



Social Security
Scotland

Tèarainteachd Shòisealta Alba

Business Plan

2023 – 2024





Foreword

To set this year's business plan in context, it is worth reflecting on our journey so far. Social Security Scotland was established in September 2018. Since then, we've taken on the administration of 13 benefits.

In the last financial year alone, we introduced Adult Disability Payment – one of the most complex benefits we will administer, we extended Scottish Child Payment to all eligible children under 16 and we paid Winter Heating Payment for the first time, which will support around 400,000 people. We also continued to progress the 700,000 disability and carer awards to be transferred from the Department for Work and Pensions to the payments we deliver by the end of 2025. The pace at which we've set up our service and continued to grow is unprecedented. Introducing new benefits while protecting the service for people who have already applied and are getting payments – while ensuring everyone is treated with dignity, fairness and respect – is not easy.

One of our biggest challenges this year has been processing times where some people have had to wait longer for a decision on their application than we, or they, would want. We have already taken action to improve this including adapting our Child and Adult Disability Payment application forms to help clients understand where they can provide information to support their application; relying on the expertise of our in-house health and social care practitioners to allow colleagues to reach decisions more quickly and making improvements to our telephone system to decrease waiting times as well as finding ways to become more efficient.

This brings me to what this year is all about – the Scottish Government has built in some space in the delivery timetable for new benefits to allow for stabilisation, consolidation and continuous improvement. We need this to make sure that we can offer the level of service that people should rightly expect from us. Work was already underway to review our structures and ways of working as we move into a new Corporate Planning period, given the financial context, this work has an even sharper focus on performance and value for money. This is required to enable us to find additional efficiencies so that we can operate within the budget available.

Although this year is about making improvements to what is already in place and finding efficiencies, there will still be progress with the introduction of new Scottish Government benefits. We are looking forward to introducing Carer Support Payment followed by a national launch in Spring 2024. Carers were our first clients through Carer's Allowance Supplement. I've been lucky to hear many wonderful stories about how this money has made a difference to carers and I'm delighted we will be providing further support to a group of people who give a lot.

Front and centre of everything we do is providing the best service possible for the people of Scotland. The work we do this year will further cement our ability to do this and keep us on track to become a service that people can be proud of for generations to come.

David Wallace

Chief Executive, Social Security Scotland

Contents

Our year ahead in numbers	04	Our approach to change and improvement	20
Introduction	06	Our Budget 2023-24	21
About us	06	Measuring our success	24
Our Governance model	08		
Scottish Government Social Security Programme	09		
Operating environment	11		
Strategic risk	11		
Alignment to the National Performance Framework	12		
Our goals	14		
Fulfil our legislative commitments with kindness, deliver the right benefit to the right people at the right time.	15		
Continuously improve our services and systems focusing on improving efficiency.	16		
Design our services with those who will use them focusing on improving quality of outcome.	17		
Ensure we have the capabilities we need, develop our people and foster a positive culture to deliver the best service possible.	18		



Our year ahead in numbers



By the end of this financial year we will administer

14 benefits

including the new Carers Support Payment



The Scottish Fiscal Commission forecast that we will provide more than

£5.1 billion

in benefit payments



We will provide support to over

1.25 million

people in Scotland



We will have more than

4,000 staff

to deliver this support
(Full-time equivalent)



Continue to deliver from our

3 buildings

in Dundee and Glasgow with a new space for people to seek support in our Dundee head office



We will continue to progress with the transfer of

700,000

disability and carer benefit awards from the DWP to our new Scottish system

Our values

Dignity, fairness, respect.

We are proud of the service we provide.

We are impartial and objective at every turn.

And we treat everyone with the respect they deserve.

Introduction

About us

We are responsible for administering Scottish benefits on behalf of the Scottish Government. To support the delivery of this, we produce a Business Plan each financial year setting out the actions we will take to make progress against these goals. We then report on this in our Annual Report and Accounts.

We were established in September 2018 and are part of the Scottish Government Director General Communities portfolio. Our **Framework Document** explains the detailed accountability and governance for our organisation, and the context for our relationship with Scottish Ministers and Scottish Government Directorates.

We do not make the rules about who can be paid benefits or how much money they should receive as these are Ministerial matters. We are here to manage our part of delivering the Scottish social security system in line with the principles laid down in the **Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018** and **Our Charter**.



