

Social Work England Board Meeting (Web)

MEETING

27 October 2023 10:15

PUBLISHED

20 October 2023

Social Work England Board Meeting

Friday 27 October 2023, 10.15 – 12.45

at The Don, Social Work England

and by videoconference

AGENDA

Item	Time	Topic	Paper / Ref.	Board Action	Lead
		Welcome			Chair
1.	10.15	Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest	Verbal	To note/declare	Chair
2.	10.20	Minutes of the meeting held on 28 July 2023	Paper 01	To approve	Chair
3.	10.25	Matters Arising and Action Log	Paper 02	To discuss and note	Chair
4.	10.35	Chair's Report	Verbal	To note	Chair
5.	10.45	Chief Executive's Report Chief Executive's meetings	Paper 03 Annex 03a	To discuss, advise and note	Chief Executive
6.	10.55	Policy Committee Chair's Report	Verbal	To note	Policy Committee Chair
7.	11.05	Remuneration Committee Chair's Report	Verbal	To note	Remuneration Committee Chair; ED, People and Business Support
8.	11.15	ARAC Chair's Report	Paper 04* [to follow]	To note	ARAC Chair
9.	11.25	Finance and Commercial Report Management accounts to 30 September 2023	Paper 05 Annex 05a	To note	Head of Finance and Commercial
10.	11.40	Quarter 2 Performance Report 2023/2024	Paper 06	To discuss and note	Executive Directors
11.	12.05	Data and Insight Strategy – progress update - Data and Insight Strategy - Year 1 Priorities	Paper 07 Annex 07a* Annex 07b*	To discuss and note	ED, People and Business Support

Item	Time	Topic	Paper / Ref.	Board Action	Lead
12.	12.30	Proposal for Senior Independent Director role Senior Independent Director: Role and responsibilities	Paper 08 Annex 08a	To discuss and note	Chair; ED, People and Business Support
13.	12.40	Any other business	n/a	To discuss	Chair
		Date of Next Meeting: Friday 02 February 2024 10.30 – 13.00		To note	Chair
	12.45	Meeting ends			

* Papers marked with an asterisk are 'private' to protect confidentiality according to our guidance for publishing board papers.

Note:

After the meeting, there will be a 15-minute data protection training session for Board members. We will then break for lunch. Following lunch, Board members and National Advisory Forum members will participate in a joint workshop between 13.30 – 14.30.

LIST OF ATTENDANCE

Board Members:	Dr Andrew McCulloch	Interim Chair, Non-executive Director
	Dr Adi Cooper	Non-executive Director
	Ann Harris	Non-executive Director
	Jonathan Gorvin	Non-executive Director
	Mark Lam	Non-executive Director
	Dr Sue Ross	Non-executive Director
	Colum Conway	Chief Executive, Executive Director
Boardroom Apprentice:	Jennifer Waterhouse	Boardroom Apprentice
	Berry Rose	Assistant Director, Regulation (Investigations)
	Elle Langdown	Director's Assistant
	Linda Dale	Executive Director, People and Business Support
	Philip Hallam	Executive Director, Regulation
	Rachel McAssey	Assistant Director, Regulation (Registration, Advice and Adjudications)
	Richard Simpson	Head of Finance and Commercial
Sponsor Team:	Andrew Wise	Department for Education (DfE)
	Brooke Parker	Department for Education (DfE)
	Catherine Pearson	Department for Education (DfE)
	Sonia Mosley	Department for Education (DfE)
Public Observers:	Ben Jones	Unison
	James Wilkinson	Unison
	Jo Clift	RedQuadrant
	June Thoburn	University of East Anglia
	Richard West	Professional Standards Authority
Staff Observers:	Elizabeth Frier	Corporate Governance Manager
	Nicola Meston	Investigations Manager

	Robert Berry	Internal Quality Assurance Manager
	Rumbie Chivaura	Finance Business Partner
Minute taker:	Jenna Hodgson	Director's Assistant
Apologies:	n/a	

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Minutes of the last meeting on Friday 28 July 2023

Agenda Item 2 Paper Ref 01

Paper for the

Social Work England Board

Sponsor

The Chair of the Board

Author

Jenna Hodgson, Director's Assistant

Date

27 October 2023

Reviewed by

Colum Conway, Chief Executive

This paper is for

Decision

Associated Strategic Objective

SO10: Continually develop and improve how we work, ensuring we are a well-run organisation that delivers the right outcomes and provides value for money.

Impact: Risk Type and Appetite

Operational delivery - Open

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

N/A

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Minutes of the Social Work England Board Meeting
Friday 28 July 2023, 10.30am
at The Don, Social Work England and by videoconference

Board Members:	Dr Andrew McCulloch	Interim Chair
	Dr Adi Cooper	Non-executive Director
	Ann Harris	Non-executive Director
	Jonathan Gorvin	Non-executive Director
	Mark Lam	Non-executive Director
	Dr Sue Ross	Non-executive Director
	Colum Conway	Chief Executive, Executive Director
Boardroom Apprentice:	Jennifer Waterhouse	Boardroom Apprentice
Social Work England staff in attendance:	Alison Edbury	Executive Office Lead
	Andy Levertton	Head of Business Planning and Improvement
	Berry Rose	Assistant Director, Regulation (Investigations)
	Jonathan Monk	Assistant Director, Policy and Strategy
	Katie Florence	Assistant Director, Communication, Engagement and Insight
	Leanne Clark	Finance Business Partner
	Linda Dale	Executive Director, People and Business Support
	Philip Hallam	Executive Director, Regulation
Sponsor Team:	Sonia Mosley	Department for Education (DfE)
	Andrew Wise	Department for Education (DfE)
Public Observers:	Ben Jones	Unison
	James Wilkinson	Unison
	Richard West	Professional Standards Authority
Staff Observers:	Khadija Rafiq	Hearings Officer
Minute taker:	Jenna Hodgson	Director's Assistant
Apologies:	None	

1. Welcome

- 1.1 Interim Chair, Dr Andrew McCulloch, welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies noted.
- 1.2 There were no declarations of interests reported.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

Paper 01

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting on Friday 19 May 2023 **were approved as a correct record.**

3. Matters Arising and Action Log

Paper 02

- 3.1 There were no matters arising.
- 3.2 The Chair reviewed the action log. All actions closed at or since the last meeting were **approved** as follows:
 - **Action 75:** Chair to circulate his finalised objectives with the Board outside the cycle of meetings. *Completed. Action closed.*
 - **Action 77:** Board to receive the Data and Insight Strategy as part of the Board awayday pack. *Completed. Action closed.*
 - **Action 78:** Board to advise on any final amendments to the EDI Action Plan by 26 May 2023. *Completed. Action closed.*
- 3.3 The progress on the open actions was noted:
 - **Action 76:** Executive Director, Regulation to produce a paper for the July Board meeting addressing the interventions that Fitness to Practise team were working on to achieve caseload progression. *This paper was presented to the Board as item 14 on the agenda. Action closed.*
 - **Action 69:** Executive Director, People and Business Support to implement an annual whistleblowing disclosures report for reporting to the Board annually. *Reporting planning in progress for joint reporting with sister regulators, this is led by GMC. Report expected to be published Q2. It was clarified that this action related to whistleblowing as a prescribed body. Executive Director, People and Business Support, to notify Board members of the report and implications in advance of publication. Action open.*

4. Chair's Report

Paper 03*

- 4.1 The Chair reported on recent participation in the National Advisory Forum (NAF) and Board buddying scheme in which they jointly visited Birmingham City University. The visit had included meetings with service users, academics, people with lived experience and social workers in their assessed and supported year in employment. They had heard feedback and had an opportunity to ask questions. Discussions had also referenced the current research into public perception of the profession.
- 4.2 The students had expressed their appreciation for being in a regulated profession and thanked the Chair for input into the day.
- 4.3 It was noted that Social Work England had recently appointed new members to the NAF. The Board agreed that this would be an opportunity to refresh and re-launch the Board/NAF buddying scheme, with a joint NAF/Board workshop later in the calendar year.
- 4.4 The Chair had recently attended a Fitness to Practise hearing and encouraged other Members to attend one. He noted that it would be valuable to hear any feedback and to consider a future Board discussion.

5. Chief Executive's Report

Paper 04

5.1 The Chief Executive provided an update in relation to key areas. He noted the work involved to support those on fixed-term contracts, which concluded in June, and commended everyone for their contribution. The vast majority of people had secured alternative roles either within or outside Social Work England. An initial analysis of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion data in relation to the Fitness to Practise process had taken place. The findings would be published in September. The public perception research findings had been drafted and would be discussed at the 27 October 2023 Board meeting. The National Workforce Roundtable had agreed an action plan. It was noted that the work was progressing well. Colleagues are also involved in the National Practice Group and are working with the Department of Education on the Early Career Framework, this would be discussed by the Policy Committee and with feedback at the next Board meeting. It was reported that Social Work England would shortly be commencing its fourth year of registration renewals.

6. Policy Committee Chair's Report – verbal

6.1 The Policy Committee Chair reported that their first Policy Committee meeting as Chair took place on 8 June 2023, when the Committee had discussed its purpose and held a workplace review. The Chair applauded the Policy Team's work on the Quarterly Policy Committee Briefing: The Public Policy Landscape and asked if these briefings were circulated to the Board. The Board confirmed that they were not and agreed it would be helpful to see them.

Action: Executive Assistant to circulate the Quarterly Policy Committee Briefing: The Public Policy Landscape to Board members for their information.

6.2 The Policy Committee Chair noted the Policy Committee away day scheduled for 19 September 2023. The proposed areas of focus would include concluded research projects, Early Career Framework, the external policy landscape and a review of governance. The outcomes would be shared with the Board at its October meeting.

7. Remuneration Committee Chair's Report - verbal

7.1 The Remuneration Committee Chair reported that at the last Committee meeting, the agenda was focused on closing out the previous year and looking to next year. The Committee consideration proposals regarding the staff pay remit and approved these, completed appraisals for senior executives and looked at objective for the CEO and Executive Directors for next year. This was the third year of the cycle and each year the Committee's processes improve. The Chair felt there was a good line of sight from Board through the whole organisations objectives process.

8. Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) Chair's Report

Paper 05*

8.1 The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Chair noted that the Annual Report and Accounts had been the main focus at the Committee's June meeting and that these had since been laid. The Committee had also discussed the National Audit Office feedback; a debrief session was scheduled for August and an action plan would be prepared to address the recommendations for next year. The new internal audit team had completed their first audit on risk management, as part of the 2023/24 internal audit plan, and were currently scoping a cyber-security audit to take place during August.

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9. Annual Report and Accounts 2022/23

Paper 06

9.1 The Board recognised the breadth of work involved and thanked everyone for their contributions. It was noted that the communications team had produced a one-page document to summarise the key statistics and data from the Annual Report and Accounts; this would be available in due course and shared with the Board. The Board were grateful for the supporting document.

10. Finance and Commercial Report

Paper 07

10.1 Finance Business Partner introduced the management accounts and explained that these covered the period up to 30 June. Net expenditure was very close to budget overall. The cost-of-living payment for staff was due to be made in July payroll and would amount to c£360k. Executive Director, People and Business Support, confirmed that the payment would be included in next month's forecast and was unbudgeted for; this might potentially affect the number of hearings that could be scheduled. The Board noted that reductions to the fitness to practise budget should be a last resort. The Chief Executive provided assurance that they would look to meet the additional cost from other budgets, in the first instance.

11. Performance Report Q1 2023-24

Paper 08

11.1 Head of Business Planning and Improvement introduced the report and noted that it had been updated to reflect Our Strategy 2023/26. The new style of report format had also been implemented to provide clearer reporting on the business plan objectives and key performance indicators (KPIs). The Board approved the revised report format.

Prevention and Impact

11.2 Assistant Director, Communication, Engagement and Insight provided an overview of key areas and performance. A new Communications and Engagement approach is in place. Following the implementation of the Data and Insight Strategy, plans are also in place to begin to routinely publish data. The Board noted that the Data and Insight Strategy was a key document and agreed that this should come to the next Board meeting for discussion and an update on next steps, following the Policy Committee awayday in September.

Action: Following the Policy Committee away day, Chief Executive and Policy Committee Chair to produce a paper on the Data and Insight Strategy for the 27 October 2023 Board meeting.

11.3 The Education and Training Advisory Forum are currently progressing the readiness for professional practice guidance and have held several student workshops. Assistant Director, Policy and Strategy, reported that all course inspections had taken place in line with the Q1 schedule and the Q2 planned inspections were on track. Following an end-to-end process review which involved our education and training inspectors, the process had been streamlined. The Board asked if any trends had been observed from the inspections and noted that certain standards were more likely to have conditions set, including curriculum development, EDI and co-production. The Chair noted the improvements which had been made to the inspections process, and to the overall regulation of social work education.

