



Social Security
Scotland

Tèarainteachd Shòisealta Alba

Business Plan

2024 – 2025



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“This process feels massively inclusive and empathetic. I can tell you have created this in conjunction with disabled people’s voices. It’s so appreciated.”

Adult Disability Payment client

Chief Executive's introduction

Our Business Plan for 2024-2025 looks ahead to our sixth full operational and financial year, building on the work we have achieved since our launch in 2018. We now deliver 14 benefits, supporting over 1.25 million people across Scotland.

We are rooted in local communities and our work helps tackle poverty and improve lives. We ensure the application process for our benefits is inclusive. For example, we can gather supporting information for disability applications on behalf of our clients and we have people in local communities to support people receive every penny they are entitled to.

Feedback from our clients and stakeholders is invaluable and helps us make continuous improvements. This year, we have listened and taken significant steps to improve processing times for applications. We have also worked hard to reduce waiting times on our phone lines and webchat, while ensuring our clients continue to be treated with dignity, fairness and respect.

This year, we will maintain our current high-quality service for the people of Scotland, while ensuring the successful national launch of Carer Support Payment, which recognises the huge amount of unpaid work and support provided by carers. Their work is invaluable to the people they care for and this payment recognises their value.

We are also looking forward to the phased rollout of Pension Age Disability Payment, designed for people of pension age who have a disability or long-term health condition that means they need help looking after themselves or additional support to stay safe.

We are committed to being efficient with our resources and processes and are focused on delivering value for money. This is achieved through good governance, a culture of performance and professionalism and strong risk management.

This year's Business Plan focuses on actions and activities that support the themes within our new three-year Corporate Plan which sets out the longer-term vision of our future growth. We align everything we do to our Corporate Plan to ensure we are delivering on our commitments, while also administering a social security system with human rights at its heart.

We are focused on making a difference for our clients and are proud to deliver a public service that is inclusive, sustainable and supports people while providing value for money.



David Wallace
Chief Executive, Social Security Scotland

About us

We administer social security benefits on behalf of the Scottish Government. We were established in September 2018 and are part of the Scottish Government's Director General Communities portfolio.

We contribute to these National Outcomes:

- We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally
- We respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination
- We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe

Our Charter was created by people with experience of social security, organisations that help or represent our clients, and our colleagues. Our Charter outlines our responsibilities and commitments to the people of Scotland and underpins all our work including our commitment to treating people with dignity, fairness and respect.

Our governance framework supports an effective relationship with Scottish Government and Scottish Ministers and ensures alignment with Ministerial priorities. Our Executive Advisory Body includes people with a broad range of skills and lived experience of social security. They provide strategic advice and constructive challenge to help us continue delivering social security in line with the principles laid down in the Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018 and Our Charter.

Our Business Plan outlines our goals in 2024-25 and is aligned to our three-year Corporate Plan for 2024-27. We report on progress each year in our Annual Report and Accounts.



Strategic goals

In our Corporate Plan 2024-2027, we set out our strategic goals over the next three years.



Strategic goal 1

Operational delivery

Fulfil our Charter commitments with kindness and ensure we deliver the right benefits to everyone who is eligible for them. This includes delivering Scottish Child Payment, which contributes to eradicating child poverty in Scotland.



Strategic goal 2

Investing in our technology

Maintain our IT systems to a high standard ensuring robust cyber security and build additional essential functions as technology improves.



Strategic goal 3

Launch of new social security benefits

Prepare for the launch of Carer's Additional Person Payment, Pension Age Disability Payment and Pension Age Winter Heating Payment.



Strategic goal 4

Business Plan priorities

Deliver our annual performance priorities to show improvements to the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of our service.



Strategic goal 5

Preparing for the future

Transfer all of the functions needed to deliver benefits from the Scottish Government's Social Security Programme to Social Security Scotland as the Programme comes to a planned end in 2026.