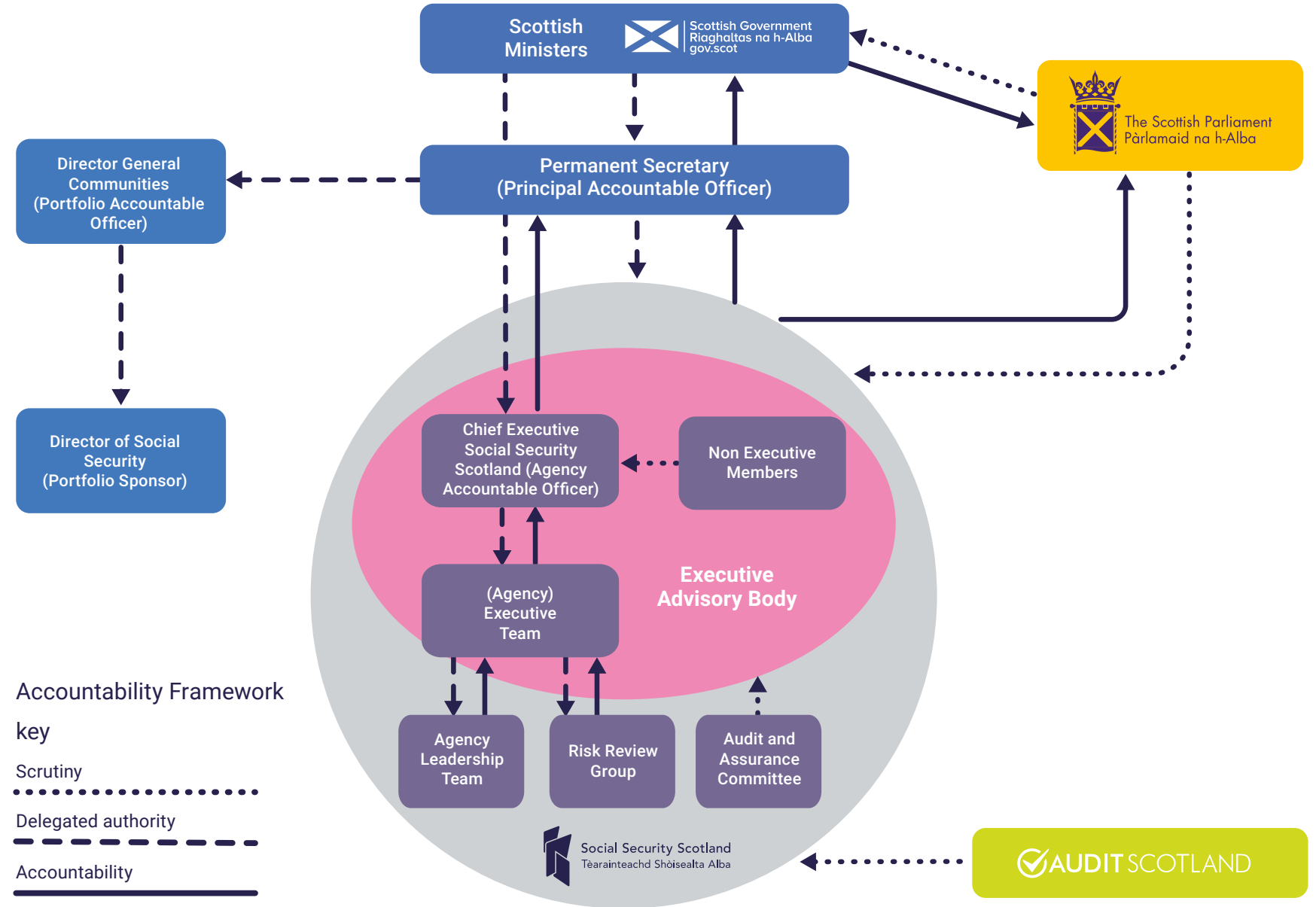
What we do

We help the people of Scotland by delivering social security payments in an efficient way.



Our Governance model

Social Security Scotland is an Executive Agency of the Scottish Government and is responsible for the administration of devolved social security benefits for people in Scotland. Our **Framework Document** sets out the detailed accountability and governance framework for the organisation, and the context for our relationship with Scottish Ministers and the Scottish Government, including the Social Security Directorate. The Scottish Government's Director of Social Security is Social Security Scotland's Portfolio Sponsor. They chair our regular Portfolio Sponsor meetings with our organisation's Executive Team. The diagram sets out these relationships.



Scottish Government Social Security Programme

The Social Security Programme run by the Scottish Government's Social Security Directorate is responsible for developing and implementing the initial capability required by Social Security Scotland to deliver the devolved benefits. The Scottish Government's Director of Social Security is the Senior Responsible Officer for the Programme.

