



Executive Advisory Body

Date of Meeting	Tuesday, 17 June 2025
Subject	HR Report
Paper No.	Below the Line 10.1
Prepared By	People Services
Purpose	Note
Sponsor	Ally MacPhail

1. Background

- 1.1. We have presented some of the key areas of work across the People and Place function for the attention of Executive Advisory Body.
- 1.2. The detailed data on workforce composition as at the end of December 2024 is available in the published dataset which can be found at [Social Security Scotland - Social Security Scotland workforce statistics to December 2024](#) and included at paper 10.2.
- 1.3. Data for period ending 31 March 2025 is still awaited due to the implementation of Oracle Cloud and will be published when available. Locally held data has been used in the report and withheld under Freedom of Information on the basis it is exempt under section 22 (1) – future publication.

2. Key points

- 2.1 [REDACTED]
- 2.2 [REDACTED]
- 2.3 We have a robust governance process in place to manage workforce through recruitment controls, and Deputy Directors continue to ensure all possible alternatives to fill posts have been considered prior to any recruitment.
- 2.4 We have started to receive sickness absence data from Oracle and at the quarter ending March 2025 our Average Working Days Lost was [REDACTED]. The top 3 reasons for absence are mental health, cold/flu/respiratory, stomach/bowel. We continue to deal with a high number of complex long term sickness cases, focussing our wellbeing offer on stress, anxiety and other mental health issues, resilience and change, to try to address the underlying causes of absence.
- 2.5 The Client and Staff Insights team are, with the support of Trade Union colleagues, commencing a research project to build a data-informed and better understanding of the issues affecting staff absence and wellbeing at work. The report is expected in August this year.



- 2.6 All People teams are now engaged with the Programme closure and the design of the Future Operating Model for our organisation. Primarily this is focusing on the establishment of a new Change and Digital Delivery function which will include transferring staff with key skills and capabilities from the Programme that don't already exist in Social Security Scotland. As part of this, we continue to manage internal stakeholder relationships, including with Scottish Government People Directorate and our trade unions.
- 2.7 A new Strategic Workforce Forum has been established and will provide strategic oversight, guidance, and decision-making support regarding strategic workforce planning and affordability measures within the organisation. The forum, whose strategic approach will increasingly be informed by work on the Future Operating Model as that work matures, reports to Executive Team, is jointly sponsored by Finance and People Divisions and is made up of senior leaders from across the organisation.
- 2.8 Forum ways of working are being established with existing groups including Finance and Investment Forum with whom it will work closely, and other appropriate groups to develop a holistic organisational view.
- 2.9 We are continuing to roll out our Approach to Performance (see Annex A below) across the organisation to support our desired performance culture. It has now been implemented in Child Disability Payment, Adult Disability Payment, Health and Social Care, Fraud and Error, Client Experience, People and Place, and the Chief Digital Office. Implementation is currently underway in Business Change.
- 2.10 The approach is delivering a significant increase in organisational performance capability, colleague engagement, and manager confidence. We have also seen stronger collaboration between enabling and operational delivery which is helping to drive improved business outcomes.
- 2.11 We continue to embed our behaviours framework, the Three Cs, across the organisation. We are also seeing a big increase in interest in the work from colleagues in core Scottish Government and we are supporting a small case study, led by Scottish Government's Societal Impact and Wellbeing Team.
- 2.12 We saw good engagement from all parts of the organisation with Learning at Work week with 3,974 attendees on sessions across the week. Evaluation feedback is excellent again this year with an average rating of 4.8/5.
- 2.13 In May 2025, we launched the revised organisational approach to mainstreaming inclusive communication and equality. This included internal publication of a revised strategy supported by a range of support materials. Our Mainstreaming Equality Report 2025 was also published externally as required by legislation.

3. Conclusions

- 3.1. Executive Advisory Body is asked to note the work taking place across People Services.

- 3.2. We would appreciate any suggestions or advice members may have regarding the content of the report.

