauma support, initially for Reporters staff, so that there is an annual opportunity for Reporters to receive trauma support from professionally trained advisers.	September 2024	Human Resources Manager
Develop the next phase of transforming connections training delivered by internal verified trainers as well as participating in the NES trauma training for witnesses	March 2025	Human Resources Manager/Practice Manager/OD Manager
We will review our Dignity at Work Policy so that we are providing the best support, guidance, and clear expectation on how we treat each other at work and the procedures where there are breaches of these expected behaviours. We will ensure that there is appropriate eLearning training available to all staff to support the roll out of this revised policy	September 2024	Human Resources Manager
We will develop an Equalities and Inclusion Plan to support the delivery of our Equality Outcomes and the ambitions of SCRA's Corporate Plan	September 2024	Inclusion and Diversity Manager
The HR Sub Group will agree an annual cycle of policy review to ensure that SCRA's policies, terms and conditions align with the organisations culture, direction and workforce expectations	Annually	HR Sub Group

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

PEOPLE STRATEGY 2024- 2027

Accountable Lead: Head of Human   **Date:**   20 March 2024
                         Resources

Recommendations:

1.   **To approve the People Strategy for 2024-2027 to support SCRA's Corporate Plan**

Reason for Report: For Board approval

Resource Implications: Within approved budgets

Strategy: Corporate Plan

Consultation: Executive Management Team

                                UNISON – National Partnership Forum

                                HR Sub Group

                                Planning and Performance Network

Equalities Duties   EHRIA completed

                                Outcome - a positive impact on all staff regardless of protected characteristics. The plan will ensure that all programme and change activity will not negatively impact on staff and will ensure an inclusive, fair and transparent developmental approach to workforce developments over the next three years.

Document Classification: Not Protectively Marked

People Strategy 2024 - 2027

Caring for, Connecting with and Protecting our People

Introduction

Our People Strategy describes how we will support and develop our workforce over the next three years to deliver our vision, our values of Care, Connect and Protect and our strategic objectives as outlined in the 2024- 2027 Corporate Plan. SCRA has four strategic aims[1] for the next three years and our workforce is one of the important factors in the delivery of our aims.

We recognise that our greatest asset is our people, who through their commitment and ability, deliver our vital, high quality services to children and their families. Our ambition is to engage and develop our staff, outlining the key priorities and drivers for our workforce for the next three years. Despite the continued financial pressures, we will focus on our workforce and maintain the organisational capacity and resilience to respond to change.

Developing our people and our organisation is a key part of our Corporate Plan. The outcome of the Children's Care and Justice Bill, our response to the Hearings for Children Report, public sector reform and our own internal improvement programme, will change the expectations on how we make decisions for Scotland's children who are in need of support. An agile, engaged and ambitious workforce will be the key to transforming the ways in which we work.

We want to be an employer that provides a positive employee experience, offers interesting and rewarding work, that respects and develops its employees and supports the health and wellbeing of our workforce.

We are taking into account all elements of equality, inclusion and diversity in all of our decision making and practices and we have agreed four main equality outcomes that will underpin our organisational transformation programme. The link to these outcomes can be found here. [SCRA's 2024/27 Equality Outcomes](#). Our values and our core behaviours are important to us, and we want SCRA to be a place where we can do our jobs well, feel safe and respected and where we can make a difference.

Through our People Strategy developments, we want staff to recognise a positive and open culture across the organisation which enables our managers and staff to thrive, be the best they can be at what they do and be able to support each other from whichever team they work in.

In the development of this Strategy, we have listened to staff, our managers and UNISON and believe we understand what being a great employer means which is the core foundation of the People Strategy.

---

[1] The Best Experience, Clear Communications, The Best Service, People that Care, Connect and Protect. SCRA's Corporate Plan 2024/27

People Strategy Aims

We want SCRA to be a place where:-

- We recognise that our colleagues are our greatest asset
- Our work is rewarding and makes a difference
- We are ready and can respond to change and we know what that means in how we deliver our roles
- We are supported to develop ourselves, enhance our skills and increase our knowledge
- We value diverse backgrounds, skills, and personalities
- We treat each other as equals with respect
- We develop a culture that is flexible, responsive and promotes the wellbeing of our employees

We need to know if we meet our strategy aims. We will measure this by the following:

- Feedback from staff through surveys and engagement
- HR metrics – absence rates, vacancies, staff turnover, grievance/dignity at work cases, learning KPIs, capability cases etc.
- Visible and effective leadership
- A flexible, skilled, and developed workforce
- Feedback from those joining and leaving SCRA

People Strategy

Recruiting and Retaining our People	Developing our People	Engaging our People	Supporting our People
We want our people to want to work with us because they see an ambitious and inspiring organisation with values they can connect with	We want to offer learning and development in a blended approach to empower our people, giving them the confidence to take an active role in their own development	We recognise that engaged employees are more motivated and productive. We want to encourage feedback so that employees have a voice and shape how we work together, now and in the future	We want to ensure an environment where our people can maintain good morale, health and resilience and develop a positive work/home life balance
Our Plan • Proactively working towards a diverse and healthy workforce • Support our people to work as efficiently and productively as possible, equipped with the digital skills they need to deliver their roles • Review and modernise our approaches to recruitment and retention to make sure that we attract and retain valued people who can deliver our vision and our corporate plan • Develop an annual workforce plan that enables us to identify the roles and skills we require, recruit to the roles we need, reduces our reliance on fixed term contracts, responds to challenging workloads and identifies where any gaps or challenges may be • Where staff decide it is time to move on from SCRA, for	Our Plan • Understanding the skills and capabilities required as SCRA undergoes transformation, with robust planning to reduce any emerging skills gaps • Through the support and development from the Operational Development Team and Digital Champions, staff will embrace our digital technologies in the delivery of their roles • Enable learning and development to be part of the way we work, through eLearning provision, f2f learning, on the job training or through coaching and mentoring, ensuring that staff have the capacity to engage in their own learning • Embed coaching and mentoring into our culture • Create learning pathways that support career development and	Our Plan • Bring our leaders together regularly • Engage with our staff on new and revised roles ensuring that their experience and knowledge is considered in role development • Ensure meaningful, supportive conversations in supervision that build strong working relationships • Continue to build on the successful partnership working with UNISON and encourage increased membership enabling all voices to be heard • Hold regular, valuable, two way engagement through a range of internal communications channels • Seek feedback on a regular basis through the staff survey, workshops and briefing	Our Plan • Continue to build on the strong health and wellbeing networks across the organisation, supporting and ensuring capacity to deliver on national and local plans • Develop a workplace wellbeing strategy that describes the wellbeing offering to all staff • Ensure that our workplaces are respectful, supportive places where inclusive behaviours are demonstrable and delivered consistently across our workforce • Achieve the mental health at work standards • Implement a programme of resilience support for all staff • Encourage our managers to use language of recognition and appreciation where things have gone really well so that our people feel valued and motivated

whatever reason, we can support them to explore that in the best way that sees them move onto positive destinations	our succession planning framework • Development plans will be a core element of our supervision framework • Refresh our annual appraisal discussions within our supervision framework • Develop our annual learning plan based on what our staff tell us in the personal development plans • Continue to develop our current and aspiring leaders through development programmes and create the environment that allows our people to flourish and excel	sessions and use this to make improvements • Our Senior Team will work visibly and closely with Head Office Teams and Localities	• Support our managers to have conversations where performance improvements have been identified to ensure that support and guidance is available to those who might be facing some challenges • Ensure we continue our journey to become a trauma informed service

High level Action Plan

Recruit and Retain our People	Timescale	Lead
Conduct an annual strategic workforce plan to inform future workforce planning and address identified issues/priorities, particularly in respect of hard to fill posts and those staff groups that are currently under represented.	April 2024 and then annually	Head of Human Resources
Consistently use the gender decoder tool on our recruitment adverts and consider placement to attract more male applicants to consider a career in SCRA. Seek to increase the male population of our support roles by 5% over the next 3 years.	Ongoing March 2027	Human Resources Manager
Work with recruitment providers to extend the reach of recruitment adverts to under-represented groups. Seek to increase applicants from minority ethnic groups and applicants with a disability by 5%	March 2027	Human Resources Manager
Implement e-recruitment for all vacant posts following a pilot testing the approach – training provided to recruiting managers via eLearning/guidance	June 2024	Human Resources Manager
Undertake a review of SCRA's recruitment and retention practices that support values based recruitment decisions that align with the core values of the organisation and our Inclusive Behaviours Framework. Associated training for recruiting managers and interview panel members to support the review	September 2025	Human Resources Manager
Develop career pathways for Locality Support Assistants to be able to progress to future Assistant Reporter roles, ensuring enriching career opportunities for support. As at 2024, we expect that the numbers of Assistant Reporters to increase during the three year People Strategy period	December 2024	Human Resources Manager
Undertake a review of the role of Reporter and associated roles to ensure that the role reflects the emerging expectations on the role and that the pay for the role reflects those expectations	April 2025	Head of Human Resources
Use data available to assess workload impacts, making appropriate decisions about workload allocations and resources locally – seeking to ensure a fair and acceptable workload for all staff	Ongoing	Senior Operational Managers/Human Resources Managers
Develop a range of potential supports for staff who choose not to stay with SCRA for whatever reason which may include improved exit interview procedures, potential future exit schemes, career coaching and publication of external opportunities	Ongoing and dependent on organisational need	Head of Human Resources

Developing our People	Timescale	Lead
The Learning Network will publish an annual learning plan, developed from engagement with colleagues, Locality/Team plans as well as information derived from personal development plans recorded on Itrent. This will include options for eLearning, face to face training, external courses and supports for further education as well as the regular practice training offerings	September 2024 then annually	Human Resources Manager
The OD Team will deliver a digital skills training programme, aiming to close the digital skills gap identified. They will measure improvements in our digital capacity against the 2022 baseline through a further skills survey	Ongoing March 2025	Operational Development Lead
The Care, Connect and Protect Projects will ensure that all workforce impacts are fully considered in the transformational change programme, so that skills and knowledge gaps can be planned for in pre-implementation stages	Ongoing	Head of Human Resources/Senior Operational Managers
We will undertake a skills gaps analysis for Reporter staff following the review of the role of Reporter to ensure that all postholders are confident and skilled in all aspects of the revised role. A supported training implementation plan will be developed to meet any gaps	December 2025 March 2026	Head of Human Resources/ Senior Operational Managers/Practice Manager
We will launch the revised Supervision Framework which now incorporates the annual performance review, personal development and wellbeing discussions within the framework. Managers and staff will be provided with clear guidance on recording supervision activity and personal development plans on Itrent. We will monitor and review the engagement with these expectations to ensure improved recording for reporting purposes	April 2024 April 2025	Human Resources Manager
In conjunction with managers across SCRA, we will develop the next phase of the management development programme. This will be a mixture of soft skills development as well as more direct management training	December 2024	Human Resources Manager
We will offer a Professional Managers Programme for future managers to ensure succession planning for key management roles	March 2025	Human Resources Manager
We will implement a resilience framework programme for all managers so that they can support and manage themselves and their teams during the next period of change	March 2025	Human Resources Manager
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training will be delivered to staff in a blended way and by promoting the learning opportunities that our membership, which is available to all staff, of the employer's network for equality and inclusion brings makes available	March 2026	Inclusion and Diversity Manager

We will embed our coaching and mentoring programme, piloting this with managers first before rolling this out to the wider organisation. We will offer access to internal and external coaching and mentoring opportunities for managers and staff	March 2026	Human Resources Manager
We will pilot a 360º feedback process for the Senior Team to ensure that priorities for individual and team development can be identified. We will use the learning from the senior team pilot to roll out to all managers for their own individual development purposes	April 2025 March 2027	EMT/Human Resources Manager
We will communicate learning opportunities on Connect such as webinars, focus groups, podcasts, external modular opportunities as well as eLearning courses	Ongoing	Human Resources Manager
We will develop our eLearning content, increasing the offering and visibility of the platform as well as empower staff to engage with the variety of short internal and external courses that are available.	Ongoing	Human Resources Manager