The aims of the Social Security Programme are published in the **Social Security Programme Business Case**. The Scottish Government's Social Security Programme Board ensures the successful delivery of the Programme and provides necessary scrutiny and challenge, while promoting alignment with current and emerging government policies. Social Security Scotland is fully represented on all Social Security Programme Governance forums and, likewise, we have senior colleagues from Social Security Programme on our forums where appropriate.

This close partnership with colleagues in the Social Security Programme ensures that implementation of new systems and processes for benefits interacts positively with and takes due account of, the live delivery for which Social Security Scotland is responsible.



What we believe

We believe social security is a human right. We make sure the people of Scotland get the support they are entitled to.



Operating environment

The Scottish Budget 2023-24 set out Scottish Ministers' intention to build on the commitments set out in the Programme for Government and the COVID Recovery Strategy, alongside the £50 million Tackling Child Poverty Fund. Ministers have prioritised funding from across government portfolios to reduce child poverty as set out in **Best Start, Bright Futures**; and through the Scottish Government's Social Innovation Partnership and place-based pathfinder projects to identify and deliver joined-up person-centred interventions that make a real difference. These actions will all contribute towards the First Minister's priorities in tackling poverty, building a fairer, greener and growing economy, and improving public services by 2026 as set out in the recent **prospectus document**.

A key Scottish Government priority is the design, development and implementation of our social security powers and delivery of thirteen benefits through Social Security Scotland, including the Scottish Child Payment, at £25 per week, that is now available to all eligible under-16s, and complex disability benefits. We have built a social security system that treats people with dignity, fairness and respect, helps people in need, and supports independent living.



Strategic risk





Social Security Scotland has identified the following key strategic risks which we intend to treat:

- Having the capacity, capability, resource and organisational resilience to sustain delivery from the Scottish Government Social Security Programme's complex programme of benefit rollouts to clients that meets our statutory obligations and the values of Our Charter
- Working with the Scottish Government's Social Security Programme on maturing and developing the performance of our systems and processes to manage an increasing caseload, including improving management and performance information and our fraud and error controls
- Working with the Scottish Government's Social Security Programme on managing key relationships and dependencies to ensure that digital services meet clients' needs and we minimise the impact of technical debt and impacts to our change management function
- Dealing with economic uncertainty and the impact on forecasting future benefit expenditure and the consequent impact on our administrative budgets and workforce planning

Alignment to the National Performance Framework

National Outcome	How we support this
We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally	We provide access to a number of low-income support payments designed by the Scottish Government to tackle poverty. We promote these benefits so people know what they are entitled to and can apply for them. We process applications in a timely manner and make payments to those eligible.
We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe	We provide access to disability payments designed by the Scottish Government to enable people to live as fully and independently as possible. We promote these benefits so people know what they are entitled to and can apply. We process applications in a timely manner and make payments to those eligible.
We have thriving and innovative business, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone	We create job opportunities and provide community benefits through our spending on goods and services. We also provide access to Job Start Payment designed by the Scottish Government to help young people who have been unemployed pay for costs incurred when they start a new job.
We are healthy and active	We provide access to disability payments designed by the Scottish Government to enable people to live as fully and independently as possible. We also provide access to Best Start Foods, a payment designed by the Scottish Government to help parents and carers of children under 3 to buy healthy food.
We respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination	The Scottish Government considers social security to be a human right. We ensure that people are aware of this and that they know about the support they may be entitled to and can apply for benefits. Public Services that treat people with dignity and respect.

<p>Scottish Government National Outcomes that we support</p>	<p>We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally</p> 	<p>We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe</p> 	<p>We have thriving and innovative business, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone</p> 	<p>We are healthy and active</p> 	<p>We respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination</p> 
---	--	---	---	--	--

<p>What our clients have told us they expect of us in Our Charter</p>	<p>A people's service</p> 	<p>Processes that work</p> 	<p>A learning system</p> 	<p>A better future</p> 
--	---	--	--	--

What we do **We help the people of Scotland by delivering social security payments**

<p>Our goals</p>	<p>Fulfil our legislative commitments with kindness, deliver the right benefit to the right people at the right time.</p>	<p>Continuously improve our services and systems focusing on improving efficiency.</p>	<p>Design our services with those who will use them focusing on improving quality of outcome.</p>	<p>Ensure we have the capabilities we need, develop our people and foster a positive culture to deliver the best service possible.</p>
-------------------------	---	--	---	--