← Public Service Reform →



Strategic goal 1

Operational delivery



Operational Delivery Improvements

We will identify and implement improvements in how we process and deliver all our benefits. This approach should help our clients easily access the benefits they are entitled to more efficiently. Examples of improvements include automation of some payments and testing different ways we communicate with our clients via telephone and webchat. In addition, we will focus on the following priorities:

Notifications Service

We know that our clients want to hear updates from us about their applications. Improving how we communicate with people applying for Scottish benefits will improve their experience while making us more efficient. We have introduced new application progress updates by text or email for Child Disability Payment and Adult Disability Payment clients. Next, we will develop and deliver a new online portal making it easier for clients to apply for Adult Disability Payment and Child Disability Payment.

Safeguarding Service Discovery

In the course of our work, we have contact with clients who may be vulnerable and have safeguarding needs. We recognise our responsibility in this area and are reviewing our current safeguarding approach this year with recommendations for the future. This project will explore our legal responsibilities in safeguarding our clients, people and policy.

Local Services Review

We continue to be committed to giving people a choice in how they apply for benefits. Our people work in communities, people’s homes, prisons and healthcare settings across Scotland. They offer face-to-face support, give information about Scottish benefits and assist people to make applications. This service is one of the key ways we support our clients with dignity, fairness and respect and make accessing our benefits more inclusive. This year, we will review how our local services are meeting clients’ expectations in communities across Scotland.

Mailroom Review

We will explore how to continue delivering a high-quality and inclusive service for our clients and make our mailrooms more efficient and cost-effective. As we deliver more benefits going forward, our mailroom plays a central role in ensuring important information about our benefits reaches our clients. They also manage information our clients send to us. We will make rapid improvements where we can and explore adding automation to further streamline our processes.

Fraud and Error Service Improvements

To ensure we use public money correctly and fairly, we will continue to refine how we manage fraud and error for all our benefits. We will further develop high-value fraud and error activities including planning improvements to our technology. We will continue to build capability to create estimates of fraud and error in our benefit caseloads. This includes getting ready for proposed changes in the law that will help us improve the fraud and error estimates we can produce.

Strategic goal 2

Investing in our technology



Critical Digital Maintenance

We will continue investment in our critical digital services and platforms that support efficient delivery of our benefits to our clients. We will also focus on cyber security, ensuring personal data and information continue to be stored securely. We will also review the critical digital maintenance required in the future to ensure we can continue to deliver effectively and efficiently.

Data, Management Information and Analysis Improvements

We will make improvements to how we gather quality data and feedback to effectively measure our performance and quality. Reviewing and considering areas we could make improvements will help us manage operational delivery and meet our reporting and legal obligations. These improvements will be of public interest to our clients and external stakeholders.

Digital Investment Review

We will commission an independent assessment of our core digital services to discover how they meet our current and future business and service needs. As part of this process, we will identify any digital services that will need to be updated to manage future demand for benefits. This assessment of our technical backlog will help us clarify our plans for future digital investment.

Strategic goal 3

Launch of new social security benefits



October 2024

Pension Age Disability Payment Pilot



From November, Pension Age Disability Payment – the replacement for Attendance Allowance - will be rolled out in Argyll & Bute, Highland, Aberdeen City, Orkney and Shetland.

Pension Age Disability Benefit can help with the extra costs that come with living with a disability or long-term health condition.

Autumn 2024

Carer Support Payment



Carer Support Payment is launched across Scotland. This money will help people with caring responsibilities and recognises the huge amount of unpaid work and support provided by carers.