Engaging our People	Timescale	Lead
We will ensure that there are opportunities for all staff to engage with the Care, Connect and Protect Programmes so that the changes to our operating model, roles and practices and procedures are developed based on the knowledge, experience, and input from our people	Ongoing	Project Managers
We will promote partnership working with UNISON, providing updates to teams on the benefits and expectations of staff and managers to work in this way. We will encourage membership of SCRA's UNISON through regular communication to ensure everyone has a voice	June 2024 Ongoing	Head of Human Resources/UNISON Branch Secretary
We will include UNISON, as our key internal partner, in our organisational and workforce decisions and changes to ensure that staff's views are fully represented in those decisions.	Ongoing	All Managers
Our management networks will meet bi-annually in addition to the regular LRM /LSM Network meetings so that all our leaders are engaged in organisational developments and management development	Ongoing	Business Integration Manager/All Managers
We will expect our managers to hold regular team and individual supervision sessions so that all staff have the opportunity to develop good team relationships and be updated on management information and to share their own views and thoughts on personal, team and organisational issues	Ongoing	All Managers
Communicating with our workforce is very important and we will deliver a programme of staff engagement including team briefing sessions, annual staff survey, focus groups, workshops, podcasts, Connect and other media to be as open and transparent in our communications as possible and to ensure that staff have a number of opportunities to engage with developments across the organisation	Ongoing	EMT/Communications Manager/Programme Manager/Project Managers
Our Senior Team will regularly hold their monthly meetings in Locality Offices, providing an opportunity for the senior team to work alongside colleagues locally	Ongoing	EMT

Supporting our People	Timescale	Lead
We will develop a Wellbeing Strategy to further promote SCRA's wellbeing offering to staff and expect that the delivery of this People Strategy will have a positive impact on the wellbeing and morale of staff	December 2024	Human Resources Manager
Following the implementation of a resilience framework for managers we will roll a further programme out for all staff based on the learning and experiences for managers	March 2026	Human Resources Manager
We will continue to develop supports required to fully embed the Inclusive Behaviours and Standards Framework, including the consideration of bystander training to help staff have the confidence to raise any issues that they may witness but are not directly impacted by	March 2025	Inclusion and Diversity Manager
We will achieve the Mental Health at Work Standards that will be based on our commitment and evidence of the progress and developments from the Mental Wealth and Health and Wellbeing Groups	December 2026	Human Resources Manager/Inclusion and Diversity Manager
We will develop a three year programme of work to establish anti-racist practice in SCRA and to understand how racism and discrimination can affect our work with children	March 2027	Principal Reporter/ Inclusion and Diversity Manager
We acknowledge the importance of employee recognition and as such we will deliver constructive conversations training and develop managerial guidance for managers to role model the positive impact recognition can have in relation to employee achievements, acknowledging effort and providing constructive criticism	March 2025	Head of Human Resources/Human Resources Manager
We will implement a framework of proactive trauma support, initially for Reporters staff, so that there is an annual opportunity for Reporters to receive trauma support from professionally trained advisers. Dependent on the learning from the first year, we will consider the extension of this to support and head office roles	September 2024 March 2026	Human Resources Manager
We will develop the next phase of transforming connections training delivered by internal verified trainers as well as participating in the NES trauma training for witnesses	March 2025	Human Resources Manager/Practice Manager/OD Manager
We will review our Dignity at Work Policy so that we are providing the best support, guidance and clear expectation on how we treat each other at work and the procedures where there are breaches of these expected behaviours. We will ensure that there is appropriate eLearning training available to all staff to support the roll out of this revised policy	September 2024	Human Resources Manager
We will develop an Equalities and Inclusion Plan to support the delivery of our Equality Outcomes and the ambitions of SCRA's Corporate Plan	September 2024	Inclusion and Diversity Manager
The HR Sub Group will agree an annual cycle of policy review to ensure that SCRA's policies and terms and conditions align with the organisations culture, direction and workforce expectations	Annually	HR Sub Group

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

Environmental Update Report

Accountable Director: Principal Reporter/Chief Executive   **Date**: 20th March 2024

Report Author: Head of Property

Recommendation(s):

1   To note the contents of this report, the public sector duties placed on SCRA and our latest emissions figures, as submitted in the mandatory Climate Change report.

2   To note the initial findings from Mott MacDonald's energy audits and more information will be provided to the Board in the next Property Strategy update

3   To approve a new 3 year target of reducing our GHG emissions by between 10% and 20% from the 2022/23 figure of 578.2 tCO2e.

Reason for Report: **To Update The Board On Progress**

Resource Implications: **Not Applicable**

Strategy: **Within agreed plans**

Consultation: **Head of Finance and Resources**
                    Executive Management Team

Equalities Duties   **Not Applicable**

Document Classification: **Not protectively marked**

1.0   Introduction

1.1   The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with an update on recent progress and set out the key points contained within the 2022/23 Climate Change report submitted to Scottish Government.

1.2   Links to some helpful Scottish Government guidance documents and reports regarding our climate change duties are included within Appendix A.

2.0   Background

2.1   Public bodies in Scotland have a mandatory requirement to fulfil specific environmental duties as a part of their functions. These are summarised as:

- contribute to the delivery of Scotland's national net zero target (**mitigation** – reducing greenhouse gas emissions);
- help deliver Scotland's climate change adaptation programme (**adaptation** – resilience to the impacts of a changing climate); and
- **act sustainably** (sustainable development as a core value).

2.2   The key dates for meeting Scotland's Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission reduction targets were revised in 2019 as follows:

2030 - GHG emissions to be reduced by 75%
2040 - GHG emissions to be reduced by 90%
2045 - Net Zero GHG emissions

2.3   Reflecting these new emission reduction targets, enhanced public sector climate change reporting requirements became mandatory from the 2021/22 reporting year. Public bodies are now required to state:

i) their organisational climate change targets;
ii) how they will align spending and resources to deliver these targets; and
iii) how the body will publish its progress towards achieving these targets.

2.4   The Board approved an initial 3 year target in 2021 for reducing our overall reported emissions by between 10% and 20%. In addition, the following corporate targets were included within our return from 2021/22:

- Net zero direct emissions from our estate by 2038
- Zero waste sent to landfill by 2030
- Become a net zero organisation by 2045

2.5   When we complete our annual Climate Change report our GHG emissions are recorded under three categories or "scopes" relating to direct and indirect emissions:

Scope 1 - Scope 1 emissions are those made **directly**, through the burning of fuels to heat our business premises or are from Fleet vehicles (n/a for SCRA)

Scope 2 - Scope 2 emissions are those made **indirectly**, for example the electricity we consume in our premises that has been produced on our behalf.

Scope 3 - Scope 3 emissions are any **indirect** emissions associated with our business activity eg business travel, employee commuting, manufacturing of the goods and products we use and customer activity that occurs as a result of our services.

2.6 Our current Corporate Plan (2020-24) references Climate Change and Sustainability as a part of our strategic aims and our organisational values and behaviours. These strategic aims and values commit SCRA to delivering our services in a way that minimises our impact on the environment and they will be developed further as a part of our new Corporate Plan.

3.0 Current Position

3.1 Our Climate Change report for 2022/23 was submitted to Scottish Government at the end of November 2023. Our reported direct and indirect GHG emissions total 578.2 tCO2e which is an have increase of c. 5.5% compared with last year. Our overall progress against our 2011/12 baseline can be seen in the graph below.
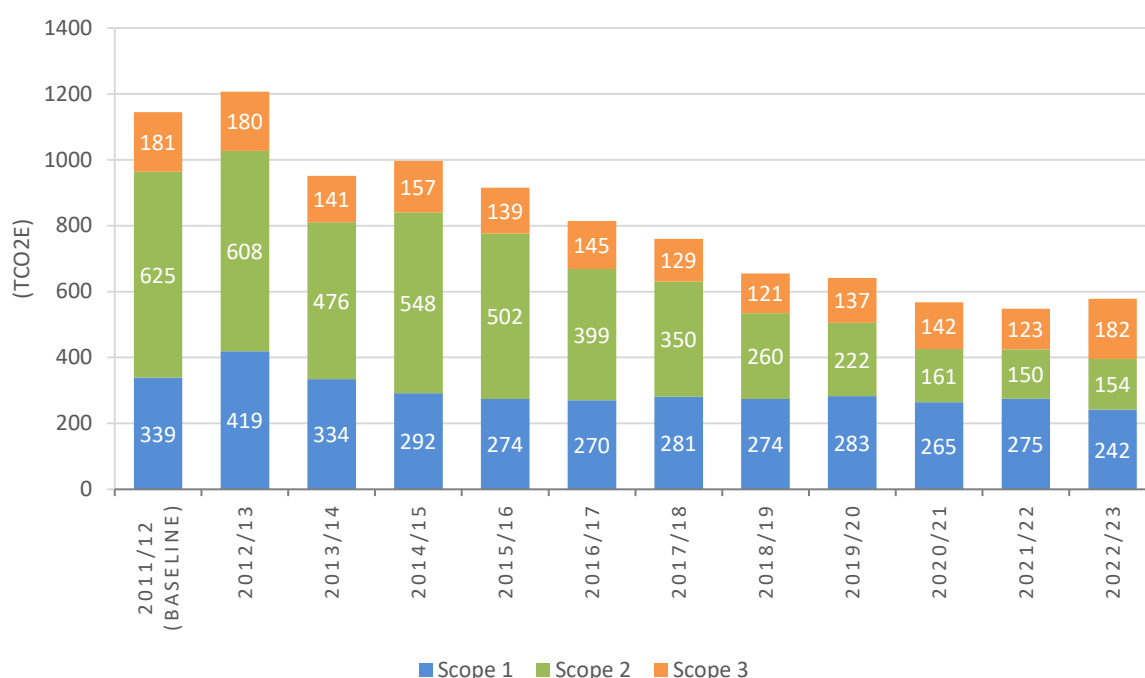
3.2 This is the first overall increase in our reported emissions since 2014/15 and is entirely related to a change in how GHG emissions are now calculated for home working. An allowance in the emission factor for reduced staff commuting has been removed producing a higher figure for home working. Staff commuting is not currently recorded by SCRA and is not reflected in our Scope 3 emissions.

3.3 The impact of the change outlined at 3.2 is that we have narrowly missed our three year target of reducing reported GHG emissions by between 10% and 20%. The figure was on track at the end of Year 2 at 14.5%, but using the new calculation for work from home emissions the reduction at the end of Year 3 is 9.86%. Although disappointing, it is now proposed to set a new 3 year target of reducing emissions by between 10 and 20% from the 2022/23 figure of 578.2 tCO2e.

3.4 SCRA has set its Climate Change reporting boundaries as Scope 1, 2 and parts of 3. At present, around 31% of our emissions are from Scope 3 activities although the true figure will be much higher as Scope 3 emissions are difficult to quantify. It is

expected that they will be more comprehensively reported over time and this will lead to an increase in reported emissions for most businesses. Deloitte estimates that more than 70% of an organisations GHG emissions will come from their Scope 3 activities (underline source). A more detailed breakdown of our reported consumption and emission figures for the period 2017 to 2023 is summarised at Appendix B while our full climate change report for 2022/23 and our reporting boundaries are provided at Appendix C.

3.5   Issues relating to Sustainability and Climate Change are now being more regularly considered as a part of organisational planning and service delivery. Our Strategic Sustainability and Environmental Ambassadors groups meet regularly to consider the priority areas for action.

3.6   The Strategic Sustainability Group met at the end of January and reviewed the key areas that have previously been identified for organisational action. The Group re-confirmed the need to prioritise these eight areas for action by the organisation. These are expected to feature more prominently in the next updates to our Corporate, Business and Locality plans.

- Property Use
- Energy Consumption
- Travel
- Waste Minimisation
- Sustainable Procurement
- Biodiversity
- Staff Awareness, Engagement and Behaviour Change
- Data Capture & Analysis

3.7   Whilst our owned and leased buildings currently account for the largest part of our carbon footprint (Scope 1 & 2 emissions), it was highlighted at 3.4 that Scope 3 emissions are currently under reported due to the difficulty/ complexity that is involved. There are 15 categories of Scope 3 emissions and whilst not all are relevant to SCRA's operations, those that are can be heavily influenced by the organisation through behaviour, supply chain engagement and decision-making. Over time public bodies are expected to report on their Scope 3 emissions as fully as possible. Some additional information on what scope 3 emissions are and how they are categorised is set out in Appendix D.

3.8   Scope 3 emissions cover a number of the priority areas set out at 3.6, although these are not reflected in our current climate change reports. As data on the additional scope 3 emissions are captured our overall emissions can be expected to increase. Scope 3 emissions are influenced by behaviours and organisational culture – this is where the work of our Environmental Ambassadors will contribute towards raising awareness of how staff can help to reduce GHG emissions. During 2023/24 the group selected several areas to focus their attention on including recycling in offices, printing, consumption monitoring and communications.

3.9   During 2023/24 there has also been a greater focus on energy consumption as sustainability forms part of Locality Plans. Business Managers are engaging with our energy suppliers and Localities to monitor the energy we use, analyse trends and query any anomalies. In February 2023 a trial building management system

(BMS) was installed in our Paisley building to determine whether improved controls would provide noticeable energy savings. Whilst some difficulties have been experienced, the new system has reduced energy consumed by around 22% and supports the use of similar systems in other buildings.