<p>Our objectives in 2023-24</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with partners and promote payments so that those who may be eligible apply. ● Prepare for the launch of future Scottish Government benefits. ● Discharge the duties of a responsible public body, complying with our corporate and social responsibilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Review the size and shape of our organisation ensuring it is supporting our client's experience. ● Review the processes we use - revising where we can - to increase performance and deliver an improved client experience. ● Work with the Social Security Programme to deliver more automation - reducing manual intervention enabling us to process applications more efficiently. ● Work with the Social Security Programme to reduce dependency on DWP technology to ensure we have the ownership and control of future benefit delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gather and learn from insights from clients, stakeholders and colleagues via client panels, surveys and stakeholder events. ● Protect client outcomes and protect the public purse, by developing our approach to quality, beginning to embed it across our systems and processes as we develop them. ● Work with the Social Security Programme to deliver an inclusive digital experience for clients and staff to help people manage their benefits. ● Work with the Social Security Programme to deliver methods to access data to ensure we are using data/Management Information/ insights to deliver a service that meets people's needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Build strong leadership and governance that provides clear strategic direction and effectively manages performance. ● Focus on developing the skills and capability of our people. ● Support the resilience of our people. ● Work jointly with Scottish Government to deliver a safe Programme Exit ensuring Social Security Scotland are left with a strong legacy to improve and evolve.
---	--	---	--	---



Our goals

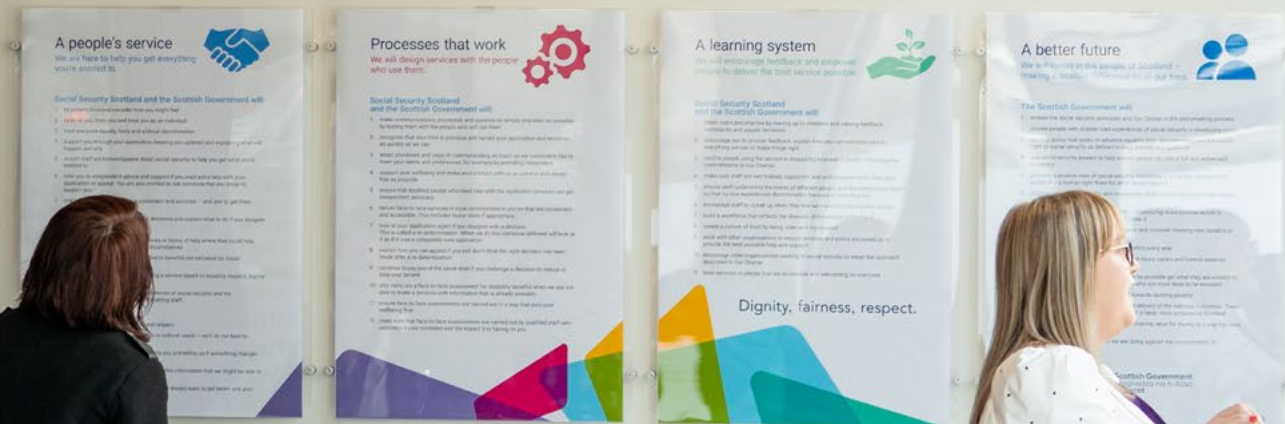
Social Security Scotland's main objective is to deliver our obligations under the **Social Security (Scotland) Act 2018** and continually improve our services for the people who need them, as measured against **Our Charter**. In 2023-24 we intend to focus on four strategic goals, which are designed to improve outcomes for the people of Scotland in the context of our operating environment and the risks we face.

Our strategic goals in pursuit of improved overall performance against Our Charter:

- fulfil our legislative commitments with kindness, deliver the right benefit to the right people at the right time
- continuously improve our services and systems focusing on improving efficiency
- design our services with those who will use them focusing on improving quality of outcome
- ensure we have the capabilities we need, develop our people and foster a positive culture to deliver the best service possible

Our Charter

What you can expect from the Scottish Government and Social Security Scotland





Fulfil our legislative commitments with kindness, deliver the right benefit to the right people at the right time.

In 2023-24 we will:

- work with partners and promote payments so that those who may be eligible apply
- prepare for the launch of future Scottish Government benefits
- discharge the duties of a responsible public body, complying with our corporate and social responsibilities

How will we do this:

- continue making payments of the right amount, to the right person at the right time across the 13 benefits we already administer and Carer Support Payment once this is introduced later this year
- deliver services across 32 local authorities, engaging with stakeholder networks to promote benefit uptake in a range of ways, assist clients with pre-claim support, deliver our health and social care services and undertake activity to protect the public purse
- further develop our systems to assess and act on safeguarding concerns to protect the public
- we will begin to roll out of Carer Support Payment by the end of 2023, with full national introduction in Spring 2024
- beginning managed case transfer of Personal Independence Payment awards to Adult Disability Payment
- preparing for the pilot of the Pension Age Disability Payment in Autumn 2024
- expansion of Best Start Food eligibility early 2024
- comply with our corporate governance requirements and be subject to audit by Audit Scotland
- discharge our obligations around transparency, data protection, or other legislative requirements
- act in a socially responsible way, driving social and economic value where we can and contributing towards Scottish Government's **Net Zero ambition**



Continuously improve our services and systems focusing on improving efficiency.