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Regulation and Protection

- 11.4 Executive Director, Regulation reported a higher than expected increase in overseas applications. It was noted that the Regulation team were diverting resources from other registration functions to support in this area. So far this was not impacting on key performance indicators and performance remained strong. It was highlighted that this time of year sees an increase in activity, with graduate applications and the upcoming renewals period.
- 11.5 The Board asked about the likely cause of the spike in misuse of title cases. Executive Director, Regulation reported that numbers increased at the end of the last renewals period when registrants had failed to renew their registration and continued to practise for a period of time. There had also been a slight increase in members of the public making referrals. These were concerns related to individuals they believed to be a social worker and a misuse of title case had to be opened, even if it was later confirmed not to be relevant (e.g. the person held a different role). Executive Director, Regulation noted that work continued to improve our processes and explore how we could update employers on registration status prior to the end of the renewals process.
- 11.6 Assistant Director, Regulation noted that triage and investigations performance remained within tolerance however the curve was moving upward; to some degree this related to the 'tail' of cases raised following the end of the last renewals period. Work at the triage stage had focused on identifying opportunities to improve decision-making. The investigation team had been focusing on reducing the age of the caseload whilst identifying learning from other activity to apply earlier on during the investigations stage. Consistent supervision of cases and learning and development were key areas of focus. A third single point of contact network event had been scheduled for September and opportunities were being considered to extend the work of this group beyond the transactional aspects of case progression. Executive Director, Regulation reminded the Board that we were currently the only regulator with the power to make accepted disposals; we were looking at how we can use this most appropriately and effectively, up to now we had been relatively cautious. The current budget position limited our ability to address the timeliness of hearings, however recently we had seen some reduction in the number of cases coming through for a hearing due to accepted disposals and other work undertaken. We have started to operate new process for voluntary removal with 21 applications received so far, this was higher than it was expected to be in steady state. The case review process was also operational. Towards the end of the calendar year, there would be a review of how all the new powers were working.

Delivery and improvement

- 11.7 Executive Director, People and Business Support, reported good overall performance regarding KPIs. There had been an increase in corporate complaints which mainly related to applications to register, timeliness and communication. Despite this, timeliness to respond to complaints had been maintained in line with the KPI.
- 11.8 The People Team continued to monitor the gradual reduction in retention rate. They had begun a review of recruitment processes and people policies. Plans for leadership development were underway. Results from the people engagement survey would be shared in a future meeting.

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11.9 Executive Director, People and Business Support noted good progress with implementation of the assurance framework, scoping of value for money work and delivery of the Sustainability Plan.

12. People Strategy 2023/26

Paper 09

12.1 Executive Director, People and Business Support, presented the final draft people strategy. The Remuneration Committee Chair commended the paper and the approach taken to co-produce the strategy with our people.

12.2 The Board noted that the 'our vision' section appeared towards the end of the strategy and could be made more prominent. **The people strategy was agreed by the Board.**

Action: Executive Director, People and Business Support, to ensure that the 'Our Vision' section is clearly highlighted on the internal webpage, when launching the People Strategy.

13. Risk Appetite Statement

Paper 10*

13.1 Executive Director, People and Business Support introduced the updated risk appetite statement for 2023/24 and explained the approach that had been taken. During discussion, the Board noted that the risk appetite for "reputation and credibility" had been classified as 'cautious'. This had previously been 'open'. The Board agreed that 'cautious' was the correct risk appetite, however, it did not want to lose the ability to be bold where we should be ambitious. Some adjustments may be needed to the wording to reflect this. **The Board endorsed the Risk Appetite Statement.**

Action: Business Planning Manager to assess the wording of the reputation and credibility appetite description to ensure it captures the Board's recommendations.

14. Early stages of Fitness to Practise: Interventions for timeliness and quality

Paper 11

14.1 Executive Director, Regulation, reported that following completion of the legacy caseload project, there would be a change in the focus of activity towards the earlier fitness to practise stages. The Board were informed of the planned activity for the business year, and over the current strategic period. Learning and development would be key to this plan and also capacity and consistency of supervision and management oversight. Some activities would take place during the current year to achieve immediate efficiencies/benefits; some would be across the strategic period for the longer term.

14.2 The Board asked how social workers were engaged and informed when offered an accepted disposal. Executive Director, Regulation, explained that a cautious approach had been taken to date and that there were outcomes that the social worker could be invited to accept, however it was not a negotiation process. Executive Director outlined the further steps to improve early engagement with social workers, and highlighted the continued work with the representative bodies and employers. The Board were keen to further explore and understand the quality of engagement throughout the process, and it was confirmed that this would be brought back to future meetings.

14.3 The Board explored the balance between timeliness and fairness to all parties, including to social workers, and particularly those who were unrepresented. Executive Director, Regulation, confirmed that this was at the forefront of the thinking as they continued to look for

efficiencies. Efficiency impacted everyone positively and there was no indication of any issue regarding fairness. However, as the majority of social workers were unrepresented, this required a balance to ensure everyone had the necessary understanding and information to be able to engage.

15. Any other business

15.1 The Chair reported that he was working with the Chief Executive Officer on a forward plan for Board meetings, to incorporate actions agreed at the Board awayday on 15 June. They were considering holding one meeting per year outside of Sheffield to meet local stakeholders, and on these occasions would also consider allowing questions from the public and stakeholders at the end of the meeting.

15.2 The Chair noted the Executive Office Lead's secondment and thanked them for their contribution and support to the Board.

15.3 The Board committed to submit an application for year two of the Board Apprentice programme.

Date and Time of Next Meeting: Friday 27 October 2023 10.15am.

The meeting ended at 12.20pm.

Summary of Actions

- Executive Director, People and Business Support, to inform Board members of the whistleblowing annual report and implications in advance of publication.
- Executive Assistant to circulate the Quarterly Policy Committee Briefing: The Public Policy Landscape to Board members for their information.
- Following the Policy Committee away day, Chief Executive and Policy Committee Chair to produce a paper on the Data and Insight strategy for the 27 October 2023 Board meeting.
- Executive Director, People and Support, to ensure that the 'Our Vision' section is clearly highlighted on the internal webpage, when launching the People Strategy.
- Business Planning Manager to assess the wording of the reputation and credibility appetite description to ensure it captures the Board's recommendations.

* Papers marked with an asterisk are 'private' to protect confidentiality according to our guidance for publishing board papers.

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Summary of Actions from Board meetings up to 27 October 2023

Agenda Item 3 Paper Ref 02

Paper for the

Social Work England Board

Sponsor

The Chair

Author

Cathy Glynn, Executive Officer

Date

27 October 2023

Reviewed by

Colum Conway, Chief Executive

This paper is for

Assurance and Noting

Associated Strategic Objective

SO10: Continually develop and improve how we work, ensuring we are a well-run organisation that delivers the right outcomes and provides value for money.

Impact: Risk Type and Appetite

Operational delivery - Open

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

N/A

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1. Summary

The actions below provide an audit trail of items closed at or since the last meeting on 28 July 2023. Actions still in progress or yet to complete since the last meeting are listed on the log that follows.

Closed actions recorded at and following the last meeting:

- **Action 76:** Executive Director, Regulation to produce a paper for the July Board meeting addressing the interventions that Fitness to Practise team were working on to achieve caseload progression. *This paper was presented to the Board as item 14 on the agenda. Action closed.*

Actions for review and decision at the 27 October meeting:

- **Action 61:** Business Planning and Improvement team to produce a short summary of the annual report. *Infographics for 2022/23 annual report have been published on the website and shared with the Board. Action closed.*
- **Action 69:** Executive Director, People and Business Support to implement an annual whistleblowing disclosures report for reporting to the Board annually. It was clarified that this action related to whistleblowing as a prescribed body. Executive Director, People and Business Support, to notify Board members of the report and implications in advance of publication. *Update on the 2022/23 report was circulated to the Board on 20 September 2023. The report was published on the website on 27 September 2023. Action closed.*
- **Action 79:** Executive Assistant to circulate the Quarterly Policy Committee Briefing: The Public Policy Landscape to Board members for information. *These briefings will be circulated to the Board routinely in the future. Action closed.*
- **Action 80:** Following the Policy Committee away day, Chief Executive and Policy Committee Chair to produce a paper on the Data and Insight Strategy for the 27 October 2023 Board meeting. *On today's agenda. Action closed.*
- **Action 81:** Executive Director, People and Business Support, to ensure that the 'Our Vision' section is clearly highlighted on the internal webpage, when launching the People Strategy. *Completed. Action closed.*
- **Action 82:** Business Planning Manager to assess the wording of the reputation and credibility appetite description to ensure it captures the Board's recommendations. *Completed. Action closed.*
- **Action 83:** Executive Director, People and Business Support, to inform Board members of the whistleblowing annual report and implications in advance of publication. *See action 69 above. Action closed.*

Updates on open actions are noted in the action log that follows.

2. Action required

The Board is asked to note the progress against the actions.

Social Work England Board
Action Log

Action no.	Date of Meeting	Action	Owner	Due By	Update	Next review	Status
70	10/03/23	Head of Finance and Commercial to plan an exercise to look at financial modelling for 2024/25.	Head of Finance and Commercial	27/10/23	Initial work has been undertaken to understand resourcing needs in 2024/25 and across the next spending review period. Discussed with DfE on 14 September. Detailed process to develop 2024/25 budget and business plan commenced in October.	02/02/24	Open

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Chief Executive's Report to the Board 27 October 2023

Agenda Item 5

Paper Ref 03

Paper Ref 03a

Paper for the

Social Work England Board

Sponsor

Colum Conway, Chief Executive

Author

Colum Conway

Date

27 October 2023

Reviewed by

Executive Leadership Team

This paper is for

Assurance and Noting

Associated Strategic Objective

SO10: Continually develop and improve how we work, ensuring we are a well-run organisation that delivers the right outcomes and provides value for money.

Impact: Risk Type and Appetite

Strategic approach - Open

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

N/A

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1. Introduction

Since the last Board meeting, we have had meetings of the Policy Committee, Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the Remuneration Committee. The Chairs of the committees will be reporting to this Board meeting.

The recruitment process for our new Chair and Non-Executive Directors has now closed and the selection process will now take place over the coming months. Our National Advisory Forum will have an advisory input into the selection process.

The consultation on the new education and training approval standards for courses leading to the specialist award of best interest assessor (BIA) is still live and will close on the 27 October.

The main part of the meeting today will be the performance report on Q2 of our business plan. In general, we are on track to achieve the majority of our objectives by year end. However, as the Board will be aware we have had challenges in some areas in relation to capacity and turnover of staff and there is the potential for a small number of our KPIs and business plan objectives being pushed back towards the end of the year or even into next year. From a resource and budget perspective there is little room for manoeuvre into the second half of the business year.

2. The initial analysis of social workers' diversity data in relation to fitness to practise

As the Board will know the initial analysis of the diversity data on our FtP process, which was published on 29 September, shows an over representation in referrals and hearings of groups of social workers including those aged 40 and over, males, and people of Black, African, Caribbean and Black British ethnicity. By way of follow up we are looking at referrals and how we engage with employers. We will conduct further analysis with a view to moving towards understanding causality for these overrepresentations and disparities. We will do this by examining the relationship between the demographic categories highlighted in the recent publication, and a number of different potentially influential factors such as the relationship between concern category/type data, that is recorded against the case at the pre triage stage, and demographic data; the employment type of the social worker, subject to FtP (adult social work, children and families etc); regional variations in referrals and progression through FtP.

In response to feedback, we will also examine other factors that may impact disparity in categories of diversity data, including: a social worker's time on the register; the risk and complexity profile of a case and the impact of the presence of an interim order; and social

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worker engagement with the FtP process. We will also be establishing an technical data oversight group with support from the GMC and the NMC and the university of Essex.

3. People

At the last Board meeting I indicated that our pay remit had been submitted to the DfE. The pay remit has now been agreed and the pay elements will be implemented in the October payroll. The outcome of the staff survey was presented at the recent Remuneration Committee meeting and will be brought to the next Board meeting. Work is well under way on the action plan arising from the survey.

The planned all team day in September proved very successful and the feedback indicates it was very well received. As part of our approach to hybrid working most of our staff came to the office for the day and engaged in a range of activities that supported culture and values and reinforced our strategic and business objectives. Plans are now under way for the next event in January and we continue to focus on hybrid working and how best to achieve a good balance between working from home and working in the office.

We are welcoming new people into the leadership and management team in the Professional Practice and External Engagement directorate – Lara Timms has been appointed Head of Education Programmes; Lara joined us in September from her previous role as Principal Social Worker at Birmingham Local Authority. Natalie Day has been appointed Assistant Director for Policy and Strategy; Natalie will join us in January from her current role at Sheffield Hallam University. Matt Devlin has been appointed Head of Strategic Engagement, Matt is one of our Regional Engagement leads and will be taking up his new post at the beginning of November. We wish them well as they take on their new roles. Also, of interest to the Board will be the appointment of a new Corporate Governance Manager, Liz Frier, who will be taking up her post in mid-November.

4. Policy

As noted in the Q2 report a final draft report of the research on practice educators should be available soon, along with the earlier research reports on workforce and perceptions, these will be brought to the next Policy Committee meeting in December for review and to the next Board meeting in February and then published ahead of Social Work Week.

In September the government published its response to the consultation on the independent review of children's social care, Stable Homes Built on Love. As noted in the Q2 report we are continuing to work with the department alongside other stakeholders on the implementation plans for key aspects of the review.

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One area of particular importance and focus is the alignment of our approach to the implementation of the readiness for professional practice and the development of the Early Career Framework. This will also be linked to our learning from the EQA inspection process and how we develop this process beyond the current cycle of inspections, which is due to end next September. We will equally have to consider our plans for practice educators and how they can be developed in line with the implementation plan for the reform of children's social care.

We have agreed with the regulators in our Alliance partnership – NISCC, SSSC, SCW and CORU on a project to explore the impact of regulation in social work and social care. The initial focus will be on the learning from the introduction of a professional model of regulation for the social care workforce.

Skills for Care has published its annual State of the Adult Social Care Sector and Workforce in England report - and announced plans to develop a new and comprehensive workforce strategy for adult social care. I have asked to be part of the steering group for the strategy.