3.10 Property remains the main source of our reported emissions and where appropriate steps have been taken to remove space from the estate that is no longer required. This is one of the ways that our GHG emissions can be reduced and through the introduction of Agile Working and the refurbishment our offices using a smart working approach less space is required in a number of our buildings. At the lease expiries of our Elgin, Glasgow and Hamilton offices during 23/24 new agreements were entered into for a smaller amount of space and these changes will help reduce our emissions over time.

3.11 In last year's Board update work had started to engage Mott MacDonald through a Scottish Government framework to carry out energy audits of our buildings. A review of our 19 owned buildings commenced at the end of 2023 and a full report of their findings is due by the end of March 24. A workshop was held in February to set out their initial findings and the estimated costs associated with the energy conservation measures (ECM's) identified for each site. The main ECM's proposed include:

- Energy Monitoring – Sub meters
- LED Lighting & Controls
- Glazing Upgrades
- Insulation – Roof & Walls
- BMS Installation
- Electrification of Heating
- Solar PV

The expected payback (or return on investment) for these ECMs are set out at Appendix E. It can be seen that the majority of measures achieve payback within 50 years, the main exception to this being the electrification of heating systems (air and ground source pumps) where the return on investment is poor.

3.12 Whilst air source heat pumps are very efficient (producing c.2.5 kwh of heat for every 1 kwh of electricity supplied) the cost differential between a kwh of gas and electricity typically means that they are more expensive in operation and these systems are not appropriate for some properties. Other factors including capacity of the electricity network will influence how long it takes to transition away from fossil fuel heating systems. District heating networks within local authority areas serving a large area, or town, with hot water is another area of development for us to keep under review as an alternative.

3.13 Capital costs for undertaking the various recommended interventions to each of our owned sites were presented during the workshop by Mott MacDonald and the total indicated at this stage is in the region of £9M. These estimates are subject to further review and change prior to the final report being issued.

3.14 Given the high costs involved, further work is necessary to plan our approach and identify available funding through additional grant in aid or the public sector decarbonisation scheme. The most significant cost outlined is against the installation of air source heat pumps and we may therefore decide that the electrification of heat

in our buildings forms part of a longer term plan that allows the technology to improve, grid capacity to increase, heat networks to establish and the cost differential with fossil fuel systems to decrease prior to an estate wide replacement.

3.15 As there are a number of underutilised properties within our estate, we will need to consider how we prioritise the investment needed to improve energy efficiency and achieve net zero direct emissions. To help with prioritisation, analysis of usage data derived from CSAS against cost data from property budgets was prepared to provide a breakdown of a) hearing sessions per property and b) cost per hearing session. Where costs are high and usage is low, the additional cost of meeting our net zero duties raises questions around value for money and alternative options available for delivering services.

3.16 Climate change and sustainability will form a significant part of our next Property Strategy and further consideration of the findings from Mott MacDonald along with an approach to prioritisation of investment will be prepared for the Board.

4.0   Conclusions

4.1   The Scottish Government set the target of achieving Net Zero by 2045 and all public bodies are required to work towards this target. SCRA has committed to achieve Net Zero by 2045 and has set new targets for reducing it's emissions. With regard to our use of property, an earlier target of 2038 has been set for all public sector buildings to have zero direct (scope 1) emissions ie no longer heated using fossil fuel burning systems.

4.2   Our Strategic Sustainability and Environmental Ambassadors groups have a role to play influencing plans, policies and behaviours to keep the focus on achieving our net zero objective. As Business and Locality plans are updated there will be an increasing emphasis on how we all contribute to this objective.

4.2   Moving to net zero direct emissions and meeting our targets will be key considerations for our next Property Strategy. Work is being undertaken with Mott MacDonald to audit our owned buildings and prepare recommendations for improving the energy efficiency of our buildings to work towards these targets. Further information will be provided in the next Property Strategy update for the Board.

4.3   Whilst progress towards meeting our net zero target continues, our overall GHG emissions increased by 5.5% compared to last year due to changes to how working from home emissions are calculated. There is a risk of our overall emissions continuing to increase, particularly as currently "out of boundary" emissions are added over time.

4.4   As more Scope 3 emissions are brought into our reporting boundary (see Appendix C & D), the challenge of achieving Net Zero will go beyond the buildings we use and will affect the services we deliver and the resources we use/procure to deliver those services. The legislative and policy position from Scottish Government envisages transformational change to deliver Net Zero emissions of all greenhouse gases by

2045. It will be necessary to incorporate our Net Zero obligations into business planning and our future operating model.

5.0   Recommendations

5.1   To note the contents of this report, the public sector duties placed on SCRA and our latest emissions figures, as submitted in the mandatory Climate Change report.

5.2   To note the initial findings from Mott MacDonald's energy audits and more information will be provided to the Board in the next Property Strategy update

5.3   To approve a new 3 year target of reducing our GHG emissions by between 10% and 20% from the 2022/23 figure of 578.2 tCO2e.

**Guidance Documents**   **Appendix A**
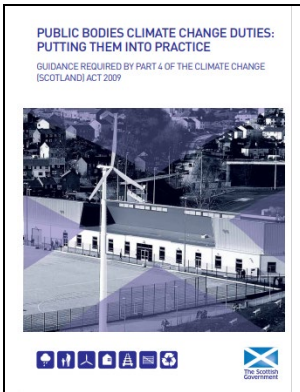
Public Bodies Climate Change Duties (2011)

Sets out the public sector duties contained in the 2009 Act:

- Contribute to the delivery of Scotland's national net zero target (**Mitigation** – reducing greenhouse gas emissions);
- Help deliver Scotland's climate change adaptation programme (**Adaptation** –resilience to the impacts of a changing climate); and
- **Act sustainably** (sustainable development as a core value).

https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2011/02/public-bodies-climate-change-duties-putting-practice-guidance-required-part/documents/0113071-pdf/0113071-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/0113071.pdf
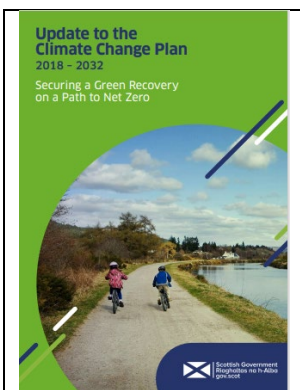
Climate Change Plan (Updated) 2018 to 2032

- Biodegradable waste no longer sent to Landfill from 2025.
- Waste sent to Landfill reduced to 5% and 70% of all waste recycled by 2025
- New build Zero Emissions Heat Standard introduced from 2024
- 50% of Scotland's building stock to use zero emission heating by 2030.
- Reduce car kilometres by 20% by 2030.
- Phase out the need for new petrol and diesel cars and vans

https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2020/12/securing-green-recovery-path-net-zero-update-climate-change-plan-20182032/documents/update-climate-change-plan-2018-2032-securing-green-recovery-path-net-zero/update-climate-change-plan-2018-2032-securing-green-recovery-path-net-zero/govscot%3Adocument/update-climate-change-plan-2018-2032-securing-green-recovery-path-net-zero.pdf
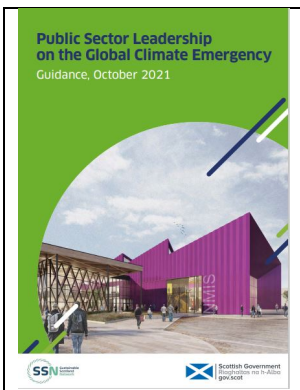
Public Sector Leadership on the Global Climate Emergency (Oct 21)

Published in October 2021, this document provides good information on the scale of the challenges ahead and the actions that public bodies need to put in place. It provides an overview of the policies in place, leadership and governance arrangements as well considering organisational capability, reporting and target setting.

https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/advice-and-guidance/2021/10/public-sector-leadership-global-climate-emergency/documents/public-sector-leadership-global-climate-emergency/public-sector-leadership-global-climate-emergency/govscot%3Adocument/public-sector-leadership-global-climate-emergency.pdf
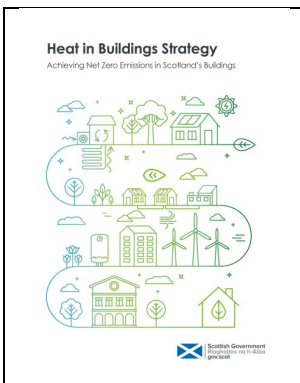
Heat In Buildings Strategy (Oct 21)

This sets out the proposed introduction of new regulations that will require a move away from fossil fuel burning systems to zero emissions heating systems. For public sector buildings, government is committed to showing leadership and a series of phased targets is planned from 2024 with all publicly-owned buildings meeting zero emission heating requirements by 2038.

https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2021/10/heat-buildings-strategy-achieving-net-zero-emissions-scotlands-buildings/documents/heat-buildings-strategy-achieving-net-zero-emissions-scotlands-buildings/heat-buildings-strategy-achieving-net-zero-emissions-scotlands-buildings/govscot%3Adocument/heat-buildings-strategy-achieving-net-zero-emissions-scotlands-buildings.pdf

Reported Consumption and Emissions 2017/18 to 2022/23 **Appendix B**

Emission Source & Scope		Unit	2022/23			2021/22		2020/21		2019/20		2018/19		2017/18	
			C		**E**	**C**	**E**	**C**	**E**	**C**	**E**	**C**	**E**	**C**	**E**
Heating - Natural Gas	1	kWh	1,270,313	↓	231.88	1,457,088	266.9	1,439,020	264.59	1,472,322	270.72	1,451,515	267.02	1,482,421	273.01
Heating - Oil	1	litres	3,800	↑	9.65	3,001	7.6			4,869	12.37	2,579	6.54	3,160	8.00
Electricity (generation)	2	kWh	797,318	↑	154.18	708,558	150.4	688,999	160.63	951,993	221.95	919,461	260.27	996,702	350.40
Electricity (transmission)	3	kWh	797,318	↑	14.10	708,558	13.3	688,999	13.81	951,993	19.09	919,461	22.19	996,702	32.76
Business Travel - miles	3	miles	101,029	↑	27.71	67,627	19.0	42,018	11.79	294,848	82.71	294,850	87.16	284,410	84.98
Water - Supply	3	m3	2,898	↓	0.28	2,289	0.3	2,081	0.23	4,390	1.51	4,617	1.59	3,874	1.33
Water - Treatment	3	m3	2,898	↑	0.55	2,289	0.5	2,081	0.48	4,171	2.95	4,386	3.11	3,680	2.61
Waste - mixed recycled	3	tonnes	18	↑	0.38	14	0.3	21	0.46	46	0.99	82	1.76	70	1.52
Waste - paper recycled	3	tonnes	28	↓	0.61	46	1.0	12	0.25	13	0.29	11	0.24	14	0.31
Waste - Landfill	3	tonnes	10	↓	4.67	15	7.0	37	17.09	63	29.00	45	4.51	54	5.38
Waste - Combustion	3	tonnes	19	↓	0.40	24	0.5								
Waste – WEEE recycled	3	tonnes	2		0.04										
Homeworking	3	% home-based	n/a			60.00%	81.2	75.00%	98.23						
Homeworking	3	FTE Working Hr	392,456	↑	133.73										
Total (tCO2e)					**578.2**		**548.0**		**567.56**		**641.57**		**654.39**		**760.30**

C – Consumption in units (↑/↓)

E – Emissions (tCO2e) calculated from consumption using emissions factor provided

Climate Change Report and Reporting Boundary   **Appendix C**

1) SCRA's Climate Change Report for 2022/23

SCRA PBCCD
Annual Return 22-23

2) SCRA's Reporting Boundary

Emission Sources Within Boundary	Emissions Outside Boundary
Direct Fuel Use (heating) - Gas - Oil	Fleet Vehicles (n/a)
Electricity (generation)	Staff Business Travel - Rail - Air - Bus - Taxi
Electricity (transmission)	Staff Commuting
Staff Business Travel - Car	Procurement of Goods and Services
Water - Supply - Treatment	Customer Travel eg by Partner Agencies and Families to SCRA premises
Waste Disposal - Paper recycling - Mixed waste recycling - Incineration - Landfill	Capital Goods and Works
Hybrid/ Homeworking	

Key:

| Scope 1 |
| Scope 2 |
| Scope 3 |

Scope 3 Emissions – Description & Categories   **Appendix D**

The following pages have been copied from the Greenhouse Gas Protocol guidance document for calculating Scope 3 emissions.