In 2023-24 we will:

- review the size and shape of our organisation ensuring it is supporting our client's experience whilst delivering value for money and ensuring we make best use of our resources
- review the processes we use - revising where we can - to increase performance and deliver an improved client experience
- work with the Social Security Programme to deliver more automation - reducing manual intervention enabling us to process applications more efficiently
- work with the Social Security Programme to reduce dependency on DWP technology to ensure we have the ownership and control of future benefit delivery

How will we do this:

- refine our existing delivery structures as well as reviewing and assessing work streams transitioning from the Social Security Programme
- refine our systems and processes, working with the Scottish Government's Social Security Programme, improving functionality and performance
- prioritise continuous improvement activity on those elements that directly improve performance outcomes for clients and Social Security Scotland, through increasing automation
- improve our systems and processes to reduce error, increasing positive outcomes for clients first time and reducing the need for colleagues to spend time on error correction



Design our services with those who will use them focusing on improving quality of outcome.

In 2023-24 we will:

- gather and learn from insights from clients, stakeholders and colleagues
- protect client outcomes and protect the public purse, by developing our approach to quality, beginning to embed it across our systems and processes as we develop them
- work with the Social Security Programme to deliver an inclusive digital experience for clients and staff to help people manage their benefits
- work with the Social Security Programme to deliver methods to access data to ensure we are using data/ Management Information/insights to deliver a service that meets people's needs

How will we do this:

- mature our change management functions to ensure it can deliver safely and securely ongoing and new change initiatives
- ensure that we provide insightful analysis that informs effective decision-making, as well as ensuring transparency and accountability to the people of Scotland
- develop the frameworks, structures and capability we will need to support improvement of our services to clients across our people, processes and technology
- advance our existing technology, systems and processes further on their development lifecycle, ensuring we have the capability to effectively support our live services
- continually improve our controls, identifying and implementing new or additional controls to mitigate the risk of financial loss and/or a negative client outcome due to error
- continue to work collaboratively with Dundee and Glasgow City Council and the Department for Work and Pensions to tackle child poverty through the respective Dundee and Glasgow Pathfinder projects, as part of **Best Start, Brighter Futures**



Ensure we have the capabilities we need, develop our people and foster a positive culture to deliver the best service possible.

In 2023-24 we will:

- build strong leadership and governance that provides clear strategic direction and effectively manages performance
- focus on developing the skills and capability of our people
- support the resilience of our people
- work jointly with Scottish Government to deliver a safe Programme Exit ensuring Social Security Scotland are left with a strong legacy to improve and evolve

How will we do this:

- engage with stakeholders to ensure that we are a learning organisation that listens to feedback
- focus on line manager's skill and capability to ensure all staff are well supported
- deliver a mix of operational and development training for people based on their individual needs, broadening their skills base and providing flexibility in deployment across Social Security Scotland
- continue our wellbeing offer to staff, ensuring they are resilient to the challenges ahead
- listen to our clients and respond where we can make changes to improve
- we will work with Scottish Government to begin our review of Our Charter
- carry out a review of Adult Disability Payments
- carry out a People Survey with colleagues, a Client Survey and gather and learn from other insights

How we do it

We assess applications for support fairly and make payments efficiently to people who are eligible.