Annex A – Approach to Performance

Slide 1



Social Security Scotland
Tearainteachd Shòisealta Alba

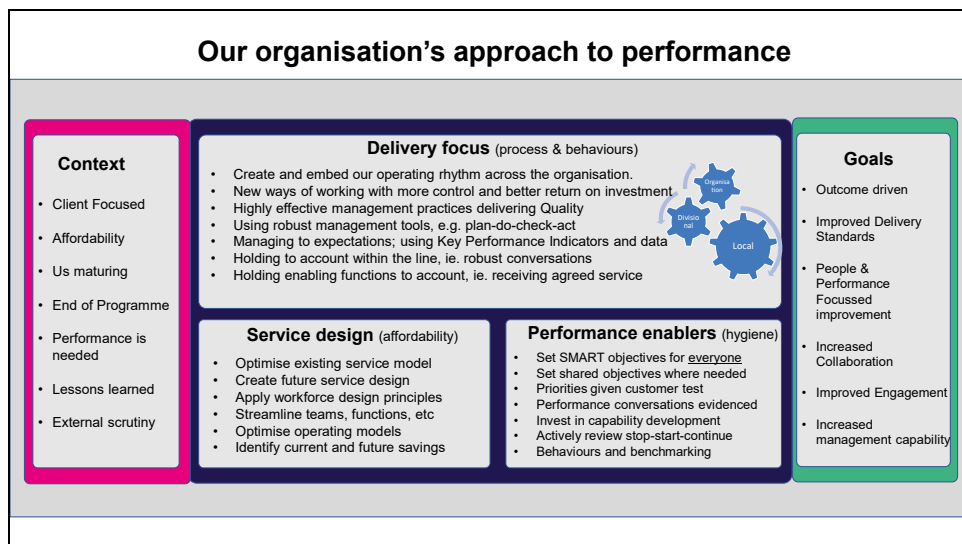
Executive Team - People & Finance mode

Approach to Performance

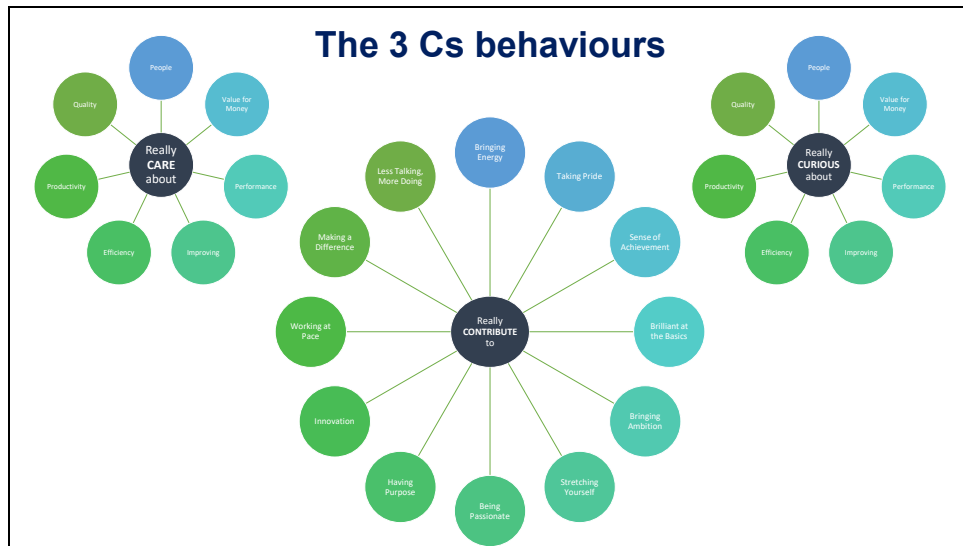
10 September 2024

Dignity, fairness, respect.