Descriptions of scope 3 categories

Figure I shows the 15 distinct reporting categories in scope 3 and also shows how scope 3 relates to scope 1 (direct emissions from owned or controlled sources) and scope 2 (indirect emissions from the generation of purchased purchased electricity, steam, heating and cooling consumed by the reporting company). Scope 3 includes all other indirect emissions that occur in a company's value chain. The 15 categories in scope 3 are intended to provide companies with a systematic framework to measure, manage, and reduce emissions across a corporate value chain. The categories are designed to be mutually exclusive to avoid a company double counting emissions among categories.

Table I gives descriptions of each of the 15 categories. The Scope 3 Standard requires companies to quantify and report scope 3 emissions from each category.

Figure [I] Overview of GHG Protocol scopes and emissions across the value chain
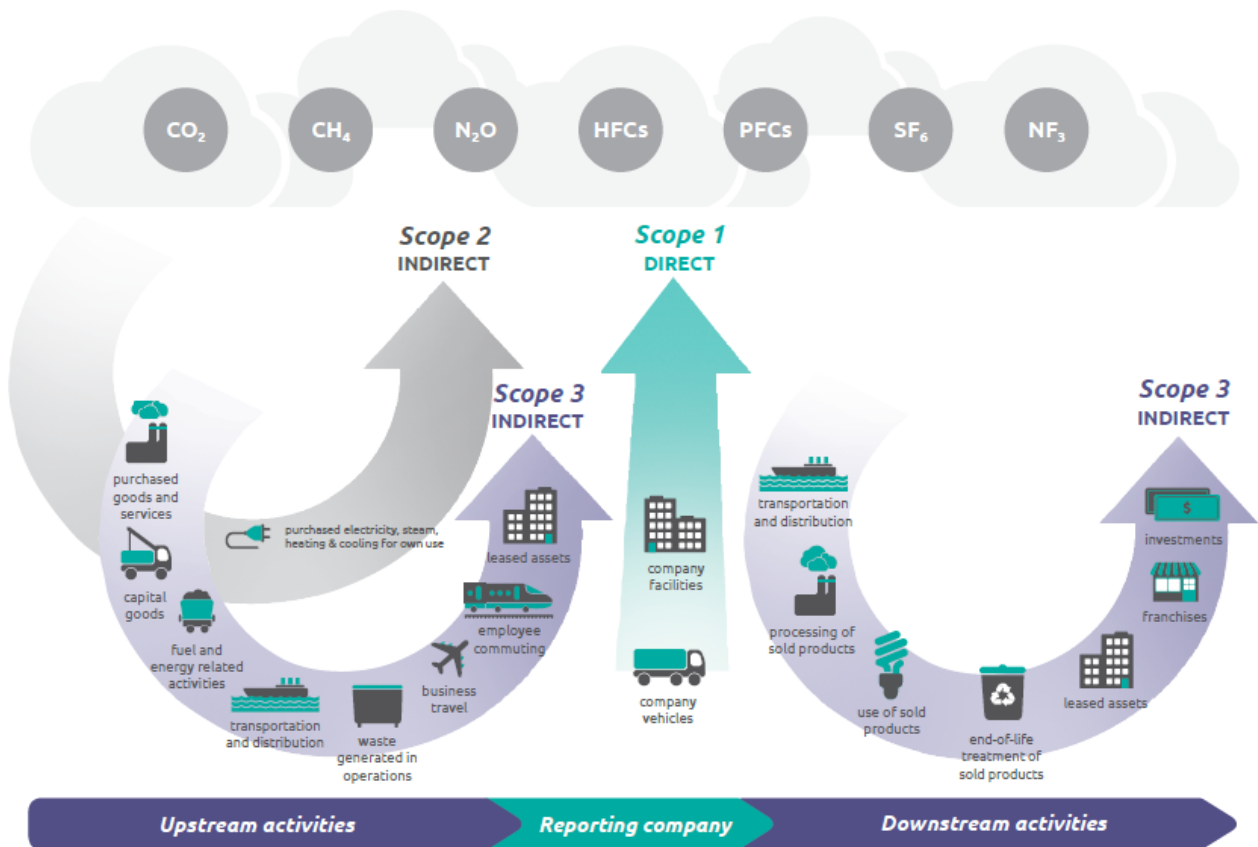
Source: Figure 1.1 of *Scope 3 Standard.*

Table [I] Description and boundaries of scope 3 categories

Upstream scope 3 emissions

Category	Category description	Minimum boundary
1. Purchased goods and services	• Extraction, production, and transportation of goods and services purchased or acquired by the reporting company in the reporting year, not otherwise included in Categories 2 - 8	• All upstream (cradle-to-gate) emissions of purchased goods and services
2. Capital goods	• Extraction, production, and transport-ation of capital goods purchased or acquired by the reporting company in the reporting year	• All upstream (cradle-to-gate) emissions of purchased capital goods
3. Fuel- and energy-related activities (not included in scope 1 or scope 2)	• Extraction, production, and transportation of fuels and energy purchased or acquired by the reporting company in the reporting year, not already accounted for in scope 1 or scope 2, including: a. Upstream emissions of purchased fuels (extraction, production, and transportation of fuels consumed by the reporting company) b. Upstream emissions of purchased electricity (extraction, production, and transportation of fuels consumed in the generation of electricity, steam, heating, and cooling consumed by the reporting company) c. Transmission and distribution (T&D) losses (generation of electricity, steam, heating and cooling that is consumed (i.e., lost) in a T&D system) – reported by end user d. Generation of purchased electricity that is sold to end users (generation of electricity, steam, heating, and cooling that is purchased by the reporting company and sold to end users) – reported by utility company or energy retailer only	a. For upstream emissions of purchased fuels: All upstream (cradle-to-gate) emissions of purchased fuels (from raw material extraction up to the point of, but excluding combustion) b. For upstream emissions of purchased electricity: All upstream (cradle-to-gate) emissions of purchased fuels (from raw material extraction up to the point of, but excluding, combustion by a power generator) c. For T&D losses: All upstream (cradle-to-gate) emissions of energy consumed in a T&D system, including emissions from combustion d. For generation of purchased electricity that is sold to end users: Emissions from the generation of purchased energy

Table [I] Description and boundaries of scope 3 categories (continued)

Upstream scope 3 emissions

Category	Category description	Minimum boundary
4. Upstream transportation and distribution	• Transportation and distribution of products purchased by the reporting company in the reporting year between a company's tier 1 suppliers and its own operations (in vehicles and facilities not owned or controlled by the reporting company) • Transportation and distribution services purchased by the reporting company in the reporting year, including inbound logistics, outbound logistics (e.g., of sold products), and transportation and distribution between a company's own facilities (in vehicles and facilities not owned or controlled by the reporting company)	• The scope 1 and scope 2 emissions of transportation and distribution providers that occur during use of vehicles and facilities (e.g., from energy use) • *Optional:* The life cycle emissions associated with manufacturing vehicles, facilities, or infrastructure
5. Waste generated in operations	• Disposal and treatment of waste generated in the reporting company's operations in the reporting year (in facilities not owned or controlled by the reporting company)	• The scope 1 and scope 2 emissions of waste management suppliers that occur during disposal or treatment • *Optional:* Emissions from transportation of waste
6. Business travel	• Transportation of employees for business-related activities during the reporting year (in vehicles not owned or operated by the reporting company)	• The scope 1 and scope 2 emissions of transportation carriers that occur during use of vehicles (e.g., from energy use) • *Optional:* The life cycle emissions associated with manufacturing vehicles or infrastructure
7. Employee commuting	• Transportation of employees between their homes and their worksites during the reporting year (in vehicles not owned or operated by the reporting company)	• The scope 1 and scope 2 emissions of employees and transportation providers that occur during use of vehicles (e.g., from energy use) • *Optional:* Emissions from employee teleworking
8. Upstream leased assets	• Operation of assets leased by the reporting company (lessee) in the reporting year and not included in scope 1 and scope 2 – reported by lessee	• The scope 1 and scope 2 emissions of lessors that occur during the reporting company's operation of leased assets (e.g., from energy use) • *Optional:* The life cycle emissions associated with manufacturing or constructing leased assets

Table [I] Description and boundaries of scope 3 categories (continued)

Downstream scope 3 emissions

Category	Category description	Minimum boundary
9. Downstream transportation and distribution	• Transportation and distribution of products sold by the reporting company in the reporting year between the reporting company's operations and the end consumer (if not paid for by the reporting company), including retail and storage (in vehicles and facilities not owned or controlled by the reporting company)	• The scope 1 and scope 2 emissions of transportation providers, distributors, and retailers that occur during use of vehicles and facilities (e.g., from energy use) • *Optional:* The life cycle emissions associated with manufacturing vehicles, facilities, or infrastructure
10. Processing of sold products	• Processing of intermediate products sold in the reporting year by downstream companies (e.g., manufacturers)	• The scope 1 and scope 2 emissions of downstream companies that occur during processing (e.g., from energy use)
11. Use of sold products	• End use of goods and services sold by the reporting company in the reporting year	• The direct use-phase emissions of sold products over their expected lifetime (i.e., the scope 1 and scope 2 emissions of end users that occur from the use of: products that directly consume energy (fuels or electricity) during use; fuels and feedstocks; and GHGs and products that contain or form GHGs that are emitted during use) • *Optional:* The indirect use-phase emissions of sold products over their expected lifetime (i.e., emissions from the use of products that indirectly consume energy (fuels or electricity) during use)
12. End-of-life treatment of sold products	• Waste disposal and treatment of products sold by the reporting company (in the reporting year) at the end of their life	• The scope 1 and scope 2 emissions of waste management companies that occur during disposal or treatment of sold products
13. Downstream leased assets	• Operation of assets owned by the reporting company (lessor) and leased to other entities in the reporting year, not included in scope 1 and scope 2 – reported by lessor	• The scope 1 and scope 2 emissions of lessees that occur during operation of leased assets (e.g., from energy use). • *Optional:* The life cycle emissions associated with manufacturing or constructing leased assets

Table [I] Description and boundaries of scope 3 categories (continued)

Downstream scope 3 emissions

Category	Category description	Minimum boundary
14. Franchises	• Operation of franchises in the reporting year, not included in scope 1 and scope 2 – reported by franchisor	• The scope 1 and scope 2 emissions of franchisees that occur during operation of franchises (e.g., from energy use) • *Optional:* The life cycle emissions associated with manufacturing or constructing franchises
15. Investments	• Operation of investments (including equity and debt investments and project finance) in the reporting year, not included in scope 1 or scope 2	• See the description of category 15 (Investments) in section 5.5 for the required and optional boundaries

Source: Table 5.4 from the *Scope 3 Standard*

Impacts of PSDS – Heat Decarbonisation Focus
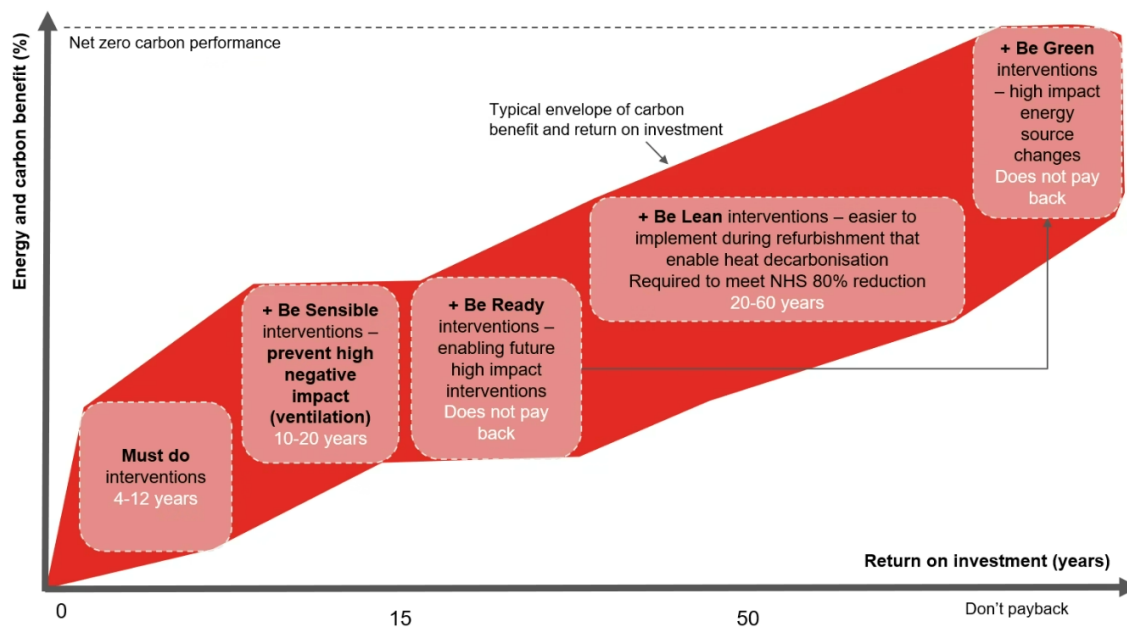
Mott MacDonald   2 February 2024

PSDS – Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme

The benefits of different net zero carbon building interventions

Mott MacDonald   2 February 2024

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE

Accountable Director: Head of Human   **Date:**   20 March 2024
                            Resources

Report Author: Health and Safety Adviser

Recommendations:
1.   **To note the activity in 2023/24 and planned future activities.**

Reason for Report: Board Update

Resource Implications: Within approved budgets

Consultation: EMT

Document Classification: Not Protectively Marked

**Equality Impact   Not required
Assessment:**

1.   Introduction

This Health and Safety Annual Report covers the period from 1st April 2023 – 4th March 2024. It provides an update to the Board on Health and Safety across SCRA, including reporting on the number of incidents during that time. It provides updates on policy developments and wellbeing initiatives that have occurred within that timeframe.