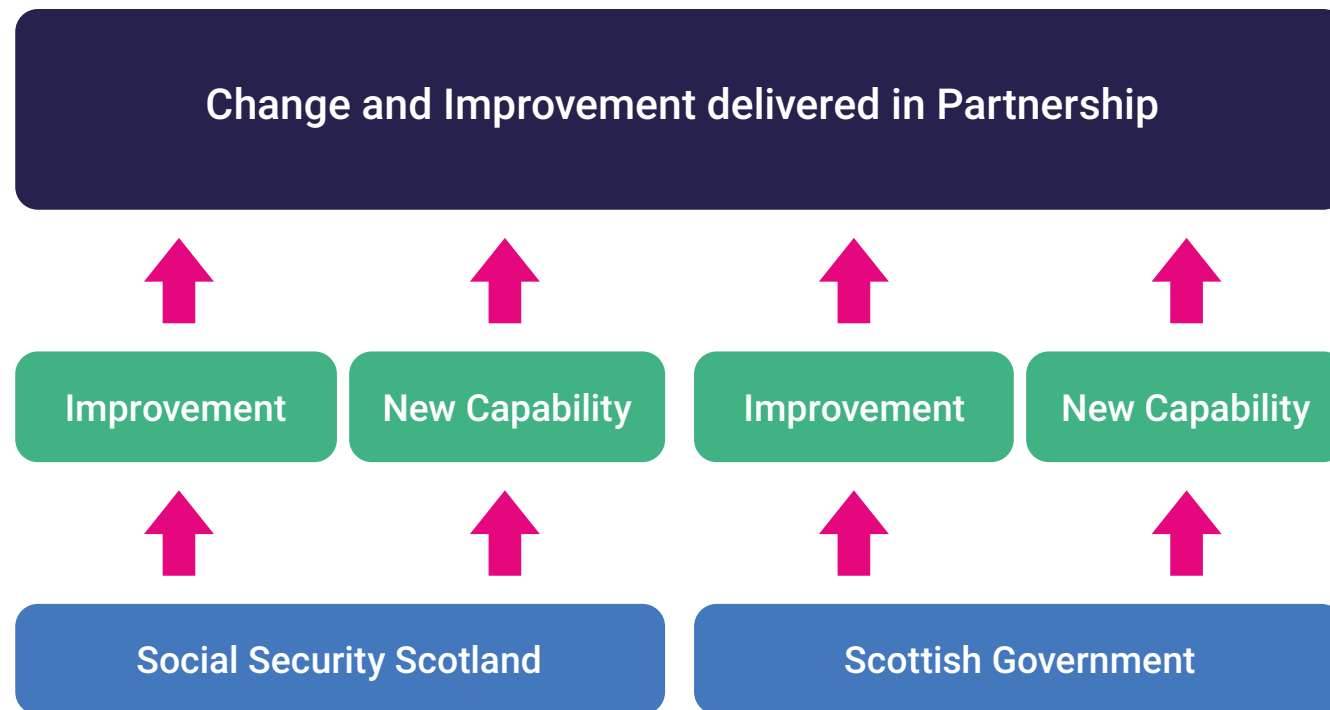
Our approach to change and improvement

The Scottish Government’s Social Security Programme has delivered systems and processes to enable Social Security Scotland to begin direct delivery of thirteen benefits since 2018. The pace of delivery and the Agile development approach employed by the Scottish Government means that systems and processes require further development post go live. Both the Scottish Government and Social Security Scotland will deliver improvements to systems and processes. Some improvements will be jointly delivered and some by the Scottish Government or Social Security Scotland alone. We co-ordinate the delivery of improvement to existing system and processes, alongside the delivery of new capabilities for the launch of more benefits in one single prioritised delivery plan.

Social Security Scotland prioritise our change activity by alignment to our strategic goals. All potential change is assessed against the four goals. We ask, does the change or improvement:

- Deliver for People in Scotland
- Improve Performance
- Improve Quality
- Develop our People and Culture

This scoring enables us to contribute to the single prioritised delivery plan with the Scottish Government and assess the importance of potential changes within Social Security Scotland.