Slide 2



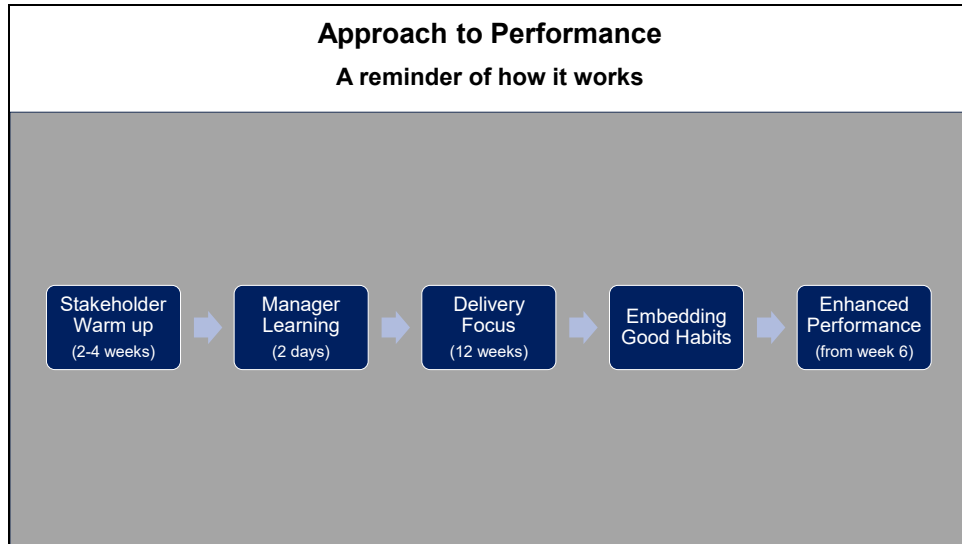
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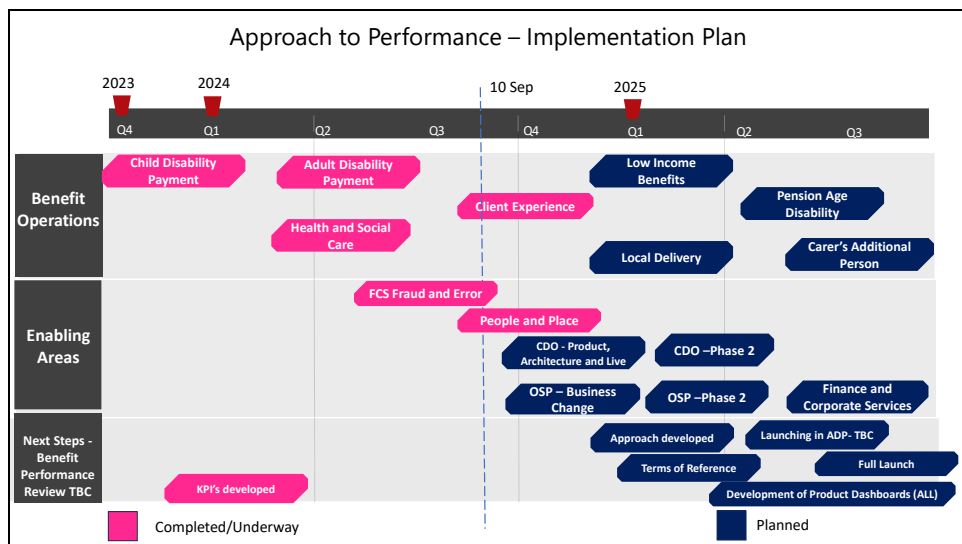
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[REDACTED]

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Slide 6





Slide 7

Approach to Performance – Discussion

- Significantly raising our capability to deliver on a wide range of outcomes
 - ✓ Delivering strong results in quality, performance, manager capability and behaviours
 - ✓ Providing business areas with financial resilience as demonstrably doing more with the same/less.
 - ✓ Improving relationships with enabling functions
 - ✓ Showing what an inclusive performance culture looks like
 - ✓ Wider messaging of Approach to Performance linked to behaviours
- Agency-wide plan accommodates controlled roll out with room for acceleration of priority areas – how do we **support and resource** acceleration?
- Maturity of Approach to Performance opens up greater opportunities to improve governance between performance of benefits and investments in improvement.

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Approach to Performance – Decisions

- From Nov 2023 – date the Approach to Performance continues to rapidly deliver significant results in outcomes and capability.
Decision: Executive Team to endorse attached roll out plan across Agency, with commitment to resource effective delivery of approach.
- Agree further communications and wider commitment to Performance Culture, Behaviours, Approach to Performance.
Decision: Executive Team to endorse and prioritise.