2.   Accident and Incident Reporting

2.1   During the reporting period, there have been a total of 19 incidents reported to the Health and Safety Adviser (Table 1). There have been no incidents that required notification to the Health & Safety Executive under the RIDDOR regulations.

Table 1   Breakdown of incidents since 01/04/22 to 4th March 2024

Type of Incident	Number reported	Summary
Minor Injury	7	1. Hand sanitizer in eye (panel member Edinburgh / May) 2. Hearing table collapsed resulting in knee injury to staff member (Aberdeen, August) 3. Laceration to face after child slipped on beanbag (Dumbarton / August) 4. Knuckle injury to staff member from door (Elgin / November) 5. Head injury to staff member following fall (related to pre-existing health concern Paisley / December) 6. Staff member fell on ice that had formed from an overflow pipe next to building (January, Kilmarnock).. 7. Contractor replacing pipework on the second floor (Dundee office, January) fell from ladder sustaining deep laceration to palm of hand.
Ill Health	3	1) Reporter entered hearing room and complained of irritated sinuses. and coughing due to strong paint smell in the room. Absent from work for 2 days. (Fraserburgh – May 2023) 2) Panel member on arrival at hearing centre informed staff that she had fallen while en-route to hearing. Advised to attend hospital where they identified a fractured knee (Glasgow – August 2023) 3) Staff member collapsed (Stirling, November). Thought to have fainted so given sweet tea. Reported feeling better next day.
Physical Assaults	2	1) Mother attending hearing assaulted ex-partner in waiting room.. Police Scotland called and

		attended, charging the mother with assault and aggravated conduct. (Arbroath OHC – May 2023) 2) Child attending hearing left building and was assaulted by a group of older youths(Tranent OHC – June 23)
Violence (non contact)	1	1) Father leaving hearing unhappy with decision, threw fire extinguisher at fire door before exiting the building (Glenrothes – October 2023)
Verbal Abuse	2	1) Father attending a hearing became angry after decision of the panel made and shouted in a threatening manner. Police alerted who spoke to the individual to calm him and no further action was taken (Selkirk – November). 2) Parents attending hearing called to say they were in Birmingham and could not attend. Advised they could attend virtually and email sent with secure link. Telephoned as hearing started but not on secure line so asked to attend via link. Hearing proceeded without them. Called again but by that time, panel were deliberating and were refused access. Hearing ended and threatening phone calls made to SCRA / Social work and safe guarder threatening violence (to kill those involved). Police informed of threats and statements taken from staff (Aberdeen, December)
Near Miss	3	There were three near miss incidents that all happened on the same day and same location (Elgin in December) and involved ice formation in and around the site.
Vandalism	1	Young person (Dundee, December) angry at being unable to visit shop before hearing smashed bookcase and leaflet stand in waiting room and was verbally abusive to people outside of building.

All incidents were managed appropriately by the staff on site. As with previous years we continue to work in partnership with Unison to encourage staff to report verbal aggression (both in person and virtually).

3.   **Historical Data**

3.1   **Total number of incidents**

Graph 1 below provides a breakdown of the number of incidents per year since 2009 (15 years).

Graph 1   Total Incidents since April 2009 to 4th March 2024

Total number of incidents per year (1st April 2009 - 4th March 2023)

61, 33, 21, 19, 36, 44, 26, 42, 33, 28, 45, 5, 7, 14, 18

2009/10, 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24
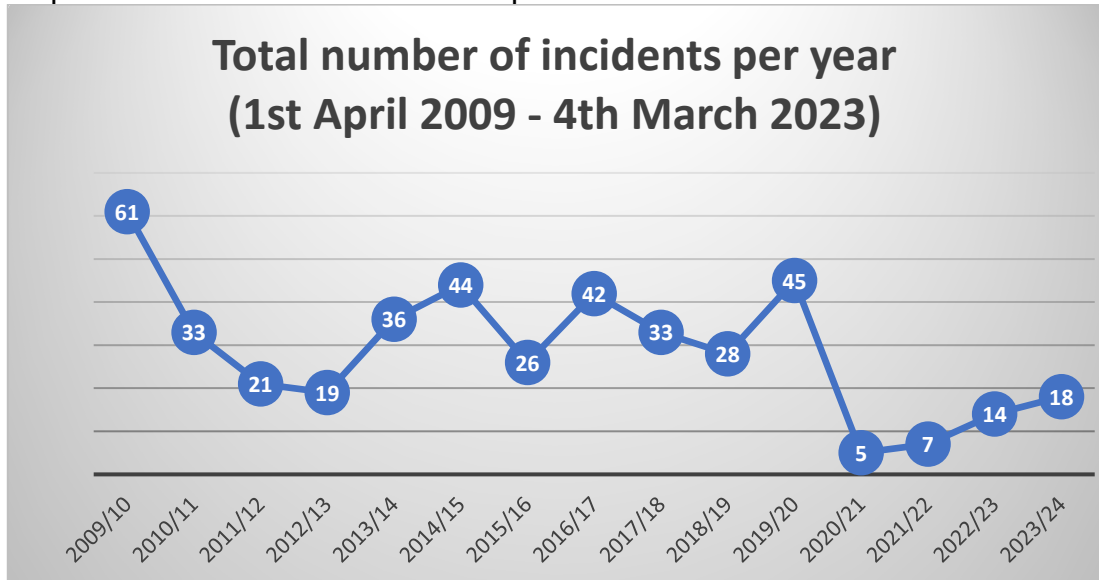
It shows that, apart from the first year (where n=61), there was an average of approximately 32.7 incidents per year up until 2020.

Staff working from home during the Covid pandemic resulted in a significant drop in incident numbers from April 2020 to end of March 2022 (n=5 and 7 respectively for those years). As staff have returned to the office and in person hearings have increased, the number of incidents have also increased but are still not as high as they were pre-covid. This may be due to a combination of more virtual hearings employed and the introduction of the Agile Working Policy allowing staff to work from home more frequently.

3.2   **Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR)**

In the last 15 years there have been a total of 16 incidents that have been reported to the Health & Safety Executive under the RIDDOR regulations (the last being recorded back in 2019/20).

Graph 2 provides a breakdown of RIDDOR incidents between staff and visitors to SCRA premises over that timeframe.

Graph 2   RIDDOR Incidents

RIDDOR Incidents - staff vs visitors

Legend: ■ Incidents involving staff   ■ Incidents involving visitors

X-axis labels: April 2009 – March…, April 2010 – March…, April 2011 – March…, April 2012 – March…, April 2013 – March…, April 2014 – March…, April 2015 – March…, April 2016 – March…, April 2017 - March…, April 2018- March…, April 2019 - March…, April 2020 - March…, April 2021 - March…, April 2022- March…, April 2023 - March…

3.3   Injuries, near misses and ill health

In total there have been 93 injuries reported during the 15 year period and 27 near misses – where injury could have been sustained but was averted (Graph 3). In addition there have been 52 incidents involving ill health (involving staff members becoming unwell while on the premises and requiring medical attention or those attending hearings reporting they are unwell).

Graph 3 – Injuries, near misses and ill health April 2009 – 4th March 2024

Injuries, near miss and ill health (April 2009 - March 2024)

Legend: ■ Injury   ■ Near Miss   ■ Ill Health

X-axis labels: 2009/10, 2010/11, 2011/12, 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15, 2015/16, 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23, 2023/24
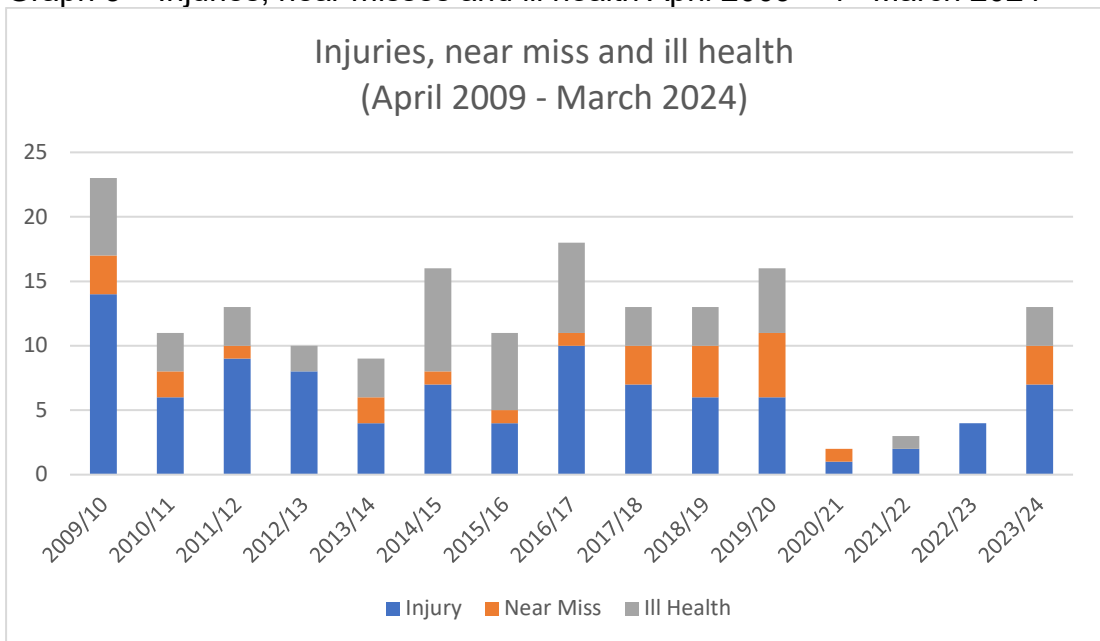
3.4   Violence

Graph 4 looks in more detail at the number of incidents where violence (including actual assaults) as well as non-contact violence and verbal aggression has been experienced within an SCRA premises.

Assaults, verbal or non contact aggression, vandalism and other incidents
(April 2009 - March 2023)

Legend: ■ Assault (Total)   ■ Verbal/ Non Contact   ■ Vandalism   ■ Other
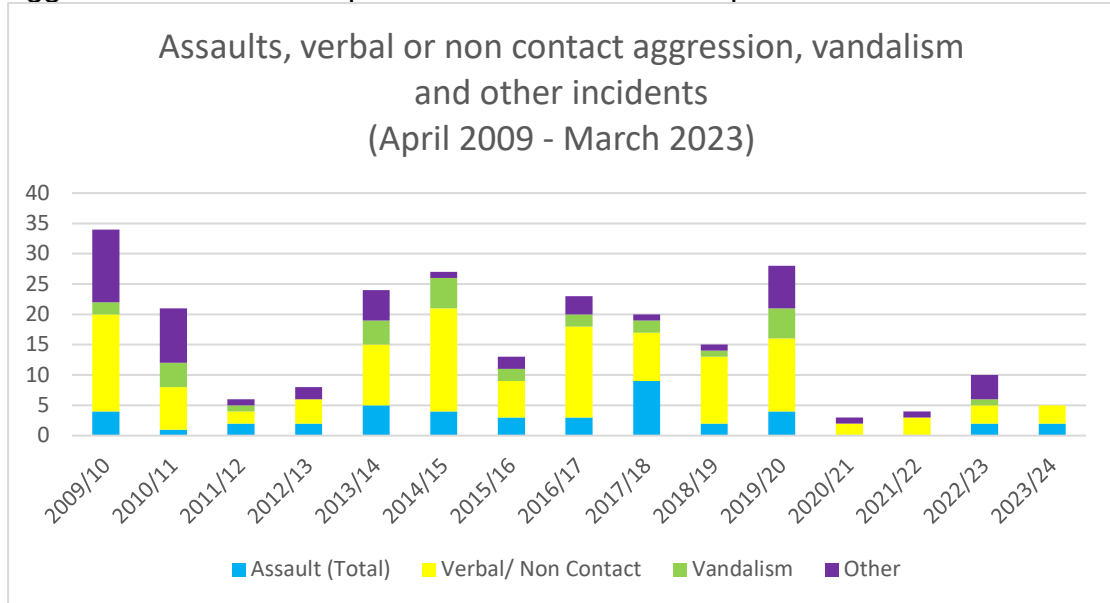
Within the last 15 years there have been a total of 43 actual assaults. Given the nature of the business undertaken by SCRA, this number would be considered low with an average 2.8 assaults per annum.