5. Strategic financial planning

We have been working with our sponsor team at DfE on developing strategic financial scenarios initially for the business year next year and then beyond for the upcoming spending review. A key focus is on the nature of the case throughput in hearings and how we can have an impact on delays in this area. Other financial pressures are being highlighted in this work.

In terms of this year, as noted in our Q2 report we are projecting a close to breakeven position for the year end. However, we have an overspend at the half year (largely due to the cost-of-living payment made to staff in July), it is important to note the challenge to control spending in the second part of the year as required towards the breakeven forecast.

6. Registration and renewals

The October board meeting takes place while we are in the middle of annual renewals. At the time of writing almost 30% of social workers currently on the register have completed their renewal which is slightly ahead of the same period this time last year. Of course, it also means that quite a significant number of social workers have still to renew with 5 or 6 weeks of the renewal period left. We are continuing to engage and communicate in every way we can to encourage social workers not to leave their renewal to the last minute.

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As noted in the Q2 report we continue to have fairly high levels of international applications for registration. We are aware that there can be significant delays in processing some of these applications. This is not so much an issue of efficiency in processing, although we continue to review our processes in this area, but more an issue in relation to standards. Delays often arise when we are unable to verify or have evidence of the applicant's experience in social work in their own country and how applicable it is to statutory social work in England. Additionally, it is important that employers and applicants ensure that they make their application for registration as early as possible to prevent delays as we gather the evidence we need to make decisions on applications. Leaving registration until the end of the recruitment process can prevent applicants from starting work in good time. We are working with employers, networks, associations, and the other social work regulators in the UK to discuss standards and explore ways in which the delays may be minimised.

7. Conclusion

I gave a presentation recently at the Community Care Live event in London along with Gareth Gault from the National Advisory Forum. In the Q&A session, people were interested in the data and research we have published and how it is beginning to present a picture of social work in England that hasn't really existed up to now. It has always been a commitment of Social Work England to become a source of rich data and insight for the profession to better inform the narrative, messaging and decision making across the profession. It is an important aspect of one of our key statutory objectives, to build confidence in the profession. While there is a long way to go, we are building a solid platform in this area.

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7. Annexe

Annex 1: Chief Executive's meetings

The Chief Social Worker at Frontline

Chief Executives of the other social work and social care regulators in the UK and Ireland

Chief Executives of the Health Professions regulators in the UK

The Chief Executive of the Professional Standards Authority

The Chief Social Worker – Adults

The Chief Social Worker – Children's

The National Practice Group

The Chief Social Worker BASW

The Alliance Partnership

Community Care Live

Members of the National Advisory Forum

National Workforce Roundtable

CORU

Red Quadrant

Director of Research on Practice

National Audit Office

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Finance and Commercial Update

Agenda Item 9 Paper Ref 05

Paper for the

Social Work England Board

Sponsor

Linda Dale, Executive Director, People and Business Support

Author

Richard Simpson, Head of Finance and Commercial

Date

27 October 2023

Reviewed by

Linda Dale, Executive Director, People and Business Support

This paper is for

Assurance and Noting

Associated Strategic Objective

SO10: Continually develop and improve how we work, ensuring we are a well-run organisation that delivers the right outcomes and provides value for money.

Impact: Risk Type and Appetite

Financial governance - Cautious

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

N/A

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1. Summary

This paper provides a summary of the year to date management accounts for the period ending 30 September 2023 and an update of our main commercial activity in the last quarter.

2. Action required

For discussion and noting.

3. Commentary

Management accounts

A summary set of the management accounts for the year to 30 September 2023 can be found in Annex A. Key highlights are:

Year to date expenditure, net of fee income, is £6,379k compared to the budgeted amount of £5,890k. This represents a year to date overspend of £488k with the adverse variance primarily due to the government's cost of living payment, which was paid to employees in July at a cost of £355k. Excluding this payment, there is an overspend compared to budget of £133k, which is a 2.25% variance from the YTD budget.

The cost of living payment was an unbudgeted item, first communicated by the Cabinet Office in June.

Year to date capital expenditure is £1,280k, which is £181k higher than budget, due to a higher level of forge development costs than initially envisaged when phasing the budget. In order to return expenditure to budget we will adjust the level of planned activity for the remainder of the financial year following agreement of priorities at our digital board meeting in November.

Whilst we are confident that the outrun for the full year will be close to budget we are mindful of avoiding impact to our regulatory activity. As such the second half of the financial year will present a number of challenges for management to consider and to take appropriate action. We will also continue to discuss our budget position with our sponsor team at the department for education.

Commercial update

At its meeting of 19 May 2023, the Board approved a business case for the re-procurement of legal services with an external value of £735,000. The tender process for this procurement has now closed and we have received bids from 9 interested parties, which was a higher than expected number, demonstrating the attractiveness of Social Work England as a customer. Each of the respective bids will be assessed against criteria based on price, service quality and social value. We expect to have selected the successful provider by the end of the calendar year.

We also recently awarded the contract to undertake the independent board effectiveness review to RedQuadrant. This review has begun this month and the outcome will be reported in Q4.

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We have completed the recruitment of a commercial manager, having made a temporary appointment in June. The successful candidate has a wide range of commercial experience in various roles at the department for work & pensions and the department for education.

4. Conclusions and/or Recommendations

N/A

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5. Annexes

Annex A – Management accounts at 30 September 2023

Income and Expenditure Statement

	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Variance	% Variance	Full Year Original Budget	Full Year Forecast	Variance
Fee Income	(5,016,525)	(5,051,773)	(35,248)	0	(10,605,000)	(10,605,000)	0
Executive Leadership Team							
Wages & Salaries	259,059	249,750	(9,309)		504,814	511,681	(6,866)
Support	15,712	5,000	(10,712)		10,000	12,802	(2,802)
Total	274,772	254,750	(20,021)	(7.9%)	514,814	524,483	(9,669)
People & Business Support							
Wages & Salaries	1,092,983	1,081,846	(11,137)		2,435,835	2,436,376	(540)
Support	1,161,389	1,182,514	21,126		2,351,029	2,341,833	9,196
Total	2,254,372	2,264,361	9,989	0.4%	4,786,865	4,778,209	8,656
Regulation							
Wages & Salaries	2,989,949	2,898,323	(91,627)		5,808,773	5,962,614	(153,841)
Seconded & Agency Staff	37,417	42,000	4,583		42,000	43,949	(1,949)
Support	4,460,734	4,037,375	(423,359)		7,464,440	7,239,861	224,579
Total	7,488,100	6,977,698	(510,402)	0.0%	13,315,213	13,246,424	68,790
Professional practice and external engagement							
Wages & Salaries	1,059,809	1,002,790	(57,019)		2,063,578	2,108,449	(44,871)
Support	318,777	442,751	123,974		925,529	943,133	(17,603)
Total	1,378,586	1,445,541	66,955	4.6%	2,989,107	3,051,581	(62,474)
Total Expenditure	11,395,829	10,942,350	(453,479)	(4.1%)	21,606,000	21,600,697	5,302
Total Expenditure, net of fee income	6,379,304	5,890,577	(488,727)	(8.3%)	11,001,000	10,995,697	5,302

Balance Sheet

	Cost £	Depreciation £	N.B.V £
Fixed assets			
Buildings	1,264,299	(892,774)	371,525
Lease - Right of Use	1,122,252	(278,253)	843,999
IT Equipment	1,194,087	(782,874)	411,213
Fixtures & Fittings	318,851	(318,851)	0
Intangible Asset (complete)	7,807,986	(1,171,198)	6,636,788
Intangible Asset (Asset under construction)	1,848,371	0	1,848,371
	13,555,847	(3,443,950)	10,111,897
Current assets			
Prepayments			573,883
Bank			1,897,031
			2,470,914
Current liabilities			
Accruals			(909,032)
Deferred Income			(1,837,397)
Trade Payables			(1,633,935)
			(4,380,363)
Working Capital (Current assets less current liabilities)			(1,909,449)
Non current liabilities			
Lease liabilities			(934,065)
Dilapidation provision			(135,542)
			(1,069,607)
Total assets and liabilities			7,132,841
Taxpayers' equity			(7,132,841)



Performance Report Q2 2023-24

Agenda Item 10

Paper Ref 06

Paper for the

Social Work England Board

Sponsor

Colum Conway, Chief Executive

Author

Andy Leverton, Head of Business Planning and Improvement

Date

27 October 2023

Reviewed by

Executive Leadership Team

This paper is for

Discussion and Advising

Associated Strategic Objective

SO10: Continually develop and improve how we work, ensuring we are a well-run organisation that delivers the right outcomes and provides value for money.

Impact: Risk Type and Appetite

Operational delivery - Open

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

N/A

1. Executive summary

This report presents our performance for Q2 of 2023-24. We publish our performance and data on a quarterly basis. Publishing quarterly means we show trends and performance within the year and against previous years.

2. Overall assessment

Table 1: Overview of business plan objectives for 2023-24

Business plan objective for 2023 to 2024			RAG
Prevention and Impact	1.1	Develop an inclusive communications and engagement approach to improve understanding about social work and the value of our professional standards	
	2.1	Implement our data and insight strategy	
	3.1	Influence and advise development of national policy and statutory guidance	
	4.1	Implement the readiness for professional practice guidance	
	4.2	Review approach to course inspections, reapprovals and quality assurance	
Regulation and protection	5.1	Identify opportunities to improve the timeliness, fairness and quality of our registration and advice processes	
	5.2	Identify ways we can improve the timeliness of overseas applications	
	5.3	Review approach to concerns about misuse of title of 'social worker'	
	6.1	Identify opportunities to bring more investigative activity into earlier stage of the FtP process	
	6.2	Optimise our approach to accepted disposals	
	6.3	Ensure our hearings process is efficient and delivers value for money	
	6.4	Demonstrate impact following changes to revised legislative framework	
	7.1	Develop our SPOC network and explore local resolution pathways	
Delivery and improvement	8.1	Conduct user research to identify how to improve digital user experience	
	9.1	Implement our people strategy	
	10.1	Further develop and communicate quality and assurance frameworks	
	10.2	Evaluate our economy, efficiency, and effectiveness, and demonstrate value for money improvements	
	10.3	Implement our corporate sustainability plan	
Green: On track			Amber: Some issues, being managed and closely monitored
			Red: Significant issues, action plan required

Table 2: Overview of key performance indicators for 2023-24

ID	KPI Description	Target		Q2	Last Q
EQA1	Percentage of course reapproval decisions made	70% by March 2024	Q2: 55%	57%	37%
REG1	Time taken to approve UK registration applications	≤ 10 working days (median)		3	4
REG2	Time taken to approve restoration applications	≤ 20 working days (median)		4	8
REG3	Time taken to conclude misuse of title cases	Monitor (working days)		85	55
REG4	Time taken to answer emails	≤ 5 working days (median)		3	4
REG5	Time taken to answer phone calls	≤ 8 minutes (median)		8	5
FTP1	Age of triage caseload	≤ 14 weeks (median) by March 2024	Q2: ≤ 16 weeks	18	17
FTP2	Age of investigation caseload	≤ 54 weeks (median) by March 2024	Q2: ≤ 59 weeks	62	61
FTP3	Time taken to complete case examination process	≤ 12 weeks (median)		9	7
FTP4	Time from receipt of referral to final FtP outcome	Monitor (weeks)		118	118
FTP5	Time taken to approve interim orders	≤ 20 working days (median)		17	19
FTP6	FtP cases internal quality score	≥ 90% meet our internal standards		89%	93%
IG1	Time taken to complete FOI requests	≥ 90% within deadline		100%	100%
IG2	Time taken to complete subject access requests	≥ 90% within deadline		99%	100%
C1	Corporate complaints response time	≥ 70% within 20 working days		97%	82%
P1	Retention rate	≥ 80%		86%	84%
P2	Sickness absence over last 12 months	≤ 5.4 days per person		4.8	4.3
FIN1	Forecast year-end variance to budget	+/- 1.5%		0.05%	0.6%
IT1	System availability excluding planned outages	≥ 99%		99.9%	99.9%

3. Performance 01 July to 30 September 2023

Strategic theme: Prevention and impact

Our objectives

Objective 1.1: Develop an inclusive communications and engagement approach to improve understanding of social work and professional standards

Communications and engagement help us to facilitate positive, long-term change in our role as a specialist regulator. This is specifically true for our third statutory objective, to build trust and confidence in the social work profession. Through proactive action in this space, we aim to create opportunities to educate and inform people on social work and why is it deemed important enough by society to be regulated. Some of the activity in Q2 to incrementally grow confidence in the way we regulate and the proportion of social workers who value our professional standards includes:

- Engaging with over 4,400 people across the England. There has been a significant increase in the ask for engagement sessions on registration and continued professional development (CPD).
- Supporting social workers to apply to renew their registration. The registration renewal period started on 1 September. To ensure high levels of awareness and engagement with the registration renewal process, we have:
 - sent a stakeholder engagement email to 633 'employer' contacts announcing the start of the registration renewal period was open and for them to encourage social workers to complete all actions. Key messages focused on the legal requirement to be registered to practice as a social worker and the link to professional standards.
 - requested key stakeholder organisations to share messages with their networks. This included Research in Practice, Skills for Care and the Department for Education.
 - started working with representative bodies to hold workshops in Q3 with their members on CPD and registration renewal.
- Welcoming 6 new members to our National Advisory Forum. This included people with both lived and learned experience of social work. A Principal Social Worker, a care leaver, a social work lead at an NHS trust, a practice educator and a disability team manager. We will expand the group further by recruiting a social worker from the private, voluntary and independent sector and social work students during Q3.