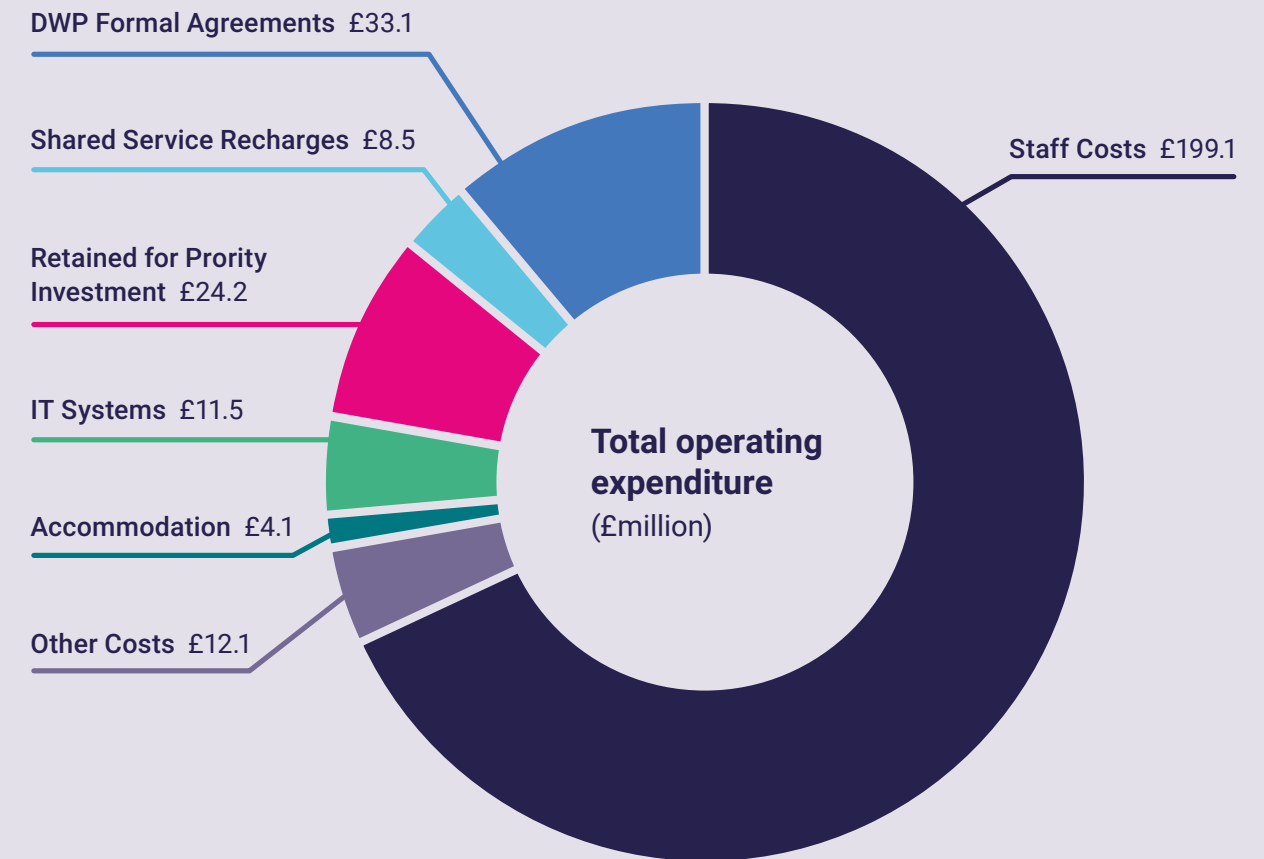


Our Budget 2023-24

On the 15 December 2022, the draft 2023-24 Scottish Budget was presented to the Scottish Parliament and the Budget¹ was passed on 10 February 2023. For 2023-24, Social Security Scotland has an administration budget of £302.5 million and benefit expenditure budget of £5.1 billion.

Social Security Scotland	Budget 2023-24	Revised Budget (after Spring Budget Revision 2022-23)	Increase/ (decrease)
	£million	£million	£million
Operating Expenditure	292.5	262.3	30.2
Capital Expenditure	4.5	7.3	-2.8
Depreciation (Non-Cash)	5.5	5.4	0.1
Total Social Security Scotland administration	302.5	275.0	27.5
Benefit expenditure	5,102.2	4,036.9	1,065.3

We have allocated our budget as follows:



¹ Scottish Budget: 2023-24 - gov.scot (www.gov.scot)