4.   Policy Development

Five Health and Safety policies and associated Equality Impact Assessments were reviewed and considered at the Health & Safety Committee in 2023 H. The policies include:-
1. Control of substances hazardous to health policy
2. Substance misuse policy
3. Lone working policy (and associated guidance)
4. Fire policy (and associate guidance)
5. Locality Support Manager monthly safety inspection checklist

5.   Locality Support Manager Refresher Training

There has been some turnover in the Locality Support Managers (LSM) roles with new postholders requiring training to be undertaken to ensure they were conversant with the relevant Health and Safety responsibilities and risk assessments to be undertaken at Locality level. A training session was held in November 2023 for the new LSMs to learn about the various health and safety policies and risk assessments they were required to complete as part of their role.

6.   Mental Health and Wellbeing

6.1   Mental health and wellbeing continues to be a key focus for SCRA and a significant effort has been put in to promote and encourage staff to consider their own and others mental wellbeing. Our Mental Health First Aiders continue to provide help to staff with their contact details and photos on Connect.

We continue to engage the HELP Employee Assistance Programme which encourages and supports wellbeing in the workplace. Staff have access to a team of trained welfare and counselling practitioners who will support employees by offering confidential, independent and counselling and guidance by telephone, on-line and through face-to-face appointments for a wide variety of issues including (but not limited to) mental health, sickness absence, debt, bereavement and childcare issues.

6.2   **Financial Wellbeing**

SCRA has continued to update its financial wellbeing page to provide links to organisations that can provide support as staff continue to feel the impacts of the ongoing cost of living crisis.

6.3   **Mental Health Week, Big Team Challenge and Time to Talk Day**

The Mental Wealth Group supported Mental Health Week in May 2023 – the theme this year covering the topic of anxiety. To link with the theme, the organisation launched a Right to Disconnect Policy. This policy, and accompanying FAQs, which is on Connect, recognises that disconnecting from work is vital to a healthy and sustainable work-life balance, and to support personal resilience. As such, every employee is entitled to switch off outside of their normal working hours and enjoy their time away from work without being disturbed, unless there is an emergency or prior agreement to do so, for example while on 'standby'.

To coincide with Mental Health Awareness Week in May 2023, SCRA offered another walking / fitness challenge. For 2023, staff were invited to virtually walk from Edinburgh to Paris over the course of 5 weeks. The route involved covering 1291.7 kms with teams walking or individuals cycling the distance. By the end of the 5 weeks a total of 26,024 miles / 41,882 km had been stepped with 28 teams which involved and 159 individual participants taking part.

As part of the challenge and in conjunction with Ecologi, the challenge also saw SCRA planting 32 trees (one for every 5 participants that took part). This partnership helped offset our carbon impact and was well received by those who participated. Preparations are now underway for the 2024 Big Team Challenge which will be launched as part of Mental Health Awareness Week (13-19th May 2024). The theme of this year is Movement: Moving more for our mental health

The mental wealth group promoted "Time to Talk" day on 1st February 2024. This is a national initiative run annually by the charity SeeMe to encourage staff in workplaces across the country to come together to discuss Mental Health. 1 in 4 people will experience mental health issues in any one year. The 1st February each year is also Breathing Space Day. This year marks 20 years since the launch of this national service aimed at those over the age of 16 who may be feeling low, anxious or depressed by providing a confidential telephone service that allows people to discuss their concerns with trained councillors.

6.4   **Menopause Awareness**

SCRA promoted World Menopause Day on the 18th October. The purpose of the day is to raise awareness on the menopause and support options for improving health and wellbeing. Staff were encouraged to visit the menopause toolkit on Connect for information and resources on the topic. There was also a stall at the Staff Event held in September which was well attended by staff.

7.   Flu Vaccination

SCRA offered the flu vaccination for the seventh year running. the Scottish Government flu vaccination initiative has seen the number of flu vouchers required by SCRA drop year on year given the demographics of our workforce. Of the flu vouchers offered to staff from SCRA only 68.7% (n=79) have been redeemed/ SCRA will continue to provide the vouchers but will decrease the number of vouchers procured when the scheme opens in July to align with the number of vouchers redeemed in 2023.

8.   Recommendation

The Board is asked to note the Health and Safety update outlined in this report.

SCOTTISH CHILDREN'S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION

RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

Accountable Director: Principal Reporter/Chief Executive   **Date:**   20 March 2024

Report Authors: Head of Finance & Resources
Governance Officer

Recommendations:

1. **To approve the proposed change to the attached Risk Management Policy.**

Reason for Report: **For approval**

Resource Implications: **Within approved budgets**

Strategy: **Within approved plans**

Consultation: **Executive Management Team, Audit and Risk Management Committee**

Document Classification: **Not protectively marked**

1.   **Introduction**

1.1   The current Risk Management Policy was updated and presented to the Audit & Risk Committee at its meeting in November 2023 and approved by the Board in December 2023. The key changes were to the Board's Finance and Accountability/Governance risk appetites.

1.2   The Head of Finance and Resources has carried out a further light touch review consulting with Audit & Risk Committee members.

1.3   The Head of Finance and Resources will arrange training in risk management for the new member of the Audit & Risk Committee.

2.   **Revision of the Risk Management Policy**

2.1   The main terms of the policy document remain unchanged since December 2023 and only one change for approval, a new section 10, is highlighted in red text.

3.   **Recommendation**

3.1   To approve the proposed change to the attached Risk Management Policy.

SCRA Risk Management Policy

1. Statement on Risk Management

1.1 The Risk Management Policy is founded upon the core principles that risk management is:

- central to SCRA's corporate governance and internal control arrangements
- a key tool in the management of the organisation to assist staff to manage risk as part of their day to day workload
- an important component in ensuring continuity of core activities and to assist SCRA to deliver its business objectives
- dynamic, with frequent review and updating, and focused on the most significant risks at the time
- is an inclusive process covering all strategic and operational risks.

1.2 The definition of a **risk** is the threat or possibility that an action or event will adversely or beneficially affect an organisations' ability to achieve its objectives.

1.3 The policy applies to all areas of the organisation's activity. It is not only concerned with strategic objectives but encompasses operational and programme/project management activity.

1.4 It should be viewed as a top to bottom process, involving all levels of staff, that supports continuous improvement. As well as focusing on possible threats it is important to consider the risks of not taking opportunities that would support innovation (positive risk taking) and improve service delivery.

1.5 Locality Management Teams and Head Office Teams are responsible for developing their own risk registers and escalating risks to the Planning and Performance Network (PPN) or EMT as appropriate.

1.6 The PPN co-ordinates the operational and locality approach to risk, including the development and maintenance of risks (aligned to locality plans).

1.7 The PPN role also includes:
- identifying and sharing good practice
- assessing whether risks are being adequately managed within agreed appetites and tolerances across SCRA
- ensuring that each business area and locality is regularly carrying out risk identification and assessment exercises to ensure that risk registers are accurate and up-to-date.

2. Approach to Risk Management

2.1 The risk management policy sets out the approach to risk management and documents the roles, responsibilities of the Board, senior management, the PPN and employees.

2.2 In addition, the policy describes the process the Board will use to evaluate the effectiveness of the Administration's internal control procedures.

2.3 The following key principles outline SCRA's approach to risk management and internal control:

- the Board has responsibility for the system of internal control and for overseeing risk management within SCRA

- the Principal Reporter/Chief Executive and senior managers will implement policies on risk management and internal control approved by the Board

- a positive attitude to risk assessment and solving risk problems is adopted by the Board and senior managers

- managers at all levels are responsible for encouraging good risk management practice within their areas and all managers consider the consequences of their decisions and actions from a risk management perspective

- integration of risk management into the planning and performance framework

- the process will be supported by a programme of audit and review

3. Risk Management Policy

3.1 The objectives of the risk management framework are founded on a number of key objectives to:

- ensure the delivery of core strategic and operational objectives within available resources
- support continuous improvement in service delivery
- inform SCRA business continuity plans
- support internal controls intended to reduce losses
- facilitate the timely identification and resolution of risks
- enable effective stakeholder communication on service delivery
- enhance SCRA's reputation and image.

3.2 The effectiveness of the Risk Management Policy will be reviewed and monitored based on the following measures:

- the extent to which SCRA is successful year on year in achieving its business objectives

- the incidents of risks which have not been recognised and documented within the Risk Management structures; or which have been inappropriately rated within the structures.

3.3 The Risk Management Policy is underpinned by a commitment to training and development in risk management and the recognition of the importance of staff responsibilities in this area.

4. Risk Management Structure

4.1 The Risk Management Structure for SCRA is detailed at Appendix 1. Appendix 2 sets out in general the framework for managing risk (Diagram 1) and the Risk Management Process (Diagram 2).

4.2 These arrangements reflect the organisational structure and ensures that risk is embedded throughout the organisation and allows for a straightforward and timely process to response to risk.

4.3 Information Risk Register
A separate information risk register is maintained by SCRA's Digital Security and Governance Manager and owned by SCRA's Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO) given the specific duties placed on the organisation in terms of information risks.

4.4 Joint Risks (SCRA/CHS)
SCRA and Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS) hold regular liaison meetings and any joint risks would be highlighted at joint Board meetings.

5. Risk management as part of the system of internal control

5.1 The internal control system encompasses a number of elements including:

- Strategic planning and budgeting - the strategic planning and budgeting process is used to set objectives, agree priorities and allocate resources. Progress towards meeting objectives is monitored and scrutinised by the Board quarterly with longer term and strategic objectives reviewed at a frequency to be agreed between the Board and senior management.

- Risk Registers – the standard template (Appendix 3) has been set up in the risk register tool (Decision Time) and should be used at strategic, operational and locality level. The risk registers should be included in annual business plans at these levels and formally reviewed quarterly. Localities and Head Office (HO) Teams should develop a risk register for inclusion in their Locality/team plans and ensure any risks which require to be escalated are highlighted to the appropriate management group/network and Executive Management Team member.

- Programmes – SCRA's strategic Programmes and Projects have individual risk profiles based on risks identified by Project Managers some of which are escalated for review to the appropriate

management group/network, Programme Board or Executive Management Team member.

- Audit & Risk Committee - the Audit & Risk Committee will oversee, on behalf of the Board, the risk management process through co-ordination and monitoring of the implementation of the Risk Management Policy. This includes reviewing Strategic and Operational Risk Registers every six months and more frequently as necessary for key risks (e.g. finance and pay), reviewing the work undertaken on identified high risk areas and the action plans to mitigate the effects of such risks.

- Audit – The Audit programme is informed by an annual needs assessment and encompasses traditional fieldwork and self-assessment. The internal audit programme will be focused on the significant strategic and operational risks, as identified by management, and auditing risk management processes across SCRA. External audit provides feedback to the Audit Committee on the operation of internal controls as part of the annual audit.

6. Annual Governance Statement

6.1 The Board is responsible for the effectiveness of governance arrangements within SCRA. The Principal Reporter/Chief Executive, in preparing an annual Governance Statement for inclusion in the Annual Accounts will consider the elements in section 5.1 above and the following:

- SCRA's performance against financial and non-financial targets
- organisational structure and performance of senior managers
- organisation culture with respect to management of risk
- operation of delegated authority
- timeliness in identification of control issues and new significant risks
- prioritisation of risks and action to address areas of high exposure.
- effectiveness with which corrective actions are implemented

7. Risk Management Process

7.1 The key elements of the risk management process are set out below and more information is provided in Appendix 8. Effective risk management is a vehicle for continuous improvement in service delivery.

7.2 Risk Types – it is helpful to categorise risks to ensure consistency in the process of identification, monitoring and reporting of key risks. SCRA has adopted a simple approach based on definitions for seven types of risk that should be sufficiently flexible to cover strategic, operational, group, team and programme risks.

7.3 Risk Identification (guidance at Appendix 4) is the process of finding, recognising and describing risks – it is the responsibility of the members of groups/teams at each level to identify risks. A workshop approach is likely to be most effective allowing individuals within the group/team to work

together and look beyond their areas of responsibility.