- Planning Social Work Week 2024. In Q2, we established a steering group, set objectives for the week, and began to co-produce content. Equality, diversity and inclusion will remain a core theme. A panel of people with lived and learned experience will be meeting in Q3 to review expressions of interest to run sessions during the week.
- Achieving over 2.3 million page views across our digital content. Our social media content has focused on quarterly themed content that brings to life our data and publications. Our Instagram pilot continues to increase audience reach to new followers. Across the quarter, our 4 social media platforms continued to grow, gaining close to 2,900 new followers.
- Supporting equality, diversity and inclusion awareness:
 - The publication of our initial analysis of social workers' diversity data in relation to fitness to practise (FtP) was our highest performing post of the week on social media.
 - During South Asian heritage month, we saw good engagement with our content that used the data we hold to tell the story of the profession within this demographic.
 - We ran a week-long digital campaign to support co-production week in July. Content included a National Advisory Forum video speaking on what co-production means. We also arranged an interview with a member of the National Advisory Forum in the Woman's Weekly magazine. This has a print circulation of 179k. This was a good example of reaching a new national audience.
 - In September, we ran a weeklong digital campaign for National inclusion week where we continued to reflect on social justice and celebrated the impact of our positive mentoring pilot.
- Supporting discussions on education and training. During August, we published posts aimed at students considering careers in social work. These posts directed audiences to an article on our website with Dr Kevin Stone about his journey into social care and his advice for students. This was one of the highest viewed news stories we published this quarter.
- Continuing our research commitments. Following the completion of the public perceptions research in Q1, we have finalised the report and agreed an approach to

sharing the final product over the next 2 quarters. We are exploring the findings of this research, in conjunction with our other research commitments, and how they may support future work on informing and educating people on the value of social work. In Q3, we will design an annual survey that will take forward these baseline measures to track social work sentiment each year to help inform our activities.

Objective 2.1: Implement our data and insight strategy

In September we published a new 'Data and Insight' hub on the website. On this hub, we published 'Social Work England's fitness to practise process: an initial analysis of diversity data' report. The initial analysis shows where there are higher numbers of social workers, given their demographic group, in our FtP process compared to the numbers of that group who are registered as a social worker in England. This report represents a significant first step for us on a longer journey towards a comprehensive understanding of fairness in our processes and the actions we must take in response.

In August, we published our first monthly publication of data relating to our register and fitness to practise cases. In September, we also published our first quarterly publication of fitness to practise referral data. We are using these to test and learn about how we present our data and tell the story of our insights publicly.

Objective 3.1: Influence and advise on the development of national policy and statutory guidance

We have continued our work to respond to the challenges faced by the social work workforce in England. We held 2 further national roundtable meetings of sector leaders and representatives, as well as more specific conversations with members in working group formats. These meetings considered recruitment and entry into the profession, retention of social workers, and international social work. We further developed the working groups' causal loop analysis, which we will bring to our next national roundtable meeting in October. We have also committed to undertaking a review of these meetings and outputs with members of the group.

We have worked with our appointed research provider, YouGov, to progress research into the workforce issues around recruitment and retention. We have received a draft report and we have provided initial feedback to the research provider. Over the next quarter, we will finalise this research, consider the findings, and agree an approach to sharing what we have learned.

We are a member of the Department for Education's Early Career Framework (ECF) Expert Writing Group. This group has met 10 times during Q2 and is moving into a phase of content development. We have established a project group to prepare for internal reform relating to the ECF across policy, education quality assurance, registration, systems development and

legal. This project now has an agreed scope, governance arrangements, stakeholder engagement routes and has begun to set out timelines around the possible scenarios of implementation around the ECF.

Our work to continue to refine our stakeholder engagement approach continues. We are using our stakeholder management system to support identified deliverables for us as the regulator in relation to 'Stable Homes, Built on Love'. In Q3 we will design an annual survey that will further explore stakeholder sentiment in relation to our regulation.

Objective 4.1 Implement the readiness for professional practice guidance

The Education and Training Advisory Forum has continued to meet on a monthly basis during Q2 to develop the readiness for professional practice guidance. Through this engagement, we are refining and strengthening our approach to the knowledge, skills and behaviour statements included in the guidance. We are also ensuring that the guidance is aligned with the development of the ECF with DfE. In Q3, we will hold engagement events with newly qualified social workers, students, practice educators and people with lived experience of social work who are involved in social work courses.

This work is on track and will soon reach the point of requiring clarity on the preferred approach of the Department for Education with regard to their reform proposals. The Early Career Framework (ECF) in particular will need to link well into the readiness for practice work in order to ensure complementarity of frameworks. We are assuring this to the best of our ability through our representation on the ECF writing group.

In Q2, we received a first full draft of the practice education research. We are working with the provider to produce a final version, so we can consider the findings and agree an approach to sharing the learning in Q3.

Objective 4.2 Review approach to course inspections, reapprovals and quality assurance

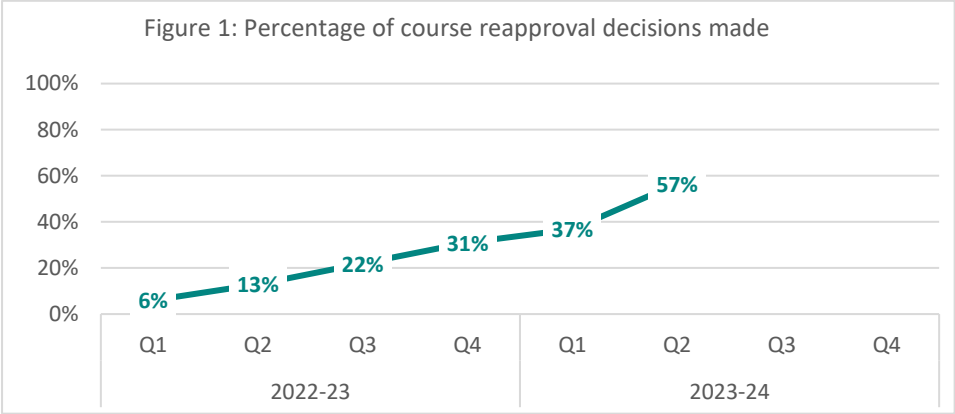
We are currently identifying the best approach to streamline our systems and administration of our inspection process. To support this, we are reviewing existing process maps and using these findings to inform our next steps. Course inspectors completed face-to-face training in September, which provided opportunities for reflection that will help shape our continuous improvement work.

We have been successful in proactively planning inspections and these have been allocated to inspectors in good time, with the inspection cycle continuing at pace. The new head of education programmes started in post in September 2023. They will oversee the development and implementation of our inspection model for education and training.

KPI: Percentage of course reapproval decisions made

Table 3: Education and training key performance indicator

ID	KPI Description	Target	Q2 target	Q2
EQA1	Percentage of course reapproval decisions made	70% by March 2024	55%	57%



We met our Q2 target for reapproval decisions, with 135 reapproval decisions completed to date. We have continued to work with higher education institutions to review evidence from courses with conditions and to ensure that appropriate improvement action is taken against areas of concern. Our current cycle of course inspections is on track to be completed in August 2024.

Strategic theme: Regulation and protection

Registration and Advice

Objective 5.1: Identify opportunities to improve the timeliness, fairness and quality of our registration and advice processes

We have made further improvements to the online renewals application form, for example improvements to the text to support social workers completing the form, and how we send communications to social workers in relation to registration renewal. We have also updated and improved the guidance for applicants on our website. This includes information for social workers on how they can provide evidence that they meet our CPD requirements. This refreshed public guidance is due to be published at the start of Q3.

Registration renewal for the year commencing 1 December 2023 opened on 1 September 2023. 101,610 social workers are eligible to renew their registration by the deadline of 30 November 2023. As of 30 September 2023, 2,247 social workers had completed all three steps to submit their renewal application.

As part of the application for renewal, social workers are required to provide evidence that they meet our CPD requirements. By 31 August 2023, 7% of social workers had provided this evidence. By the end of September 2023, this had increased to 14%, which is a 2-percentage point increase compared to the same point last year.

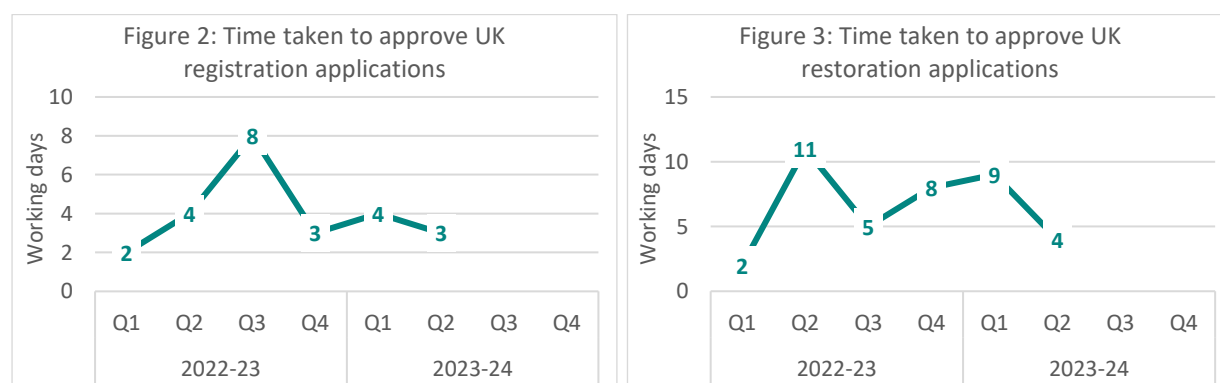
Our press release relating to the 1st month of the renewals period is available here:

[Registration renewal and CPD data September 2023 - Social Work England.](#)

Time taken to approve registration and restoration applications

Table 4: Registration and restoration applications

ID	KPI Description	Target	Q2	YTD
REG1	Time taken to approve UK registration applications	≤ 10 working days	3	4
REG2	Time taken to approve restoration applications	≤ 20 working days	4	6

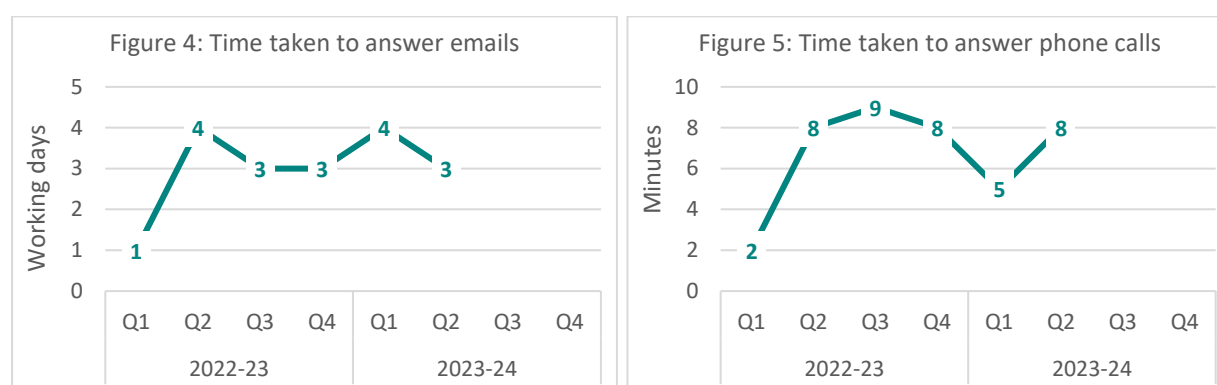


We met our targets for assessing applications to join and restore to the register in Q2. The peak time for receiving UK registration applications is during Q2. This year we received 3,397 UK registration applications between July to September, compared to 3,367 during the same period last year. We continue to provide support to new graduates (for example through online information sessions) on how to join the register.

Time taken to answer emails and phone calls

Table 5: Phone call and email key performance indicators

ID	KPI Description	Target	Q2	YTD
REG4	Time taken to answer emails	≤ 5 working days	3	3
REG5	Time taken to answer phone calls	≤ 8 minutes	8	6



We met our targets for time taken to answer phone calls and emails in Q2. This is despite volumes continuing to increase: 9,168 calls in Q2 compared to 8,188 in Q2 22-23 and 8,990 emails in Q2 compared to 6,313 in Q2 22-23. During July and August, we installed new software to support the contact centre in handling enquiries. We anticipate that Q3 targets in this area will be challenging due to activity related to the close of the renewals period, as well as the impact of vacancies, recruitment and training of new members of staff in the team.

Objective 5.2: Identify ways we can improve the timeliness of overseas applications

The number of overseas applications received remains high (485 in Q2), which continues to impact our timeliness for processing these applications (median 56 days in Q2). Our workload capacity has also been impacted by the number of vacancies in the team in the quarter (3 vacancies out of an establishment of 17 full-time equivalent roles).

We continue to deepen our understanding of the reasons for this increase and develop our approach to managing this sustained increase in overseas applications. This includes working with employers who are recruiting social workers from overseas and identifying barriers for applicants in the timely provision of the evidence required for acceptance onto the register.

As part of our ongoing work to ensure an efficient and effective overseas application service, we have improved the information and templates for applicants to provide evidence of their skills and knowledge since qualification. We have continued to implement the findings from our process reviews and in Q2 we made the highest quarterly number of application decisions to date (549).

We have co-produced refreshed guidance for overseas applicants with social work representative bodies, which is delayed slightly and will be published once the legal and communications review is completed.

A paper on international recruitment went to ARAC in October 2023.