Throughout 2024 - 25

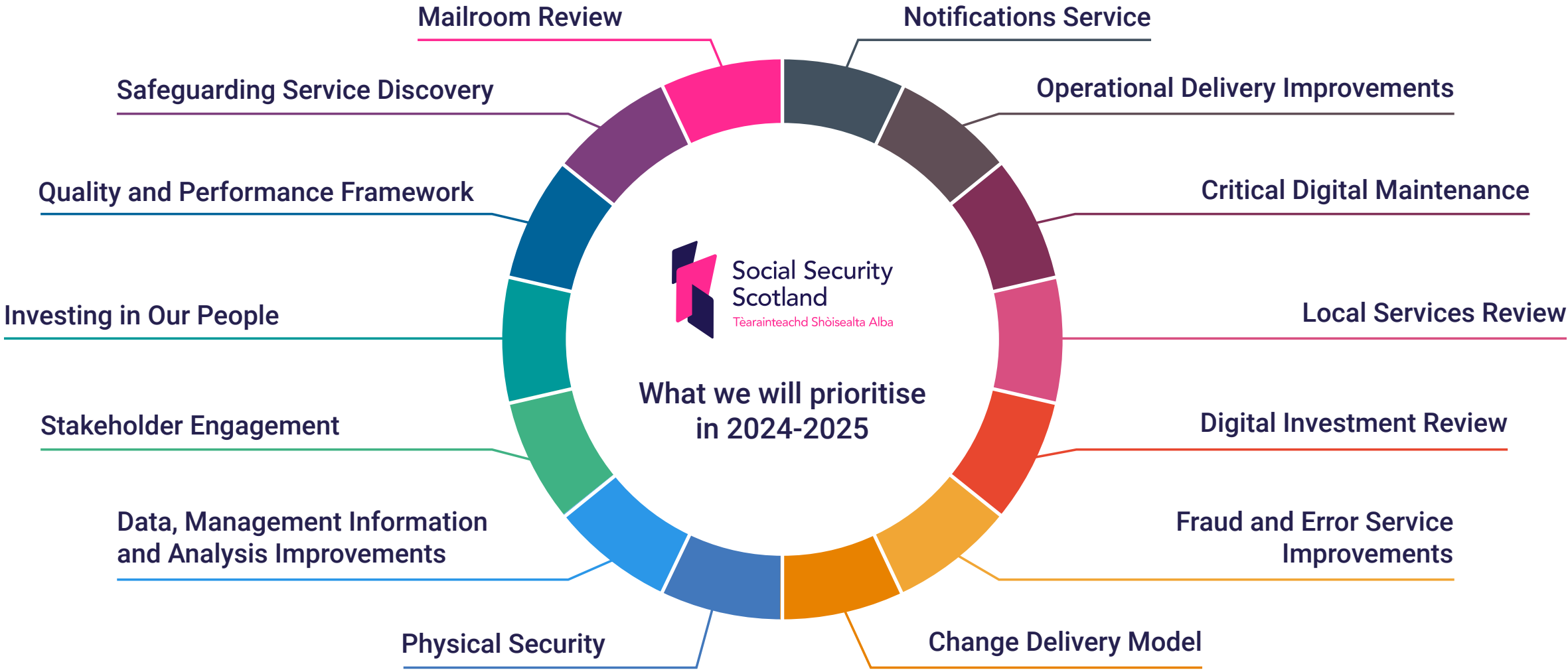
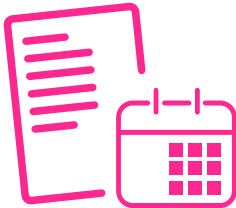
Case Transfer



We will continue to transfer people’s benefit awards from the Department for Work and Pensions to Social Security Scotland. This includes new Carer Support Payment and Pension Age Disability Payment claims, as well as Child Disability and Adult Disability claims.

Strategic goal 4

Business Plan priorities 2024-25



Strategic goal 5

Preparing for the future



Investing in our People

As we continue to mature as an organisation, we will review the processes in place to support our workforce to deliver a high-quality service to the people of Scotland. Our review will be in our updated People Plan, to be published in Autumn 2024. We will focus on the colleague experience including attraction and retention, performance management, and diversity and inclusion. We will also review our commitment to our people’s wellbeing at work, focusing on how we support colleagues through change and help people be as effective and efficient as possible.

Physical Security

To deliver our services effectively, we need to ensure that our offices and client-facing spaces continue to be safe and secure. We will commit to reviewing and upgrading our physical security measures where necessary to ensure the safety of our people, our clients and any information we hold.