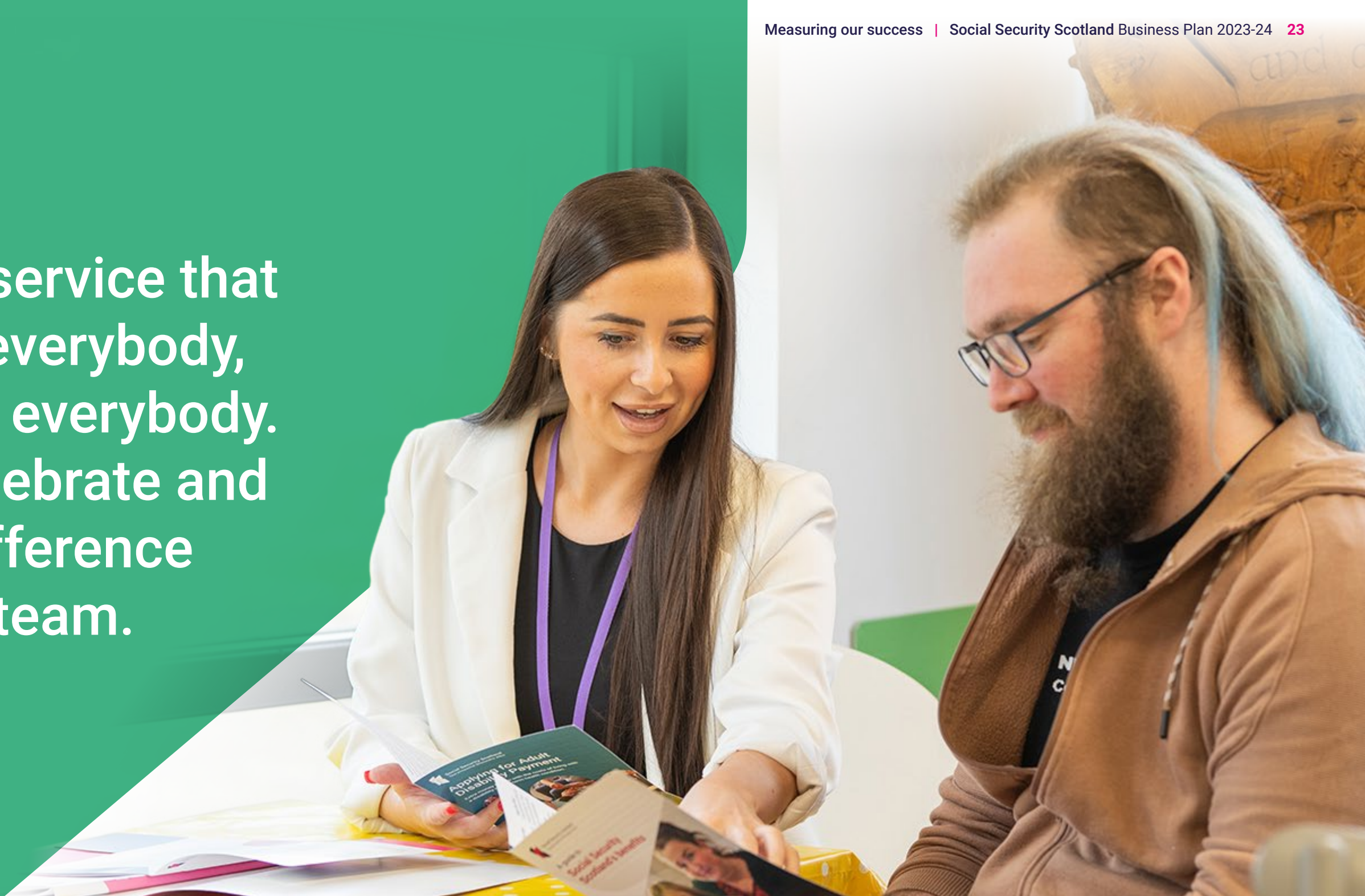
The Scottish Fiscal Commission, whose forecasts we base the budget for benefit on, estimated² that we will spend the following:

Divisional budget allocation	2023-24 Budget	2022-23 Budget
Delivered by Social Security Scotland	£million	£million
Adult Disability Payment	2,689.6	86.9
Best Start Foods	17.0	13.0
Best Start Grant	19.8	20.5
Carer's Allowance Supplement	50.0	44.3
Child Disability Payment	327.6	191.7
Child Winter Heating Assistance	4.7	5.6
Funeral Support Payment	12.1	11.8
Job Start Payment	1.1	0.3
Young Carer's Grant	1.0	0.9
Scottish Child Payment	442.1	226.3
Winter Heating Payment	23.6	21.4
Total delivered by Social Security Scotland	3,588.6	622.7
Delivered by the Department for Work and Pensions		
Personal Independence Payment	–	1,960.3
Attendance Allowance	614.1	540.0
Carer's Allowance	371.8	311.7
Disability Living Allowance (Adult)	437.6	516.9
Industrial Injuries Disablement Scheme	84.4	79.3
Severe Disablement Allowance	5.8	6.0
	1,513.6	3,414.2
Total	5,102.2	4,036.9

² Scotland's Economic and Fiscal Forecasts – December 2022 | Scottish Fiscal Commission

Inclusivity

To build a service that works for everybody, we include everybody. And we celebrate and support difference within our team.



Measuring our success

Social Security Scotland will measure and report on how well we have met our business plan.

We will:

- run a people survey each year to make sure that we are meeting our obligations to our staff
- carry out an all-client survey each year to find out how people feel about their experience of claiming benefits
- prepare and publish a range of statistical publications
- prepare and publish a Charter measurement report, showing how we have contributed to the aims of Our Charter
- prepare an Annual Report and Accounts for 2023-24, to show how we have spent our budget and how we have performed against our goals

We would expect that taken together, this suite of publications will clearly demonstrate how we are meeting our strategic goals and contributing to the Scottish Government's National Outcomes.

During the year we expect to enhance our evidence base to inform further assessment of our performance and our learning.



Social Security Scotland
Agnes Husband House
17 South Union Street
Dundee
DD1 4BF

Please ask us if you would like copies of this document in audio or visual format, large print, or in a community language. If you have any questions or feedback, please email communications@socialsecurity.gov.scot

This document is available on our website: socialsecurity.gov.scot

Published by Social Security Scotland June 2023

Follow Social Security Scotland