7.4   Description of Risk (guidance at Appendix 4) – each risk should be defined by a risk statement which describes the risk (the event) and outlines the consequence for and the impact on the organisation if the risk is crystallised.

7.5   Risk Measurement (guidance at Appendix 5) – a numerical value between 1 and 5 is given to two measures of risk – Impact and Likelihood.

7.6   Inherent Risk is the exposure arising from a specific risk before any action has been taken to manage it.

7.7   Controls – the controls in place to mitigate the risk should be recorded and any new controls to be put in place should be proportional to the risk. Some form of cost benefit analysis might be required to ensure the control action represents value for money in relation to the risk being controlled.

7.8   Residual risk is the risk remaining after the application of key mitigating controls and reflects how effective these controls are.

7.9   Target Risk is the risk exposure deemed to be acceptable as informed by the organisation's risk appetite.

7.10   Monitoring and Reporting - monitoring is continually checking, supervising critically observing or determining the status in order to identify change from the performance level required or expected.

7.11   A key element of managing risk is obtaining assurance that key controls are in place and operating effectively. SCRA has a range of internal and external assurance providers who review and provide opinions and statements which enable EMT and the Board to form a view as to whether risks are being managed in line with its expectations. Risk assurance is built into the risk management tool with the ability to report on sources of assurance, gaps in assurance and improvement actions. The risk assurance report template is attached at Appendix 6.

7.12   It is important to monitor that action plans are effective and to identify further action that might be necessary. Groups/teams should self- assess their key risks quarterly and use Decision Time to report thereon to the appropriate level for the purposes of challenge and scrutiny.

7.13   Outputs – the Risk Register is the main output of the process. As well as providing crucial data internally, this document provides evidence for audit that the risk management process is operating. The overall risk management process should help ensure that significant issues are quickly highlighted to the right level of management.

7.14   When a risk has crystallized, before closing the risk, the risk owner should review the risk in terms of effectiveness of controls and impact of actions, and capture any lessons learned in notes in Decision Time.

8.   Risk Appetite

8.1   SCRA recognises that the organisation may be involved in activities that expose the organisation to a measure of risk.

8.2   The 'risk appetite' (Appendix 7) is defined as the amount of risk that SCRA is prepared to accept, tolerate or be exposed to at any point in time. Risk appetite is about taking well thought through risks where the long-term rewards are expected to be greater than any short term losses. Risk appetite needs to be considered at all levels.

8.3   SCRA has considered its risk appetite using the classifications shown in the table below:

Classification	Description
Averse	Avoidance of risk and uncertainty is a key organisational objective.
Minimalist	Preference for ultra-safe options that have a low degree of inherent risk and a potential for limited reward
Cautious	Preference for safe options that have a low degree of residual risk and limited potential for reward
Open	Willing to consider all options and chose the one that is most likely to result in success, whilst also providing an acceptable level of reward
Hungry	Eager to be innovative and to choose options offering potentially higher rewards despite greater inherent risk

8.4   The SCRA Board has to determine its risk appetite against the different categories of risk that it is exposed to as follows:-

Type of Risk		Risk Appetite Agreed (as at December 23)
Strategic/Policy Risks		Open to Cautious
Operational/Service Delivery Risks		Open to Cautious
Finance Risk		Open to Cautious – in reality, move to Open as required *
Reputational/Credibility Risks		Open to Cautious
Accountability/Governance Risks		Open to Cautious – in reality, move to Open as required *

8.5   * In reality means when SCRA has no or very limited controls over decisions made by other agencies on which it relies for its functioning. The clearest example is decisions made by Scottish Government on matters of full year budget allocation where, for SCRA to retain its stated risk appetite could be catastrophic for the body insofar as the Board would be unable to set a budget. In reality SCRA is able to set a budget to meet its needs with sufficient and formal reassurance from senior officials about the availability of in year resource to allow it to govern effectively, within clear boundaries of accountability and with an proportionate approach to risk.

8.6   Whilst the organisation's approach is to minimise its exposure to reputational, compliance and financial risks it may accept and encourage an increased and proportionate degree of risk in pursuit of opportunities to better achieve its strategic and operational objectives.

9.   Roles and Responsibilities

9.1   Through allocating specific risk management responsibilities SCRA have created an environment where:

- risk management is integrated into decision-making arrangements, helping to create an environment for continuous improvement and learning
- the adequacy of risk assessment, control measures and action plans are regularly reviewed, taking into account the Board's risk appetite.
- The effectiveness of the risk management framework is reviewed at regular intervals and modified as necessary.

9.2   Role of the Board

The Board is responsible for the system of internal control. This includes
- Setting the tone and influencing the culture of risk management
- Setting appropriate policies on internal control
- Seeking regular assurance that the system is functioning effectively
- Approving major decisions affecting SCRA's risk profile or exposure
- Annually reviewing risk management policy and risk appetite.

9.3   In setting the tone and influencing the culture of risk management the Board must determine the level of risk which SCRA is prepared to tolerate i.e. for any particular risk whether SCRA is prepared to accept the risk at its current level or whether any further action is needed to reduce likelihood or impact. It is expected that for all top rated strategic, operational and programme risks the risk owner will develop an action plan to reduce the risk assessment to moderate or escalate the risk to the next level.

9.4   Role of the Audit & Risk Committee

The Audit & Risk Committee is charged by the Board with overseeing the operation of the system of internal control and with ensuring robust risk management arrangements within SCRA.

9.5 **The Principal Reporter/Chief Executive**

As Accountable Officer the Principal Reporter/Chief Executive has overall executive responsibility for risk management arrangements within SCRA, leading the risk management systems and ensuring that responsibilities delegated to other senior managers and staff at all levels within SCRA are discharged in an effective manner. The Principal Reporter/Chief Executive is also responsible for signing the Governance Statement which is included in the annual accounts.

In addition to overall executive responsibility for risk management the Principal Reporter/Chief Executive oversees the maintenance of the Operational Risk Register which is owned by EMT.

9.6 **Senior Managers**
All senior managers are responsible for:

- implementing policies on risk management and internal control
- identifying, assessing and developing actions plans for the most significant risks faced by SCRA

9.7 **The Head of Finance & Resources**

The Head of Finance and Resources has specific responsibility for:

- day to day operation of SCRA's risk management arrangements
- regular reporting to the Executive Management Team, Audit & Risk Committee and Board on strategic risks and controls
- facilitating an annual review of the effectiveness of governance arrangements and reporting thereon to the Audit & Risk Committee

9.8 **Planning and Performance Network (PPN)**

The role of the PPN is to act as an internal focus for the development of SCRA's approach to risk issues, providing leadership on the delivery of SCRA's Risk Management Policy at Locality level.

Risk leads within the PPN will act as risk champions which will include:

- having a specific role of raising awareness of both the risk management process and specific risks.
- providing local staff with advice and support on risk management issues
- working with other risk champions to bring consistency of approach to risk management, share knowledge and experience
- assisting with making the necessary changes happen – both process and cultural changes.

9.9   **All Employees**

All employees should have the necessary knowledge, skills, information and authority to establish, operate and monitor the system of internal control and be responsible for managing risks as an integral element of their job.

9.10   **The Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO)**

The Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO) owns the information risk policy and provides advice to the Accountable Officer on the content of the Governance Statement relating to information risk.

10.   **Effectiveness**

10.1   The effectiveness of the Risk Management Policy will be reviewed and monitored based on the following measures:

- o   the extent to which SCRA is successful year on year in achieving its business objectives.
- o   the incidents of risks which have not been recognised and documented within the Risk Management structures; or which have been inappropriately rated within the structures.

Appendix 1

Risk Management Structure

**SCRA Board
and
Audit & Risk Committee**

Reviews regular reports to gain reassurance on Risk Management

Executive Management Team

Owns strategic and operational risk registers and considers risks escalated from locality/Head Office risk registers

Planning and Performance Network

Considers risks escalated from Locality Management Teams

**Other Networks:
Court Network
IG Leads Group**

Helps mitigate risks and support the controls

Programme Boards

Owns programme risk register and considers risks escalated from individual programmes

Head Office Managers

Own Head Office risk register

Programme Managers

Individual programme risk register and consider risks escalates from individual projects

Project Managers

Individual project level risks

Locality Management Teams

Own locality risk registers

APPENDIX 2

Diagram 1: Relationship between the components of the framework for managing risks:

Mandate and Commitment

Design of framework for managing risk
- Understanding the organisation and its context
- Establishing the risk management policy
- Accountability
- Integration into organisational processes
- Resources
- Establishing internal communication and reporting mechanisms
- Establishing external communication and reporting mechanisms

Continual improvement of the framework

Implementing risk management
- Implementing the framework for managing risk
- Implementing the risk management process

Monitoring and review of the framework

Diagram 2: Risk management process:

Establishing the context

Risk identification

Risk analysis

Risk evaluation

Risk treatment

Communication and consultation

Monitoring and review
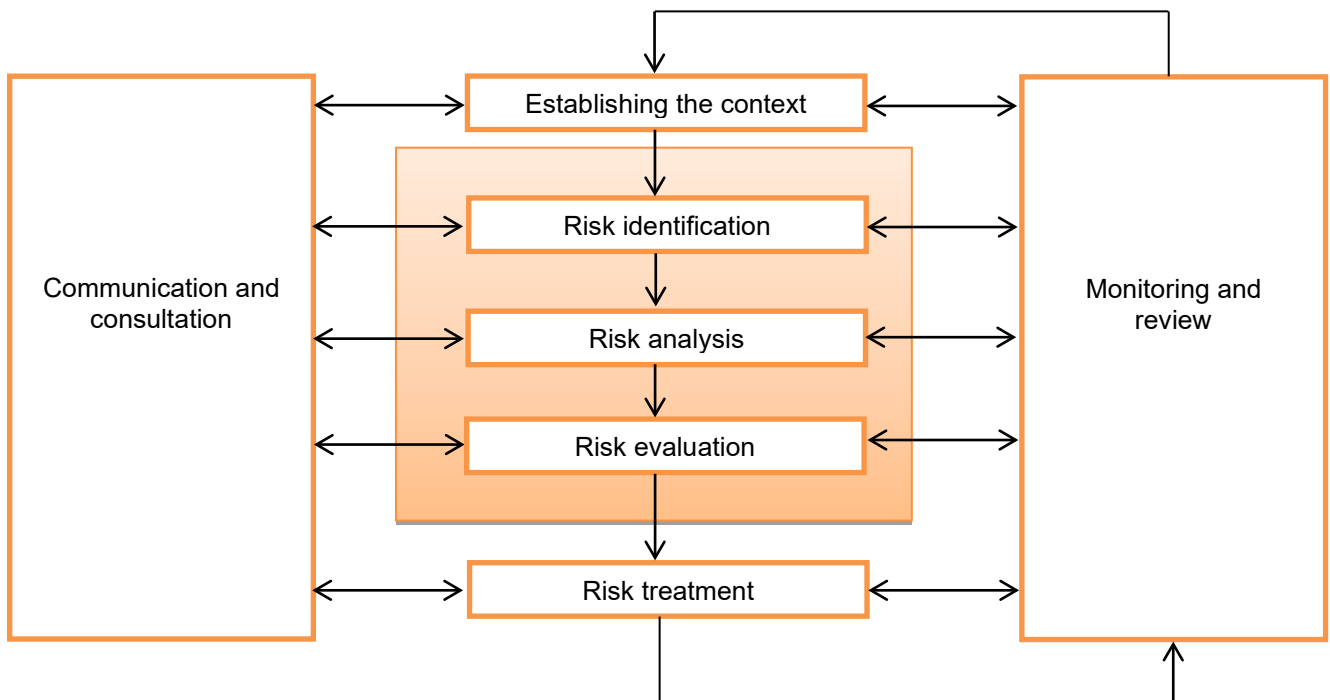
APPENDIX 3

Risk Register Template

Risk No	Reference to Locality Objectives	Risk Type	Risk Description	Risk Owner	Inherent Risk Score L*I	Key mitigating controls	Control Effectiveness	Residual Risk Score L*I	Risk Appetite	Target Risk Score L*I	Actions and Timescales	Action Owner /Deadline
1						•					1.	
2						•					1.	
3						•					1.	
4						•					1.	
5						•					1.	
6						•					1.	