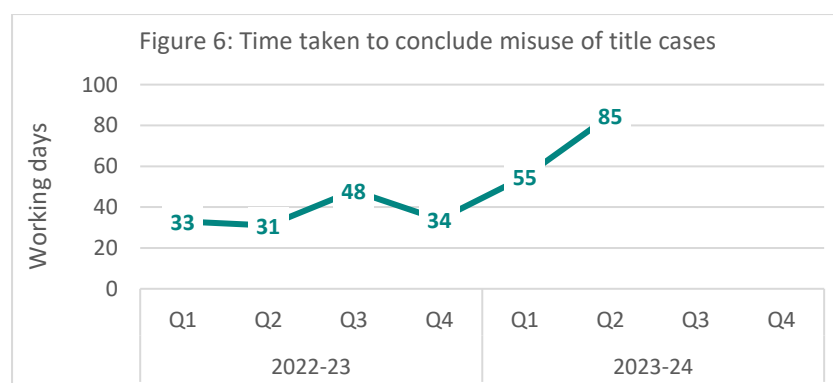
Objective 5.3: Review our approach to concerns about misuse of the protected title ‘social worker’

We have published supportive [guidance](#) on misuse of title cases, which includes an explanation of our approach to investigating these cases. Our work to review our approach is on track to be completed in Q4 of this year.

Time taken to conclude misuse of title cases

Table 6: Misuse of title key performance indicator

ID	KPI Description	Target	Q2	YTD
REG3	Time taken to conclude misuse of title cases	Monitor (working days)	85	69



The time we are taking to conclude misuse of title cases has increased to 85 working days in Q2. The number of these cases continues to increase, with 22 cases opened in Q2 compared to 16 cases in Q2 last year. This increase in volume relates to concerns raised by members of the public querying why someone is not appearing on our public register, and cases where social workers have practised whilst not holding registration, often after failing to renew.

The increase in volume, along with the number of staff vacancies, has contributed to increased closure times during the quarter. We completed a process review in September 2023, and recommendations to reduce case volumes focused on proportionality and

effective communications to help increase awareness of our role in protection of title with the public and the social work profession. We will take forward relevant actions during Q3.

Fitness to practise

Objective 6.1: Identify opportunities to bring more investigative activity into the earlier stage of the fitness to practise process

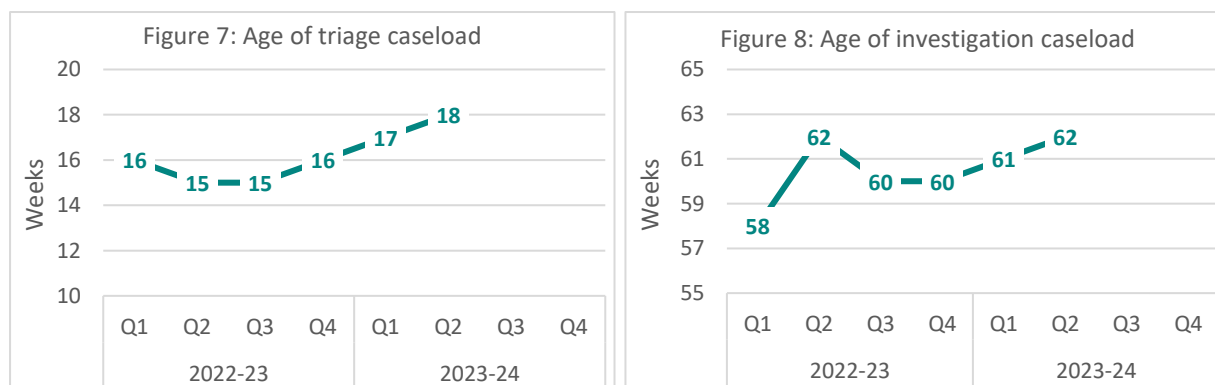
This quarter we have completed our review of triage decision-making processes. Actions have been identified from that review and further work is planned in Q3 and Q4, which we expect to streamline decision-making processes. with outputs being prioritised for progression. During Q3, we will continue to focus on improving the quality and consistency of case supervision and implementing recommended actions from the reviews that took place in Q2.

We have continued to progress our learning and development plan, with bespoke training, for example on drafting regulatory concerns, being provided to the triage and investigations teams in Q2.

Age of triage and investigation caseloads

Table 7: Triage and investigations key performance indicators

ID	KPI Description	Target	Q2 target	Q2
FTP1	Age of triage caseload	≤ 14 weeks by March 2024	≤ 16 weeks	18
FTP2	Age of investigation caseload	≤ 54 weeks by March 2024	≤ 59 weeks	62



We expected that the age of caseloads for both triage and investigation would fluctuate over the course of the year. There have been a number of vacancies in triage (3) and investigations (4) during Q2 and high level of absence. This has impacted the median age of the triage and investigations caseloads, which has increased this quarter.

We introduced short-term increases in our decision-making capacity in the triage team in September. This resulted in an increase in the volume of triage decisions made and a reduction in the caseload during September (767 cases in August to 674 cases in September). We are targeting this additional decision-making capacity at older cases. We

have also reviewed our triage and investigations resource and we are using savings generated in investigations to recruit additional staff in Q3 to build longer-term capacity at the triage stage.

We have implemented our refreshed risk assessment guidance and provided associated training to both the triage and investigations team.

We recruited to 4 vacancies and 4 new roles in the investigations team in Q1. We expect the progression of investigations and cases to increase in Q3 as newer staff members settle into their roles. We will continue to monitor vacancy levels and mitigate the impact where possible.

Objective 6.2: Optimise our approach to accepted disposals by reviewing the case examination stage

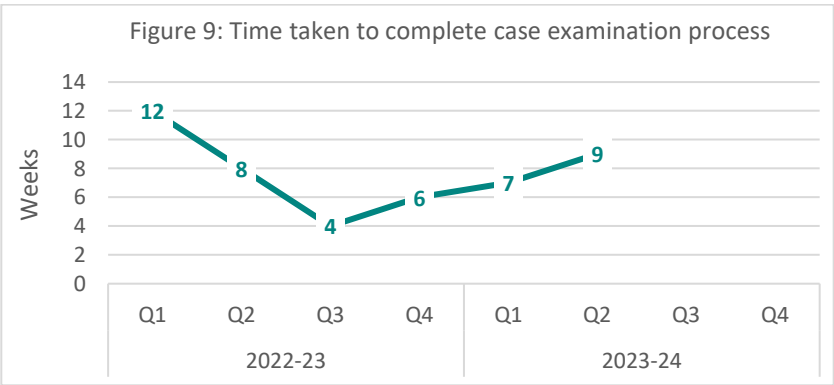
During Q2, 23 cases were closed through accepted disposal, which is 43% of cases that were closed at the case examination stage. Using the powers provided to us through the revision to our regulations and rules, case examiners have removed 3 social workers in Q2 through the accepted disposal process this quarter.

We have co-produced easy-read guidance for social workers who are considering accepted disposal. We are also finalising a supportive video to complement the guidance. We continue to support the reflection and learning of case examiners to further optimise the accepted disposal process.

Time taken to complete case examination process

Table 8: Case examination key performance indicator

ID	KPI Description	Target	Q2	YTD
FTP3	Time taken to complete case examination process	≤ 12 weeks	9	7



We remain within our target of 12 weeks for cases completing the case examiner stage, despite an increase in time taken since Q3 22-23. As we work to ensure that the accepted disposal decisions process is optimised, we will closely monitor timeliness of these cases.

This is because it can take longer for a case to be concluded by case examiners when an accepted disposal has been offered.

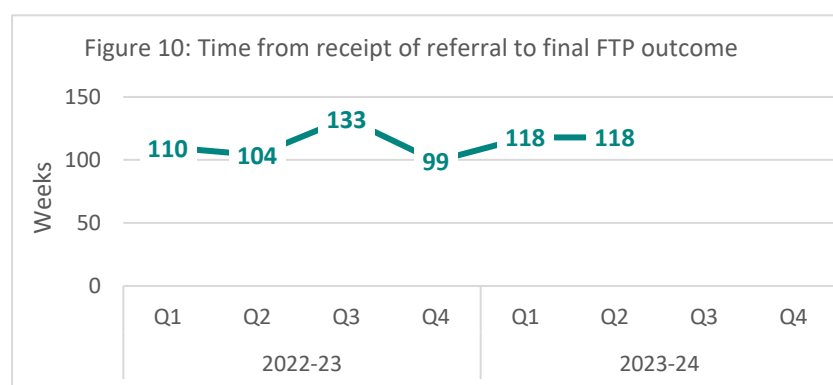
Objective 6.3 Ensure our hearings process is efficient and delivers value for money

We are planning a pilot of 2-person panels in some final hearings to start in November. This is alongside a project to identify digital support for the scheduling of hearings. We continue to prioritise cases for a hearing based on risk and age. We are preparing for an internal audit in October, which will assess the controls and processes in place for the hearings function. This will include testing of compliance with internal policies and procedures and assessing the effectiveness and efficiencies of these processes. the outcomes of this may also identify actions to further increase efficiencies.

Time from receipt of referral to final FtP outcome

Table 9: Final FtP outcome key performance indicator

ID	KPI Description	Target	Q2	YTD
FTP4	Time from receipt of referral to final FtP outcome	Monitor (weeks)	118	118



As has been previously discussed with the Board, the level of budget available this year will not enable a reduction in the number of cases awaiting hearing. Consequently, the time from receipt of referral to final FtP outcome is expected to increase over the course of this year. We will continue to maximise opportunities for efficiencies at all stages of the FtP process. Improvements in timeliness against our targets for FTP1-FTP3 will assist with ensuring timely conclusions for the majority of our cases, and more timely referrals into the hearings service.

During this quarter we have undertaken further work to ensure that we have a clear understanding of all cases waiting for a hearing, so that we can make decisions in relation to the progression of these cases within the resources available. This work has included starting the process of notifying social workers and complainants of the status of their case, and information about our approach over the coming months.

Objective 6.4: Demonstrate impact following the changes to our revised legislative framework, focusing on interim order timeliness, quality of voluntary removal decisions, and efficiency and outcomes of case examiner decision review process

In Q2, we instigated 16 applications for an interim order. A reduction in the time taken to approve interim orders (FTP5), since the start of the financial year, demonstrates the positive impact of our more streamlined interim order referral process.

We have considered 14 applications for voluntary removal from social workers who are in the FtP process, and 4 applications have been granted. We held an internal workshop to review our voluntary removal processes in Q2, with further work with external stakeholders planned in Q3.

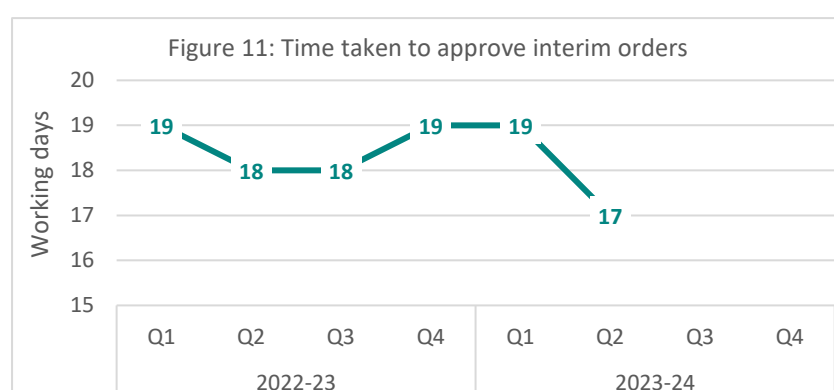
We continue to review the quality of our interim order and voluntary removal decision-making via our monthly quality assurance reviews.

In the last quarter, our legal team has received one application to review a case examiner decision using the powers given to us in our revised legal framework. At the start of Q2 we also had 4 ongoing applications. Of these, 3 were closed by the legal team, one has been referred back to the case examiners for a fresh decision and one is currently being considered at stage 2 of the process.

Time taken to approve interim orders

Table 10: Interim orders key performance indicator

ID	KPI Description	Target	Q2	YTD
FTP5	Time taken to approve interim orders	≤ 20 working days	17	18



The median time taken to approve interim orders has reduced from 19 days to 17 days. We continue to meet our timeliness target for approving interim orders.

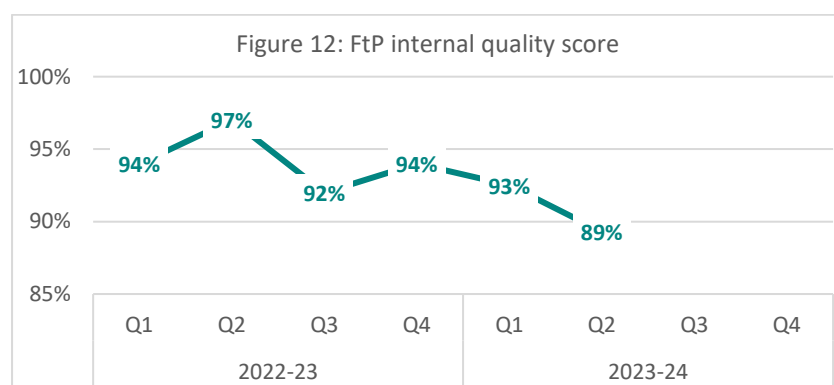
Objective 7.1: Develop our single point of contact network and explore local resolution pathways

We have continued to develop an approach to local resolution. This has included considering how the regional engagement team can further support us to achieve this objective. The next single point of contact network event is planned for Q3. This event will focus on the initial analysis of social workers' diversity data in relation to FtP processes and explore how the network can support fairer referrals.