Stakeholder Engagement

Building relationships with our stakeholders helps us deliver an effective service that responds to our client’s needs. These partnerships help raise awareness of the benefits we deliver, encourage benefit take-up and help us understand how we can improve. We listen to stakeholders’ experiences and expertise and incorporate it where we can. We learn about our clients’ experiences of our service through our annual Client Survey and regular feedback sessions. We are reviewing how we manage stakeholder relationships to ensure we are providing the right information to help promote our benefits to people across Scotland.

Quality and Performance Framework

We will develop and publish our Quality and Performance Framework, setting out clearly our quality standards for our clients. It will also identify areas for further learning and improvement. The framework will demonstrate our links with National Outcomes, the Scottish Government’s Social Security Programme’s Measurable Improvements Strategy and Evaluation Activity and the Charter Measurement Framework.

Change Delivery Model

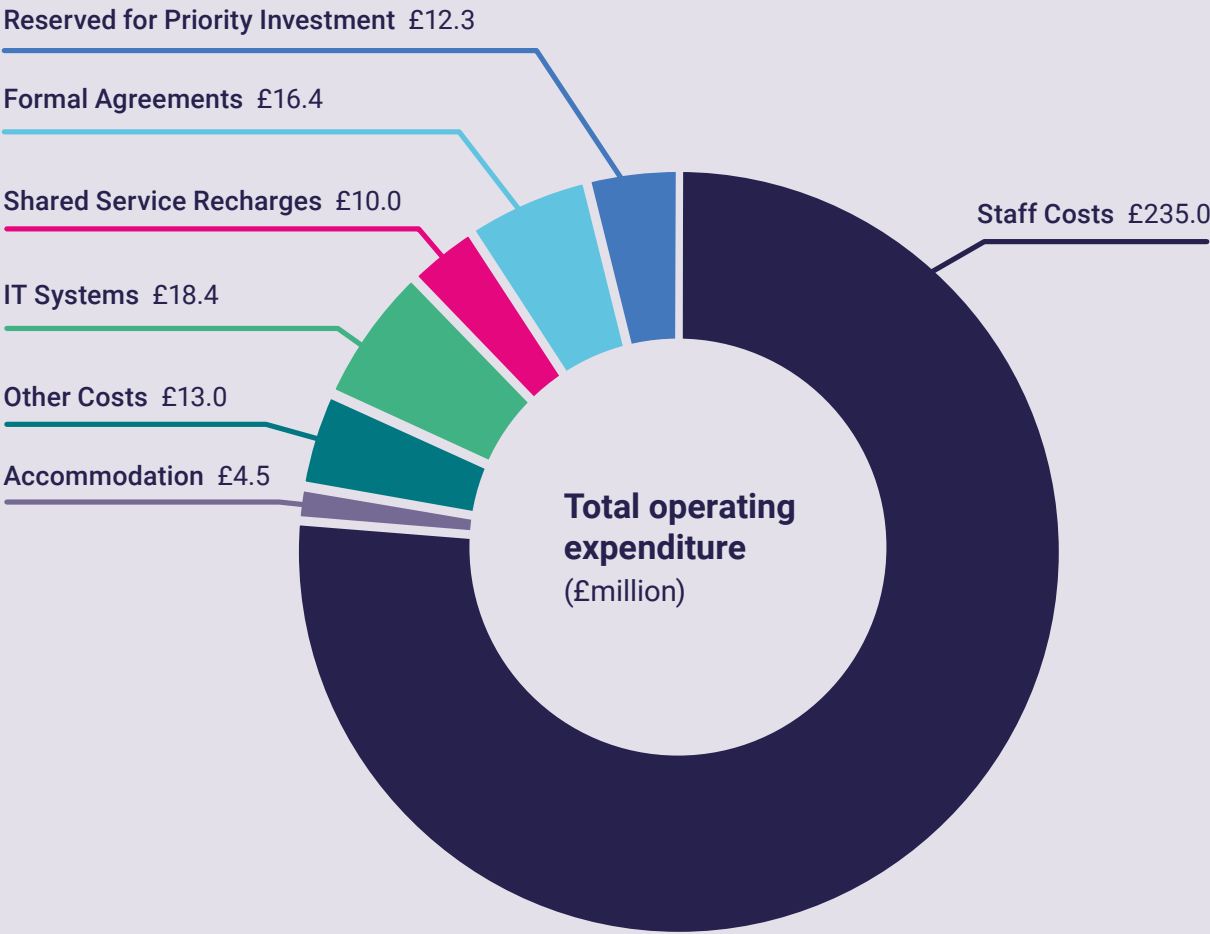
In preparation for the Scottish Government’s Social Security Programme closure, we will improve how we manage change in our organisation, considering our commitment to continuous improvement of our service. This new approach will ensure that operational delivery is maintained to a high standard while any changes are being implemented. We will manage the process by testing and evaluating any changes before rolling out across the organisation.

