![Social Security Scotland / Tèarainteachd Shòisealta Alba]

Portfolio Sponsor Meeting - Attendance

Meeting Date	Wednesday, 7 May 2025, 15:00 – 16:30, St. Andrews House / Microsoft Teams	
Members	Director General Communities	Chair – Louise Macdonald (LMD)
	Social Security Scotland Chief Executive	David Wallace (DW)
	Deputy Director, Organisational Strategy and Performance	Ally MacPhail (AMP)
	Head of Finance	NB
	Social Security Scotland Non-Executive Member	Chris Creegan (CC)
	DG Communities Governance and Strategy Lead	FC
	Chief of Staff, DG Communities Office	TF
Apologies	Chief Operating Officer	Miriam Craven (MC)
	Deputy Director, Finance and Corporate Services	Stephanie Devenny (SD)
	Scottish Government Non-Executive Member	Manish Joshi
Secretariat	Governance Manager	AMG
	Governance Manager	JM

Portfolio Meeting - Discussion

Item	Subject	Main points of discussion
1.	**Welcome and Review of Action / Decision Log**	1.1. The Chair welcomed and thanked everyone for their attendance and acknowledged the apologies as listed above. 1.2. The action/decision log was reviewed, and the outstanding open actions were noted.

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2.	**Horizon Scanning and emerging issues**	2.1. The scheduling of the Public Bodies Unit's (PBU) governance sponsorship stress test was addressed. As the format of the stress test is currently being reviewed by PBU, concern was noted regarding potential scheduling delays.
		A decision was reached to proceed with the Public Bodies Unit arrangements while simultaneously conducting a proportionate self-assessment for mitigation.
		2.2. Key points from the horizon scanning paper were highlighted, which included Non-executive succession planning, Mainstreaming and Equalities Report, noting no issues were raised and there was a discussion on tools and support available in meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), and the Digital Maturity report. Further review and analysis of the Digital Maturity report has still to take place.
		2.3. DW informed members of previous discussion with Ed Pybus, Chair of the Scottish Commission on Social Security (SCoSS), highlighting changes to SCoSS's remit concerning reporting capability.
3.	**Performance Update**	3.1. Members were provided with the latest performance update, with the following key points discussed:
		• The latest status of the balanced scorecard was provided, including assurances on improvement actions being taken and their impact pertaining to the most recent data on processing times and Average Working Days Lost (AWDL).
		• Further discussion on AWDL and how this is being addressed via People plan initiatives.
		• An overview of Performance Framework activities and the planned schedule for publication.
		• An update on current transition (Future Operating Model) activities. A Future Operating Model deep dive session, scheduled for Monday 12 May, was noted by members.

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4.	**Risk Update**	4.1. A strategic overview of the Social Security Scotland strategic risk register was presented.
		4.2. Updates were provided on three key areas: the Future Operating Model, the Client Payment Platform, and the Fraud and Error Investment business case. Risk management assessments are underway. Members had a short discussion regarding the timelines for the Fraud and Error Investment business case, and stakeholder engagement with internal audit was noted.
		4.3. Status update on Programme Closure and future operating model were discussed noting the narrowing timeline and scale of this work.
5.	**Finance Update**	5.1. The Finance report was discussed, and the following key points were highlighted:
		• Current benefit expenditure and the operating budget for the financial year 2025/2026 were reviewed, with reference made to ongoing business planning prioritisation.
		• Further discussion took place concerning the Social Security Scotland Admin budget and the anticipated pressures upon it.
6	**Internal Audit plan – progress update**	6.1 Owing to time constraints, this item was not discussed within the meeting.
7.	**Any Other Business**	7.1 The Director General Communities requested confirmation from David Wallace that there were no other critical matters requiring her attention. David Wallace confirmed that there were none.

Portfolio Sponsor Meeting – Actions

Agenda Item	Action Item(s)	Description	Owner
Horizon scanning and emerging issues	**Stress test arrangements**	Governance teams will proceed with a proportionate self-assessment, utilising the governance toolkit to provide assurance on sponsorship arrangements pending completion of the Public Bodies Unit (PBU) stress test.	DP / FC
Horizon scanning and emerging issues	**Future Operating Model project**	CC proposed convening a joint session between Executive Advisory Board members and Programme Board colleagues to share discussion on the future operating model approach	DW
Horizon scanning and emerging issues	**Equality and Mainstreaming report**	The work of the First Minister's National Advisory Council on Women and Girls regarding the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) was highlighted. LMD proposed that Social Security Scotland examine this and the emerging tools to ensure SSS are meeting the duties. CC offered assistance based on recent involvement in comparable work at the Scottish Police Authority.	AMP
Horizon scanning and emerging issues	**Scottish Commission on Social Security**	LMD asked TF to provide reminder to the Cabinet Secretary on the renewed SCoSS remit regarding reporting changes.	TF
Performance Update	**Average Working Days Lost (AWDL)**	FC drew attention to recent Parliamentary Questions concerning Average Working Days Lost (AWDL). An offer was extended regarding potential cross-learning / cross-working initiatives to enhance collaboration and insight regarding narrative.	FC / AMP
Performance Update	**Performance Framework**	An action was taken to engage with DG on the Performance Framework ahead of publication	Chief Executive Office
Risk Update	**Fraud and Error Investment Business case**	A timeline for the business case to be provided and discussion between DW and LMD is to be arranged to facilitate a review of the business case from an assurance perspective.	Chief Executive Office