Fitness to practise cases internal quality score

Table 11: FtP cases internal quality key performance indicator

ID	KPI Description	Target	Q2	YTD
FTP6	FtP cases internal quality score	≥ 90%	89%	91%



Our internal quality score for this quarter is 89%, against a target of 90%. The relatively small number of cases considered each quarter means one additional case meeting our internal standards would have meant we met the target in Q2. We have shared learning on these cases from the DRG with the case examination decision makers and panel members.

In Q2, the decision review group, alongside its work to review a sample of FtP decisions, considered thematic reviews relating to dishonesty. We will use learning from these reviews to refresh and improve our processes.

In Q2 we conducted an audit looking at the quality of accepted disposal decisions made by our case examiners. We also began the scoping of an audit which will cover all other case examiner decisions. The latter will commence in Q3.

Alongside this work, our legal team continue to respond to appeals and other legal processes. In this quarter, we managed 4 registrant appeals relating to the outcome of an FtP hearing, and a referral of hearing decision by the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care to the High Court. The team progressed responses to 2 judicial reviews relating to our FtP processes and has advised on our involvement in a number of Family Court proceedings where documents may be disclosed to us. Any learning identified from this work continues to be shared and followed up with the relevant teams.

Strategic theme: Delivery and improvement

Our objectives

Objective 8.1: Carry out user research to identify how to improve digital user experience

Our user research database process, which involves users of our services in our work, has completed data privacy and governance reviews. Participants will be able to take part in user research for our digital services, as well as helping to inform our digital content journeys and be involved in general user research.

We have mapped the issues identified in the accessibility audit against the website content accessibility guidelines, which will support us in drafting an up-to-date accessibility statement. We have agreed a priority list of website fixes and we will work with an external third-party supplier to achieve this development work in line with our budget.

We are continuing to educate our people on the importance of inclusive communications. Our teams have completed a survey on their confidence levels in producing accessible communications. This is enabling us to set realistic success measures. We have created a new accessibility training library on the intranet for training material and we have published our first monthly training blog.

All of this scoping work forms an important foundation layer to more closely examine how we engage with our users ahead of any future digital strategy. Although positive progress is being made, we have RAG-rated this objective 'red' as the work to lay foundations will remain ongoing for the rest of this business year.

Objective 9.1: Implement our people strategy

Our people strategy was launched in June and our communications plan is underway, focusing on each priority area.

We received the results of our latest Talent Inclusion and Diversity Evaluation (TIDE) submission. Our overall score has improved to 70%, an increase of 4% compared to last year. Our submission has now been benchmarked against all other entries, and we are delighted to receive a silver award this year. This is an improvement from bronze last year. Our focus remains on continuing to make steady year-on-year progress.

Our work on reviewing our recruitment approach is progressing. Base data on recruitment activity and diversity has been gathered and research is underway on benchmarking and identifying best practice both internally and externally. We are on track to develop our plan in Q3 to begin delivery during Q4.

Our people policies have been updated with the support of feedback groups and are in the final stage of review before publication. Managers workshops to support consistent application and understanding of the policies will be rolled out once the policies are finalised.

We have evaluated our positive action mentoring pilot and have used the feedback to inform our plan for the next roll-out of the programme. The programme will run from January to November 2024, with applications open 6-24 November 2023. The programme is aimed at people who are traditionally marginalised or underrepresented, particularly in terms of disability, ethnicity, and LGBTQIA+ identity. However, anyone across the organisation will be welcome to apply. This will be supported by access to targeted development and action learning sets.

We have RAG-rated this objective 'amber' due to minor slippage on our benchmarking work. A plan is in place and we are confident in being able to achieve this objective in the second half of the year.

Objective 10.1: Further develop and communicate quality and assurance frameworks.

Good progress is being made in rolling out our new assurance framework, beginning with our key regulatory functions this year. We held a number of workshops with assistant directors and heads of department to support them in completing the assurance framework self-assessments. Completing these workshops was impacted by summer annual leave and capacity within both the operational teams and the Internal Quality Improvement team. This means that the assurance framework has not yet been fully completed for 3 functional areas. For this reason, we have RAG-rated this objective 'amber' but are confident in being able to complete delivery during Q3.

Overall, the completed self-assessments indicate that there are adequate controls and assurances. Areas of strength and improvement were identified. These will be discussed with the relevant assistant directors. The outcomes of the self-assessments were reported to the audit risk and assurance committee in October.

Objective 10.2: Evaluate our economy, efficiency, and effectiveness, and demonstrate value for money improvements.

During Q2, we have been collating the evidence that will form part of our report on value for money. We met with the Cabinet Office to discuss their approach to assessing value for money in Arm's Length Bodies. The executive leadership team held a workshop in September to discuss how we plan to describe our progress to date towards delivering our three statutory objectives. Our preparatory work in Q2 will form the basis for our value for money report which we are on track to deliver in Q3.

Objective 10.3: Implement our corporate sustainability plan

Our sustainability plan remains on track. Although there have been minor delays in a couple of areas. We have plans in place to ensure we can deliver all key objectives by the end of the financial year.

In Q2, we have developed a plan to roll-out carbon literacy training to key staff within the organisation by December 2023. We have also secured agreement, via our 2023-24 pay remit, to offer all employees the opportunity to undertake one paid day of volunteering activity each year. We will develop a volunteering policy during Q3 and Q4, which will align with and support our sustainability plan. This will be implemented from 1 April 2024.

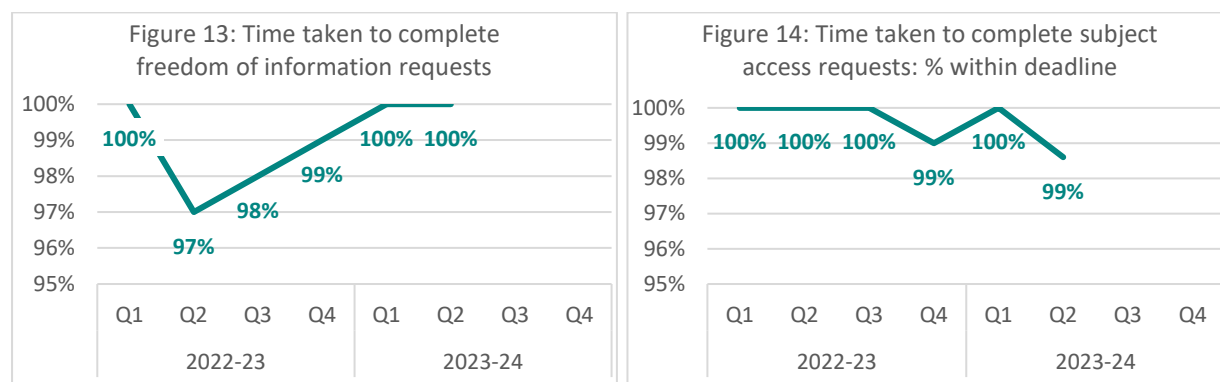
A detailed mid-year progress report will be provided to the Audit and Risk Assurance committee in Q3.

Our key performance indicators

Information governance

Table 12: Information governance key performance indicators

ID	KPI Description	Target	Q2	YTD
IG1	Time taken to complete FOI requests	≥ 90% within deadline	100%	100%
IG2	Time taken to complete subject access requests	≥ 90% within deadline	99%	99%

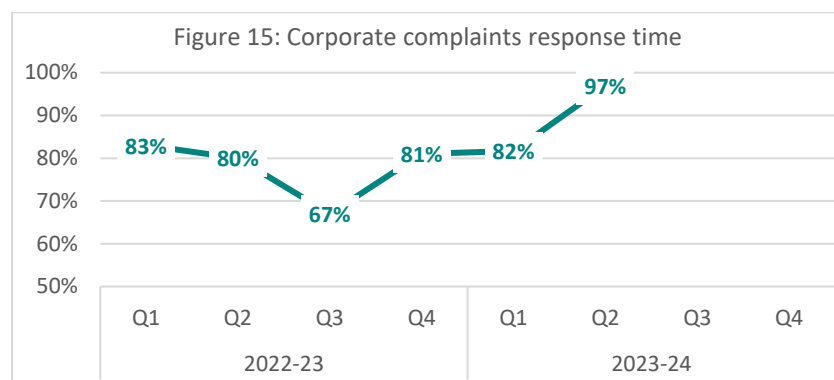


We responded to all freedom of information requests (FOIs) within the statutory deadline. One subject access request (SAR) was responded to after the statutory deadline, because the request was not identified as a SAR until after the statutory deadline had passed. Advice has been given to the relevant team in relation to identifying SARs.

Corporate complaints response time

Table 13: Corporate complaints key performance indicators

ID	KPI Description	Target	Q2	YTD
C1	Corporate complaints response time	≥ 70% within 20 working days	97%	91%

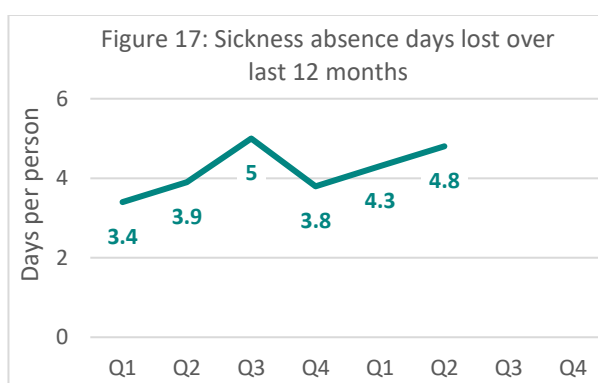
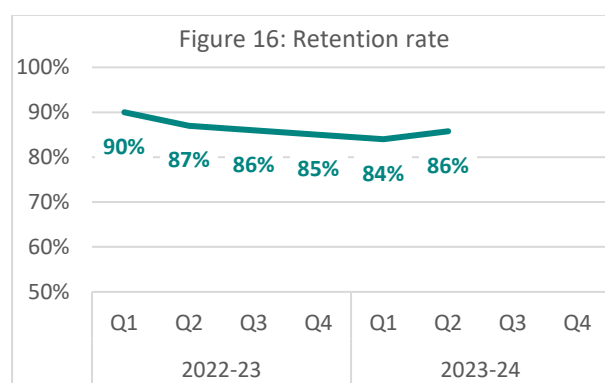


We continue to exceed our target for responding to corporate complaints in this quarter. This is despite continuing to receive a higher-than-average number of complaints. We implemented new processes to support the triage, investigation and monitoring of open complaints. This has helped ensure that timeframes for responding to complaints are being met more consistently.

People

Table 14: People key performance indicators

ID	KPI Description	Target	Q2
P1	Retention rate	≥ 80%	86%
P2	Sickness absence over last 12 months	≤ 5.4 working days per person	4.8



The average number of days lost to sickness has risen in Q2 to 4.8 days. Long term sickness cases have contributed to this, and we continue to provide one to one support and manage sustainable return to work with advice from occupational health. We remain within our target of 5.4 days absence due to sickness per employee. We continue to work with teams to manage absence.

Our retention has increased to 86% in Q2 from 84% in Q1. We are continuously working to keep ahead of risk to employee retention and work is on track on our recruitment approach, as discussed under objective 9.1.

Forecast year-end variance to budget

Table 15: Finance key performance indicator

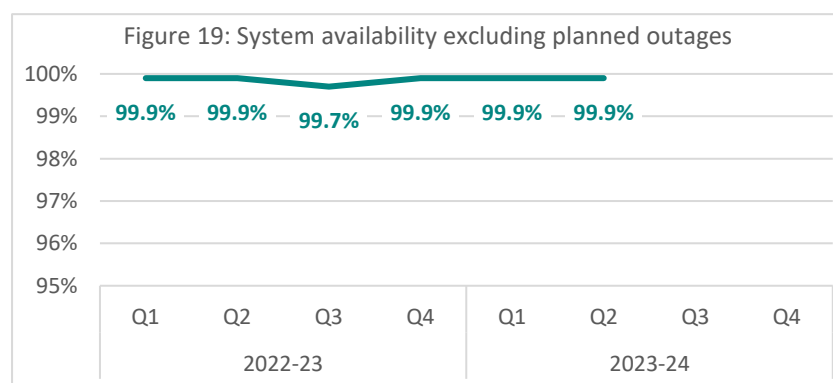
ID	KPI Description	Target	Q2
FIN1	Forecast year-end variance to budget	+/- 1.5%	0.05%

Full year revenue expenditure, net of fee income, is £6,379k compared to the budgeted amount of £5,891k. This equates to an overspend of £488k. In June, the Cabinet Office requested that employees of central government bodies each received a one-off payment of £1,500 due to the increase in the cost of living. The total revenue cost to Social Work England was c£355k, which had not been budgeted. During the remainder of the financial year, we will make savings within other areas to compensate for this payment. These savings will not adversely impact our role as a regulator. We expect that the level of expenditure for the full year will be close budget and within the finance KPI of +/- or 1.5%.

System availability

Table 16: IT key performance indicator

ID	KPI Description	Target	Q2	YTD
IT1	System availability excluding planned outages	≥ 99%	99.9%	99.9%



Our systems were available within the agreed tolerances throughout Q2.