How we will spend our budget in 2024-25

In our Corporate Plan 2024–2026, we set out our strategic goals over the next three years. Our Business Plan outlines our priorities in 2024-2025 that will contribute to delivery of our Corporate Plan objectives.

Social Security Scotland	Budget 2024-25	Revised Budget 2023-24	Increase/ (decrease)
	£million	£million	£million
Operating Expenditure	309.6	269.7	39.9
Capital Expenditure	5.0	3.5	1.5
Depreciation (Non-Cash)	7.4	5.7	1.7
Annually Managed Expenditure	0.2	0.0	0.2
Total Social Security Scotland administration	322.2	278.9	43.3
Benefit expenditure	6,133.4	5,154.2	979.2

We have allocated our budget as follows:



The Scottish Fiscal Commission, whose forecasts we base the budget for benefits delivery on, estimate¹ that we will spend the following:

Divisional budget allocation	2024-25 Budget	2023-24 Budget
Delivered by Social Security Scotland	£million	£million
Adult Disability Payment	3,266.4	2689.6
Best Start Foods	18.1	17.0
Best Start Grant	21.3	19.8
Carer's Allowance Supplement	55.1	50.0
Child Disability Payment	450.1	327.6
Child Winter Heating Payment	8.7	4.7
Funeral Support Payment	12.2	12.1
Pension Age Winter Heating Payment	180.0	-
Job Start Payment	0.4	1.1
Young Carer Grant	1.0	1.0
Scottish Child Payment	457.3	442.1
Winter Heating Payment	24.4	23.6
Total delivered by Social Security Scotland	4,495.0	3,588.6
Delivered by the Department for Work and Pensions		
Attendance Allowance	754.9	614.1
Carer Support Payment	411.7	371.8
Disability Living Allowance (Adult)	420.0	437.6
Industrial Injuries Disablement Scheme	86.6	84.4
Severe Disablement Allowance	5.1	5.8
Total Delivered by Department for Work and Pensions	1,678.3	1,513.6
Total	6,133.4	5,102.2

1 Scottish Economic and Fiscal Forecasts -
December 2023 | Scottish Fiscal Commission

Measuring our success

We will report on how we have delivered the priorities in our Business Plan in a number of ways. These surveys and publications will clearly demonstrate how we are meeting our strategic goals and contributing to the **Scottish Government's National Outcomes**.

We will:

- Continue our annual People Survey to ensure we are meeting our obligations to our colleagues
- Undertake a Client Survey every year to gather valuable feedback from people about their experience of claiming benefits with us and use this to inform continuous improvement
- Publish a range of detailed statistical reports about our performance on the benefits we administer. These will show the impact we make on people's lives and offer suggestions for improvements to our services
- Publish a Charter Measurement Report, showing how we have performed against the commitments in **Our Charter**
- Publish our Annual Report and Accounts for 2024-25 detailing how we have spent our budget and how we have performed against our goals
- Publish a Quality and Performance Management Framework

Information on all of our publications can be found here:

www.socialsecurity.gov.scot/publications



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