Appendix 4

Risk Identification Guidelines

The following guidelines have been developed to assist risk leads across SCRA to adopt a consistent approach to identifying new risks (the same approach can be used to identify changes in existing risks or risks which are no longer relevant):

- The existing meeting structures for Locality/Team planning and performance reviews, facilitated by Planning Business Partners, should be used for identifying new risks.
- A facilitated workshop, at least once per year, as part of the Locality/Team meeting is usually the best method of generating new risks.
- Good documentation of discussions is important.
- Consideration should be given as to how to gather input from those staff not involved in the Locality/Team meeting.
- Some pre-work is encouraged e.g. ask those attending the meeting to identify top 5 new risks which can then be discussed and developed further.
- A major refresh of the Locality/Team risk register should take place every two years.
- Consider different types of risks (external, governance, information management, compliance, financial management, human resources, operational).
- As well as facilitated workshops other tools and techniques and sources of information can be used to support identification of new risks (SWOT analysis, PESTLE, questionnaires, checklists, inspection reports, audit findings).
- Risks should be related to objectives in Locality/Team Plans although care should be taken to identify any generic risks which will impact on objectives but might not always be apparent when thinking about particular objectives.
- Risk identification is not an exact science and should be a continuous process which keeps up with changes in the Locality/Team.

The role of risk leads in Head Office (Head of Finance & Resources and Governance Officer) includes supporting and challenging individual Localities/Teams on their risk descriptions and risk scores and comparing risk registers to identify common themes, feeding back findings to the Planning and Performance Network and EMT.

Risk descriptions

Once a new risk has been identified it is important to develop a good description or statement of the risk. There are some basic rules which should be followed:

- Avoid stating impacts which may arise as being the risks themselves, and to avoid stating risks which do not impact on objectives.
- Avoid defining risks which are simply the converse of the objectives.
- Identify the root causes and don't mistake these for the symptoms.
- A statement of risk should encompass the risk event, causes of the impact and the impact to the objective (or consequences) which might arise.
- This should mean you identify a risk which you can't control. For a risk which you can't control it may be advisable to draw up a contingency plan.

Appendix 5

Risk Scoring

Risk Matrix
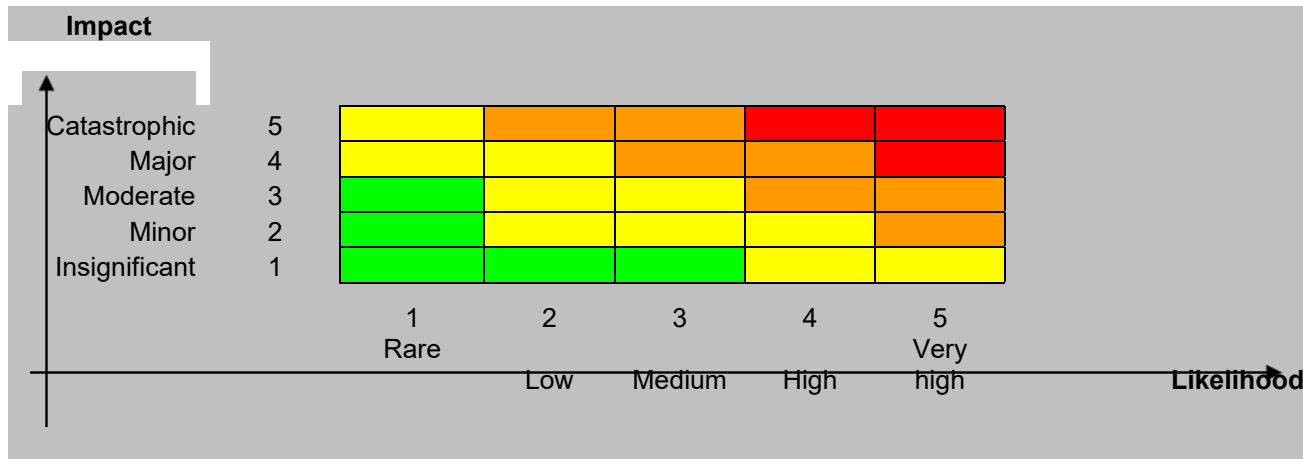
Risk level	Score	Risk level description
Very high	20 - 25	**Rating:** Unacceptable level of risk exposure that requires immediate mitigating action **Reporting**: To Accountable Officer/ Audit & Risk Committee for upward reporting to Board
High	10 - 19	**Rating**: Unacceptable level of risk which requires controls to be put in place to reduce exposure. **Reporting:** consideration should be given as to whether High risks should be escalated. Scores between 10 - 14: No, scores between 15 - 19 Yes
Medium	4 - 9	**Rating:** Acceptable level of risk exposure subject to regular active monitoring **Reporting**: Director level
Low	1 - 3	**Rating**: Acceptable level of risk exposure subject to regular passive monitoring **Reporting**: Director level. Do risks that low still exist?

Likelihood of a risk materialising

Score	Likelihood	Definitions
5	Almost certain	81-100% - almost certain will occur. Highly likely, could occur on a regular basis (i.e. several times a year).
4	Likely	51-80% - more likely to occur than not. Likely, could occur, but on sporadic basis (i.e. at least once a year). Potential of it occurring several times within the time period or has occurred recently.
3	Possible	21-50% - fairly likely to occur. Possibly, could occur, but infrequently (i.e. not more than once every 12 months). Could occur more than once within the time period and may be difficult to control due to some external influences.
2	Unlikely	6-20% - low but not impossible. Unlikely, (i.e. an event that is unlikely to occur more than once every few years) or has not occurred historically.
1	Exceptional	0-5% - extremely unlikely or virtually impossible (i.e. one-off event).

Impact of the risk

Score	Impact	Definition	Regulatory	Business Objectives	Reputational	Financial
5	Catastrophic	Likely to threaten the survival or continued effective functioning of SCRA, either financially or reputationally. Likely to have major impact on the whole organisation. Immediate action required. Must be managed with an effective control.	As below causing catastrophic loss.	> 20% variance	Ongoing media campaign, Parliamentary attention.	> £1m
4	Major	Likely substantial financial impact on SCRA. Significant impact on SCRA's strategy or operational activities. Significant stakeholder concern seriously damaging SCRA's ability to deliver its service. Likely to have major impact in many areas of the organisation. Likely to cause some damage, disruption or breach of legislation. Prompt attention required. Risk controls and actions to be developed.	As below causing major loss.	10-20% variance	Short term media campaign, meet partners and Minister to provide reassurance.	> £250k
3	Moderate	Financial impact on SCRA is likely to be moderate. Moderate impact on the SCRA's strategy or operational activities. Moderate stakeholder concern having some impact on the SCRA's ability to deliver its service. Likely to have major impact in one or a few areas of SCRA. Unlikely to cause much damage and/or threaten SCRA. Monitor and review.	As below causing moderate loss.	5-10% variance	Headline media interest causing public embarrassment, proactive contact with partners and Minister.	£50-£250k

Score	Impact	Definition	Regulatory	Business Objectives	Reputational	Financial
2	Minor	Financial impact on SCRA is likely to be small. Low impact on SCRA's strategy or operational activities. Low stakeholder concern. Likely to have minor impact in many areas of SCRA. Primary impact is on the internal business. Unlikely to require specific application of additional resources. Manage through existing controls. Monitor and review.	As below causing minor loss.	2.5-5% variance	Headline media interest, reactive approach to limited interest from partners and Minister.	£25-£50k
1	Insignificant	Likely to have minor impact in one or a few areas of SCRA. No significant impact on SCRA as a whole.	Act or omission causing legal or regulatory breach causing insignificant loss.	< 2.5% variance	Minor media, partner, Ministerial interest	< £25k

Risk Assurance Map template

Risk	Risk Impact	Risk Controls	Assurance Sources	Gaps in Assurance	Improvement Actions	Due Date	Assurance Control RAG rating

Assurance Sources – Decision Time:
- Operational Control (1st line)
- Corporate Oversight (2nd line)
- Internal Audit (3rd line)
- External Assurance (3rd line)

Appendix 7

Risk Appetite

SCRA has considered its risk appetite using the classifications shown in the table below:

Classification	Description
Averse	Avoidance of risk and uncertainty is a key organisational objective.
Minimalist	Preference for ultra-safe options that have a low degree of inherent risk and a potential for limited reward
Cautious	Preference for safe options that have a low degree of residual risk and limited potential for reward
Open	Willing to consider all options and chose the one that is most likely to result in success, whilst also providing an acceptable level of reward
Hungry	Eager to be innovative and to choose options offering potentially higher rewards despite greater inherent risk

Current Risk Appetite

Type of Risk	Risk Appetite Agreed (December 2023)
Strategic/Policy Risks	Open to Cautious
Operational/Service Delivery Risks	Open to Cautious
Finance Risk	Open to Cautious – in reality, move to Open as required
Reputational/Credibility Risks	Open to Cautious
Accountability/Governance Risks	Open to Cautious – in reality, move to Open as required

Appendix 8

Risk Management Process

1. Risk Identification (Reference & Link to Business/Group/Programme/Project objective)

It is best practice to integrate risk management into the annual business planning and quarterly performance monitoring process. Risks should be identified, assessed and prioritised in relation to SCRA's objectives. Each risk should have a unique reference number (for audit trail purposes) and be cross-referenced to one or more Business Plan/Locality Plan/Programme/Project objectives. The management of risk at strategic, operational and Programme levels needs to be integrated to ensure actions at different levels are co-ordinated.

Initial risk identification should be carried out as a facilitated group exercise involving the owners of plans and objectives at each level of the organisation. All participants should have the opportunity to identify and assess risks however the exercise should conclude with an overall group view on the risk profile to be captured in the Risk Register. Continuous risk identification and assessment is achieved as part of the quarterly reviews of the Risk Register, although new risks can be identified and assessed outwith the cycle.

The participants in initial and ongoing risk identification exercises will want to consider the following internal factors:
- Annual plans and Quarterly Operational Performance Reports (OPR's)
- Weekly, monthly/quarterly performance reports
- Quality Assurance, External Audit and Internal Audit findings
- Research and Evaluation findings
- Significant Case Reviews
- Casework issues/appeals activity

Identification of risks should involve looking externally as a well as internally. Areas for consideration include:
- Stakeholder feedback
- Economic changes
- Issues from other jurisdictions
- Partnership Working issues
- Inspectorate reports and action plans

2. Risk Type
Once identified, individual risks typically fall into natural groupings. Capturing these groupings or categories of risk can act as a check that the range of potential risks that may arise have been considered. The following risk categories should be used at all levels of the organisation:

Strategic Risks - Risks that relate to doing the wrong things
Operational Risks - Risks that relate to doing the right things but doing them in the wrong way
Information Risks - Risks that relate to loss or inaccuracy of data, systems or reported information
Reputation Risks - Risks that relate to SCRA's image
Financial Risks - Risks that relate to losing monetary resources or incurring unacceptable liabilities
People Risks - Risks associated with employees and management
Regulatory Risks - Risks related to the regulatory environment

3. Responsibility for identification, assessment, recording, reporting, management and escalation of risks

Activity	Executive Management Team (strategic and operational risks)	Localities/Head Office	Programme/projects
Risk identification	All Members	All Members	All Members
Risk assessment	All Members	All Members	All Members
Updating Risk Register	Head of Finance & Resources	Risk Lead	Programme Manager
Reporting risks	Head of Finance & Resources	Risk Lead	Programme Manager
Identification/assessment of controls	Risk owner	Risk owner	Risk owner
Action plan and progress	Risk owner	Risk owner	Risk owner
Escalation of risks	PR/CE	SOM/Risk Lead	Programme Manager

4. Key Mitigating Controls and Control Effectiveness
The controls in place should be recorded by the Risk Owner. In addition there should be an assessment of how effectively the controls are operating.

5. Action Plan & Timescales
The key actions required to mitigate the risks should be recorded along with a clear timescale for implementation.

6. Owner
The individual responsible for ensuring that the risk is managed and monitored over time. They should have sufficient authority to ensure the risk is effectively managed but may not be the person who implements the agreed actions.

7. Progress against Action Plan
Progress should be recorded on an ongoing basis on the register, with outstanding actions clearly marked.

8. Escalation
Risks may be escalated for a number of reasons: they can no longer be managed at local level; they are not confined to one area of the business; they cannot be managed effectively in isolation; there are correlations where one risk has an impact on another. The register should record where the risk is to be escalated:

Risks at Locality or Head Office level should be escalated to the Senior Operational Manager (Operational Risk Register) or Executive Management Team (Strategic Risk Register). Project risks should be captured on Programme Risk Registers and where necessary to the Senior Operational Manager (Operational Risk Register) or Executive Management Team (Strategic Risk Register). Risks that may require to be escalated to Executive Management Team (and Board) include risks that pose a significant threat to corporate objectives, targets or resource plans, risks that are deemed intolerable or have potential for significant adverse publicity.

9. Closed risks
Risks that are no longer applicable should be recorded as 'closed' and moved to a closed risk register. If the risk has been closed as it has crystalized risk leads should review the risk and ensure lessons learned are captured in the notes in Decision Time.