Annex A

Statistical data 2023-24

Education and training			Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Number of concerns received		2023-24	0	0	0	0	0	0						
		2022-23	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
Number of re-approval inspections started		2023-24	11	16	13	11	0	0						
		2022-23	5	14	12	20	7	0	0	2	0	1	15	24
Re-approval decisions	Number completed	2023-24	3	2	10	21	7	21						
		2022-23	2	0	4	6	4	9	8	6	9	9	8	6
	Number re-approved	2023-24	1	0	0	1	3	7						
		2022-23	0	0	1	4	2	5	0	0	6	0	0	0
	Number re-approved with conditions	2023-24	2	2	10	20	4	14						
		2022-23	2	0	3	2	2	4	8	6	3	9	8	6
	Number not re-approved	2023-24	0	0	0	0	0	0						
		2022-23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Approval decisions	Number completed	2023-24	3	0	4	10	3	2						
		2022-23	0	0	0	3	3	2	0	2	1	2	0	0
	Number approved	2023-24	0	0	0	0	1	1						
		2022-23	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Number approved with conditions	2023-24	3	0	4	9	2	1						
		2022-23	0	0	0	3	1	2	0	2	1	2	0	0
	Number not approved	2023-24	0	0	0	1	0	0						
		2022-23	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Registration		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Number of registered social workers	2023-24	99,893	100,316	100,677	101,460	102,388	103,284						
	2022-23	98,512	98,640	98,725	99,326	99,909	100,856	101,523	100,654	98,236	98,792	99,190	99,567
Number of social workers joining the register ⁱ	2023-24	437	468	504	822	989	985						
	2022-23	243	161	295	798	534	1,007	963	588	1,341	559	408	426
Number of social workers leaving the register	2023-24	112	43	124	37	58	85						
	2022-23	181	41	215	59	43	146	306	1,461	3,768	11	14	54
Number of new registration applications received	All applications	2023-24	535	726	694	1,333	1,230	1,319					
		2022-23	275	358	594	1,236	1,129	1,475	948	632	310	437	436
	UK graduates	2023-24	394	537	519	1,151	1,064	1,182					
		2022-23	152	188	463	1,075	954	1,338	777	501	201	308	254
	Overseas graduates	2023-24	141	189	175	182	166	137					
		2022-23	123	170	131	161	175	137	171	131	109	129	182
Median time taken to approve registration applications (working days)	All applications	2023-24	5	6	4	3	4	4					
		2022-23	4	5	3	3	4	6	8	9	7	3	4
	UK graduates	2023-24	5	5	3	3	4	3					
		2022-23	2	3	1	3	3	6	8	8	7	8	3
	Overseas graduates	2023-24	52	56	56	57	56	56					
		2022-23	8	14	12	13	20	25	33	33	34	35	46
Number of restoration applications received	2023-24	79	85	95	81	65	76						
	2022-23	83	82	75	66	94	127	142	105	1,232	194	97	102
Median time taken to approve restoration applications (working days) ⁱⁱ	2023-24	15	8	3	1	9	2						
	2022-23	2	2	5	13	11	10	9	11	4	8	7	8
Number of misuse of title cases opened	2023-24	18	13	13	8	9	5						
	2022-23	6	7	13	3	7	6	9	13	37	30	26	7
Median time take to conclude misuse of title cases	2023-24	60	71	43	70	62	115						
	2022-23	20	35	45	31	35	22	59	38	31	22	34	38

Registration		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Number of phone calls received	2023-24	1,770	1,843	2,171	2,627	2,696	3,845						
	2022-23	1,304	1,578	1,543	1,976	2,404	3,808	4,347	7,030	6,058	2,677	1,883	2,064
Median time taken to answer phone calls (minutes)	2023-24	6	5	6	6	5	12						
	2022-23	1	3	3	4	8	12	8	8	25	15	6	6
Number of emails received	2023-24	1,643	1,850	1,977	2,057	2,557	4,376						
	2022-23	931	1,344	1,480	1,648	1,802	2,863	3,058	4,281	2,993	1,803	1,592	1,896
Median time taken to answer emails (working days)	2023-24	3	4	3	5	2	5						
	2022-23	1	1	1	3	5	4	4	2	2	5	2	2

Continued professional development		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Percentage of social workers that have submitted at least one piece of CPD	2023-24	4%	5%	7%	10%	13%	20%						
	2022-23	5%	7%	8%	10%	12%	20%	34%	95%	1%	1%	2%	4%
Percentage of social workers meeting all CPD requirements	2023-24	1%	2%	3%	4%	7%	14%						
	2022-23	2%	2%	3%	4%	6%	12%	26%	95%	0.04%	0.24%	0.55%	1%
Total number of valid CPD items recorded (cumulative) ⁱⁱⁱ	2023-24	7,414	9,004	13,406	18,451	26,328	43,756						
	2022-23	7,710	9,968	13,720	17,379	24,072	41,788	75,663	220,937	759	1,793	3,478	5,731

Fitness to practise		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Number of concerns received ^{iv}	2023-24	141	142	155	146	156	146						
	2022-23	155	121	130	128	163	154	179	177	162	151	128	153
Triage	Median age of pre-triage and triage caseload (weeks)	2023-24	17	17	17	19	19	18					
		2022-23	18	17	16	16	15	15	14	14	15	16	16
	Number of new pre-triage cases	2023-24	123	151	146	138	144	107					
		2022-23	125	146	144	95	150	155	152	176	131	209	126
	Number of open pre-triage cases	2023-24	307	294	305	263	272	316					
		2022-23	350	321	316	272	309	316	319	330	354	342	307

Fitness to practise			Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Triage	Percentage of cases closed at the pre-triage stage ^v	2023-24	13%	21%	12%	22%	30%	16%						
		2022-23	27%	40%	22%	15%	15%	11%	16%	29%	22%	16%	14%	9%
	Median time taken to complete pre-triage stage (weeks)	2023-24	6	7	8	6	4	4						
		2022-23	8	10	7	9	6	6	4	3	0	7	8	6
	Number of cases that progressed to triage ^{vi}	2023-24	120	130	120	140	95	53						
		2022-23	114	110	111	122	96	135	123	117	84	186	141	133
	Number open triage cases (excluding on hold cases)	2023-24	490	527	536	615	623	567						
		2022-23	484	483	485	405	365	409	380	376	366	439	448	460
	Percentage of cases closed at the triage stage ^{vii}	2023-24	71%	68%	74%	62%	66%	77%						
		2022-23	49%	58%	61%	60%	62%	73%	57%	46%	61%	71%	79%	46%
Investigation	Median time taken to complete triage stage (weeks)	2023-24	13	19	22	18	25	27						
		2022-23	8	17	23	25	18	19	15	12	19	16	20	12
	Number of cases that progressed to investigation ^{viii}	2023-24	26	32	31	31	35	27						
		2022-23	24	48	44	39	48	27	59	66	34	30	24	62
	Number open investigation cases (excluding on hold cases)	2023-24	667	648	613	606	612	614						
		2022-23	824	784	735	731	733	731	718	720	708	702	640	665
	Median age of investigation caseload (weeks)	2023-24	63	64	61	63	61	62						
		2022-23	63	61	58	61	62	62	61	58	60	62	63	60
Case examiner	Median time taken to complete investigation stage (weeks) ^{ix}	2023-24	31	51	69	55	70	68						
		2022-23	79	129	103	57	50	78	62	63	73	57	44	75
	Number of open case examiner cases	2023-24	77	82	84	101	96	97						
		2022-23	222	177	166	140	74	58	43	68	75	59	70	82
	Percentage of cases closed at the case examiner stage ^x	2023-24	72%	80%	67%	70%	44%	85%						
		2022-23	51%	59%	63%	58%	63%	54%	49%	65%	54%	59%	64%	73%
	Median time taken to complete case examiner stage (weeks)	2023-24	7	8	6	6	9	11						
		2022-23	12	11	12	11	7	8	4	4	4	7	5	4

Fitness to practise			Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Case examiner	Number of accepted disposals offered	2023-24	2	14	12	9	8	8						
		2022-23	14	13	7	9	13	9	7	8	1	11	7	8
Hearings	Number of cases that progressed to hearings	2023-24	8	9	19	7	19	4						
		2022-23	32	46	26	32	33	25	24	15	13	27	18	7
	Number of open cases in hearings (excluding post-hearing cases)	2023-24	386	378	362	356	366	354						
		2022-23	321	351	364	375	385	392	395	392	394	406	412	394
	Number of concluded final hearings ^{xi}	2023-24	17	19	28	14	7	14						
		2022-23	6	18	12	18	21	21	16	20	12	12	11	25
Interim orders	Median time take to approve interim orders (working days)	2023-24	19	20	19	17	18	17						
		2022-23	12	25	19	19	18	12	17	21	11	19	18	19
	Number of interim order application hearings held ^{xii}	2023-24	6	4	7	4	8	4						
		2022-23	2	10	6	12	17	11	6	11	5	7	7	7
	Number of interim orders imposed	2023-24	6	3	6	4	7	4						
		2022-23	1	6	6	11	15	9	6	10	5	5	7	8
Number of final order reviews held		2023-24	10	14	11	8	14	10						
		2022-23	8	9	11	8	11	9	9	7	6	12	7	7
Median time from receipt of referral to final FtP outcome (weeks)		2023-24	102	127	118	113	128	129						
		2022-23	86	128	107	114	88	105	131	134	117	86	90	138
FtP internal quality score		2023-24	93%	93%	92%	93%	85%	n/a						
		2022-23	93%	94%	96%	n/a	96%	97%	92%	91%	92%	95%	89%	97%

People			Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Retention rate	2023-24		83%	85%	84%	86%	87%	86%						
	2022-23		91%	89%	90%	89%	87%	87%	86%	85%	86%	85%	85%	85%
Headcount of staff	2023-24		249	247	245	240	237	238						
	2022-23		228	231	237	246	250	257	262	255	252	253	252	256

People		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Days lost to sickness per employee over previous 12 months	2023-24	3.9	4.4	4.3	4.1	4.4	4.8						
	2022-23	3.6	3.5	3.4	3.6	3.8	3.9	4.3	4.7	5.0	4.4	4.2	3.8

Corporate complaints		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Corporate complaints responded to within timescales ^{xiii}	2023-24	87%	86%	77%	97%	100%	91%						
	2022-23	80%	83%	86%	82%	75%	80%	57%	82%	61%	71%	88%	89%
Number of corporate complaints received (stage 1 only) ^{xiv}	2023-24	23	20	27	38	33	23						
	2022-23	8	8	11	11	10	12	14	18	30	26	16	18
Number of corporate complaints that missed 20-day timescale	2023-24	2	3	8	1	0	2						
	2022-23	2	1	1	3	2	3	3	2	7	10	3	2
Median response time over previous 12 months (working days)	2023-24	18	18	18	18	18	16						
	2022-23	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	17	18	18	18

^{i, iii-xiv} Figures under these measures have been updated since the previous performance report. These amendments are anticipated each quarter due to retrospective changes being captured on the system after the data has been compiled and reported

ⁱⁱ The calculation for this indicator has been amended to exclude the time we are waiting for information and payment. This approach better represents the time we are taking to progress and conclude these cases.

Annex B

Course reapproval decisions Q2 2023-24

Provider	Course	Region	Inspection dates		Link to inspection report	Decision
			From	to		
Kingston University	BA (Hons) Social Work FT	London	07 February 2023	10 February 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/qntjkndg/kiur1_ba_ft_pt_wb_social_work_conditions_final_rd.pdf	Approved with conditions
	BA (Hons) Social Work PT	London	07 February 2023	10 February 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/qntjkndg/kiur1_ba_ft_pt_wb_social_work_conditions_final_rd.pdf	Approved with conditions
	BA (Hons) Social Work Work-based	London	07 February 2023	10 February 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/qntjkndg/kiur1_ba_ft_pt_wb_social_work_conditions_final_rd.pdf	Approved with conditions
	MA Social Work FT	London	07 February 2023	10 February 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/lmwbkqit/kiur2-final-report.pdf	Approved with conditions
	MA Social Work PT	London	07 February 2023	10 February 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/lmwbkqit/kiur2-final-report.pdf	Approved with conditions
	MA Social Work Work-based	London	07 February 2023	10 February 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/lmwbkqit/kiur2-final-report.pdf	Approved with conditions
	PG Dip Social Work FT (exit route)	London	07 February 2023	10 February 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/lmwbkqit/kiur2-final-report.pdf	Approved with conditions
	PG Dip Social Work Work-based (exit route)	London	07 February 2023	10 February 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/lmwbkqit/kiur2-final-report.pdf	Approved with conditions

Surrey and South London Partnership with Royal Holloway	PG Dip Social Work Step Up	London	18 April 2023	21 April 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/nnpbil1/20072023_rhulr1_stepup_final.pdf	Approved with conditions
Royal Holloway, University of London	MSc Social Work	London	18 April 2023	21 April 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/aplfbj05/20072023_rhulr1_msc_final.pdf	Approved with conditions
	PG Dip Social Work (exit route)	London	18 April 2023	21 April 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/aplfbj05/20072023_rhulr1_msc_final.pdf	Approved with conditions
Staffordshire University	BA (Hons) Social Work	Midlands	28 March 2023	30 March 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/1baimg1o/24052023_sur1_cp136_ba_final.pdf	Approved
University of East Anglia	BA (Hons) Social Work	East	21 March 2023	24 March 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/mewfpyw3/24072023_uear1_ba_ma.pdf	Approved with conditions
	MA Social Work	East	21 March 2023	24 March 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/mewfpyw3/24072023_uear1_ba_ma.pdf	Approved with conditions
University of Worcester	BA (Hons) Social Work	Midlands	04 April 2023	06 April 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/bgankazc/20230404_uworr1_ba_reapproval_approval_social_work_final_v2-1.pdf	Approved with conditions
Oxford Brookes University	BA (Hons) Social Work FT	South East	07 March 2023	10 March 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/2hspeuos/20230324_obur1_ba_final_report.pdf	Approved with conditions
	BA (Hons) Social Work PT	South East	07 March 2023	10 March 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/2hspeuos/20230324_obur1_ba_final_report.pdf	Approved with conditions
	MA Social Work FT	South East	07 March 2023	10 March 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/wxrnyxmk/20230324_obur1_ma-pgdip_final_report.pdf	Approved with conditions
	MA Social Work PT	South East	07 March 2023	10 March 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/wxrnyxmk/20230324_obur1_ma-pgdip_final_report.pdf	Approved with conditions
	PG Dip Social Work FT	South East	07 March 2023	10 March 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/wxrnyxmk/20230324_obur1_ma-pgdip_final_report.pdf	Approved with conditions
	PG Dip Social Work PT	South East	07 March 2023	10 March 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/wxrnyxmk/20230324_obur1_ma-pgdip_final_report.pdf	Approved with conditions

University of Chester	BA (Hons) Social Work Degree Apprenticeship	North West	12 April 2023	15 April 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/pa4bh1yv/31082023_uc_hr2_final.pdf	Approved with conditions
University of York	MA Social Work	Yorkshire and the Humber	18 April 2023	21 April 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/yqjhta5q/07082023_uyr1.pdf	Approved
University of York	MA (Hons) Social Work	Yorkshire and the Humber	18 April 2023	21 April 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/yqjhta5q/07082023_uyr1.pdf	Approved
University of York	PG Dip Social Work (exit route)	Yorkshire and the Humber	18 April 2023	21 April 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/yqjhta5q/07082023_uyr1.pdf	Approved
University of Sussex	BA (Hons) Social Work FT	South East	06 June 2023	09 June 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/tc0p1vni/25092023_usr1_maba_final.pdf	Approved
	BA (Hons) Social Work FT	South East	06 June 2023	09 June 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/tc0p1vni/25092023_usr1_maba_final.pdf	Approved
	MA Social Work	South East	06 June 2023	09 June 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/tc0p1vni/25092023_usr1_maba_final.pdf	Approved
	PG Dip Social Work	South East	06 June 2023	09 June 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/tc0p1vni/25092023_usr1_maba_final.pdf	Approved
	PG Dip Social Work (exit route)	South East	06 June 2023	09 June 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/tc0p1vni/25092023_usr1_maba_final.pdf	Approved
University of Sheffield	MA Social Work	Yorkshire and the Humber	16 May 2023	18 May 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/hphpo4ff/20230629_usr1_ma_pgdpip_final-report.pdf	Approved with conditions
	PG Dip Social Work (exit route)	Yorkshire and the Humber	16 May 2023	18 May 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/hphpo4ff/20230629_usr1_ma_pgdpip_final-report.pdf	Approved with conditions
University of Essex	BA (Hons) Social Work	East	16 May 2023	19 May 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/p3tnhr5v/20230525_usr1_reapproval_report_ba-mapgdip_exit_route_final.pdf	Approved with conditions
	MA Social Work	East	16 May 2023	19 May 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/p3tnhr5v/20230525_usr1_reapproval_report_ba-mapgdip_exit_route_final.pdf	Approved with conditions
	PG Dip Social Work (exit route)	East	16 May 2023	19 May 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/p3tnhr5v/20230525_usr1_reapproval_report_ba-mapgdip_exit_route_final.pdf	Approved with conditions

University of Durham	MA Social Work	North East	06 June 2023	08 June 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/1ixmeizs/udur1_final_report_durham_reg_decision.pdf	Approved
Buckinghamshire New University	MSc Social Work	South East	02 May 2023	05 May 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/blqj2114/20230908_bnu_r2-report_step-up-msc_regulator-decision.pdf	Approved with conditions
	PG Dip Social Work Step Up	South East	02 May 2023	05 May 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/blqj2114/20230908_bnu_r2-report_step-up-msc_regulator-decision.pdf	Approved with conditions
Anglia Ruskin University	PG Dip Social Work Step Up	East	18 Jul 2023	20 Jul 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/p5dgozl2/20230718_ar_ur3_reapproval_report_pgdipt_step_up_final.pdf	Approved
Solent University	BA (Hons) Social Work	South East	13 June 2023	15 June 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/bzbbokj4/20230619_ss_ur1_ba-hons-social_work_reapproval_report_final.pdf	Approved with conditions
University of Leeds	PG Dip Social Work (exit route)	Yorkshire and the Humber	18 April 2023	21 April 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/infdf0zp/230426_uler1_ba-ma_final_report.pdf	Approved with conditions
	MA Social Work	Yorkshire and the Humber	18 April 2023	21 April 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/infdf0zp/230426_uler1_ba-ma_final_report.pdf	Approved with conditions
	BA (Hons) Social Work	Yorkshire and the Humber	18 April 2023	21 April 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/infdf0zp/230426_uler1_ba-ma_final_report.pdf	Approved with conditions
University of Greenwich	BA (Hons) Social Work FT	London	07 March 2023	10 March 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/rjnpcfuw/20230307_ur1_ba_ma_pgdipt_ft_pt_social_work_final_rd.pdf	Approved with conditions
	BA (Hons) Social Work PT	London	07 March 2023	10 March 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/rjnpcfuw/20230307_ur1_ba_ma_pgdipt_ft_pt_social_work_final_rd.pdf	Approved with conditions
	MA Social Work FT	London	07 March 2023	10 March 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/rjnpcfuw/20230307_ur1_ba_ma_pgdipt_ft_pt_social_work_final_rd.pdf	Approved with conditions
	MA Social Work PT	London	07 March 2023	10 March 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/rjnpcfuw/20230307_ur1_ba_ma_pgdipt_ft_pt_social_work_final_rd.pdf	Approved with conditions
	PG Dip Social Work FT (exit route)	London	07 March 2023	10 March 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/rjnpcfuw/20230307_ur1_ba_ma_pgdipt_ft_pt_social_work_final_rd.pdf	Approved with conditions
	PG Dip Social Work PT (exit route)	London	07 March 2023	10 March 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/rjnpcfuw/20230307_ur1_ba_ma_pgdipt_ft_pt_social_work_final_rd.pdf	Approved with conditions

Course approval decisions Q2 2023-24

Provider	Course	Region	Inspection dates		Link to inspection report	Decision
			From	to		
London South Bank University	BA Social Work Degree Apprenticeship	London	24 January 2023	26 January 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/infd0zp/230426_uler1_ba-ma_final_report.pdf	Non-approval
London Metropolitan University	PG Dip Social Work	London	30 May 2023	01 June 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/0zzb3mog/20230926_lmu417-report_pgdiip-step-up_final_rd.pdf	Approved
Royal Holloway, University of London	MSc Social Work	London	18 April 2023	21 April 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/aplfbj05/20072023_rh_uler1_msc_final.pdf	Approved with conditions
	PG Dip Social Work (exit route)	London	18 April 2023	21 April 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/aplfbj05/20072023_rh_uler1_msc_final.pdf	Approved with conditions
University of Worcester	BA (Hons) Social Work	Midlands	04 April 2023	06 April 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/bgankazc/20230404_uworr1_ba_reapproval_approval_social_work_final_v2-1.pdf	Approved with conditions
Oxford Brookes University	BA (Hons) Social Work FT	South East	07 March 2023	10 March 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/2hspeuos/20230324_obur1_ba_final_report.pdf	Approved with conditions
	BA (Hons) Social Work PT	South East	07 March 2023	10 March 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/2hspeuos/20230324_obur1_ba_final_report.pdf	Approved with conditions
	MA Social Work FT	South East	07 March 2023	10 March 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/wxrnyxmk/20230324_obur1_ma-pgdip_final_report.pdf	Approved with conditions
	MA Social Work PT	South East	07 March 2023	10 March 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/wxrnyxmk/20230324_obur1_ma-pgdip_final_report.pdf	Approved with conditions
	PG Dip Social Work FT	South East	07 March 2023	10 March 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/wxrnyxmk/20230324_obur1_ma-pgdip_final_report.pdf	Approved with conditions
	PG Dip Social Work PT	South East	07 March 2023	10 March 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/wxrnyxmk/20230324_obur1_ma-pgdip_final_report.pdf	Approved with conditions

University of York	BA (Hons) Social Work Practice (exit route)	Yorkshire and Humberside	18 April 2023	21 April 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/yqjhta5q/07082023_u_yr1.pdf	Approved
Buckinghamshire New University	MSc Social Work	South East	02 May 2023	05 May 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/blqj21l4/20230908_bn_ur2-report_step-up-msc_regulator-decision.pdf	Approved with conditions
University of Chester	BA (Hons) Social Work Apprenticeship (Warrington)	North West	12 April 2023	14 April 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/pa4bh1yv/31082023_u_chr2_final.pdf	Approved with conditions
	BA (Hons) Social Work Apprenticeship (Shrewsbury)	North West	12 April 2023	14 April 2023	https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/media/pa4bh1yv/31082023_u_chr2_final.pdf	Approved with conditions



Data and insight strategy

Agenda Item 11

Paper Ref 07

Paper Ref Annex 07a

Paper Ref Annex 07b

Paper for the

Social Work England Board

Sponsor

Linda Dale, Executive Director, People and Business Support

Author

Andy Leverton, Head of Business Planning and Improvement

Date

27 October 2023

Reviewed by

Executive Leadership Team

This paper is for

Assurance and Noting

Associated Strategic Objective

SO2: Share the data and insight we hold about the social work profession and our regulation. This will help us to support leaders and policy makers to drive change, and ensure our processes are safe and fair.

Impact: Risk Type and Appetite

Strategy - Open

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

In progress

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1. Summary

We shared our data and insight strategy for 2023 to 2026 with the Policy Committee in May 2023 and with board members at the away day in June 2023. We are aware that busy agendas limited the time available at these meetings to focus on the data and insight strategy.

This paper provides a brief overview of the data and insight strategy.

2. Action required

This paper is for the purposes of assurance and noting.

3. Commentary

Our data and insight strategy for 2023 to 2026 sets out our vision and plan to develop our use of data to generate high quality insight and learning to support evidence-led improvements in our work and across the wider social work profession.

We shared the data and insight strategy with our people in the summer of 2023. We chose not to publish the document externally due to its operational nature. Our overall ambition for data and insight is reflected within Our Strategy 2023-2026, and the major deliverables for 2023/24 have been captured within our business plan.

We identified five key priorities that will help us achieve our vision:

- People, processes and technology
- Using data responsibly
- Improving our regulation
- Informing and engaging
- Being an efficient and effective organisation

Work has already started across several of these priorities, including:

- Conducting initial analyses on fitness to practise referrals and activity, including our [publication on diversity in fitness to practice](#).
- Publishing more data on our [data and insight hub](#) regarding our register and fitness to practise
- Engaging with data specialists to explore ways to improve our data management technology and reporting processes

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- Analysing and publishing a summary of the EDI data shared by our registrants
- Looking at the evolution of the regional engagement lead role to improve our approach to gathering local intelligence

These pieces of work will continue along with other priorities we have identified for year 1 of the strategy (see Annex B). We are on track to deliver these priorities as planned.

We have finalised our 3-year implementation plan which will guide delivery of the data and insight strategy.

We will regularly review the delivery of our approach to data and insight to ensure it remains aligned with our vision and develops a comprehensive evidence base to support our professional regulation of social work.

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Appointment of Senior Independent Director

Agenda Item 12 Paper Ref 08
Paper Ref Annex 08a

Paper for the
Social Work England Board

Sponsor
The Chair of the Board

Author
Linda Dale

Date
27 October 2023

Reviewed by
The Chair of the Board

This paper is for
Decision

Associated Strategic Objective
SO10: Continually develop and improve how we work, ensuring we are a well-run organisation that delivers the right outcomes and provides value for money.

Impact: Risk Type and Appetite
Governance and Compliance – Averse.

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)
N/A

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1. Summary

The Board agreed to explore the appointment of a Senior Independent Director at its private strategy meeting on 27 July.

A Senior Independent Director is a member of the Board who supports the Chair in their role and acts as an intermediary for other non-executive directors when necessary.

Although the Board is operating effectively, this is recognised to be good practice. There will also be some changes to Board membership in the next 12 months: Recruitment of a permanent Chair is underway and recruitment of 2 new non-executive directors (NEDs) is due to commence shortly, to replace current Board members whose terms of appointment are drawing to a close. Appointing a Senior Independent Director from within the existing Board could assist with continuity and strengthen support for the incoming Chair and NEDs during this transitional period.

The Chair has discussed the Senior Independent Director role with Ann Harris, Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. Ann is willing to take up the role.

2. Action required

The Board is invited to approve:

- (i) The proposed role description for Senior Independent Director at Annex 1; and
- (ii) The appointment of Ann Harris as Senior Independent Director.

3. Annexes

Annex 1 – Proposed role description for Senior Independent Director

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DRAFT FOR APPROVAL

Senior Independent Director (SID) : Role and responsibilities

- To work closely with the Chair, acting as a sounding board and providing support
- To act as an intermediary for other non-executive directors on the Board as and when necessary
- To be available to key stakeholders and other non-executives to address any concerns or issues they feel have not been adequately dealt with through the usual channels of communication (i.e. through Board meetings, or through the Chair or chief executive officer)
- Dealing with any complaints about the Chair, or dealing with any matters where the Chair has a conflict of interest and has recused him/herself
- To act as decision maker for complaints or other matters, as may be requested, to support the Chair and/or maintain their independence to hear an appeal
- To support with succession planning, recruitment and induction for the Chair's role and for other non-executive directors as may be required
- To contribute to the Chair's annual appraisal if this is requested by DfE

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