

Programme and Project Management Centre of Expertise



The Scottish  
Government

# Healthcheck Review

**PROJECT: Social Security Agency Set-up**

Report Status:	Final
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Delivery Confidence Assessment:	<b>[redacted under s30(b)(i)]</b>
Senior Responsible Owner:	David Wallace
Scottish Government's Accountable Officer:	Sarah Davidson
Organisation's Accountable Officer:	Stephen Kerr

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## 1. **Programme/Project Background**

### **Aims of the programme:**

Under the Scotland Act 2016, a range of social security powers will be devolved to the Scottish Parliament.

Although the legislation sets out the areas on which certain social security benefits are paid, and where powers will be devolved to make payments in these areas, these extend beyond the Social Security Directorate (SSD) in Scottish Government (SG) and span several ministerial portfolios.

### **Driving force for the programme:**

On 27 November 2014 the Smith Commission published a report that proposed the devolution of some welfare powers to the Scottish Parliament, to supplement the existing discretionary powers.

The Scotland Bill was published on 28 May 2015. The Bill provides for the devolution to the Scottish Parliament and Scottish Government of a range of new powers, including new tax raising powers, social security powers and powers over Scottish Parliament and local government elections in Scotland. Alongside the Bill, the UK and Scottish Government have agreed a new fiscal framework for Scotland, to support implementation.

To oversee the work on social security, a Joint Ministerial Working Group on Welfare (JMWGW) between the two Governments was established. The JMWGW provided a forum for discussion and decision-making to ensure the implementation of the welfare-related aspects of the Smith Commission Report.

Since the last IAR in November 2017 the Chief Executive of Social Security Scotland has been appointed and the Social Security Bill was successfully passed in the Scottish Parliament.

## 2. **Purpose of Healthcheck**

This Healthcheck Review (Review) focuses on the 'soft launch' of Scotland's new social security agency, Social Security Scotland ("the Agency"), the progress being made on the delivery of Wave 1 and the planning of Post Wave 1.

This report is an evidence-based snapshot of the Social Security Agency Set-up Project status at the time of the review. It reflects the views of the independent review team, based on information evaluated over a three-day period, and is delivered to the SRO immediately at the conclusion of the review.

The Review Team members and people interviewed are listed in **Appendix B**.

### **Current position regarding previous assurance reviews:**

This is the fourth Independent Assurance Review undertaken by the Social Security Programme and the first Healthcheck on the establishment of The Agency. The first IAR was carried out on 30/09/15 to 02/10/15 the second on 02/03/16 to 04/03/16 and the third on 14/11/17 to 16/11/17 all at Victoria Quay, Edinburgh.

### **Procurement/delivery status:**

Two interim locations have been identified, the HQ in Dundee and a second office in Glasgow. Lease arrangements are either signed or in the final stages of completion.

### 3. Healthcheck Conclusion

3.1 **Delivery Confidence Assessment.** The Review Team finds that the overall delivery confidence assessment is [redacted under s30(b)(i)].

3.1.1 The Agency Set-up Project is being well led and well managed. It comprises a group of very capable and talented people that are establishing and developing possibly the most ambitious initiative from the Scottish Government at present. It is in good hands.

3.1.2 The Project is broadly on track and on schedule. With three months to go before the launch of Carer's Allowance Supplement (CAS), the first benefit, substantial work is in train to ensure Day 1 is managed successfully. There is a high degree of confidence that Wave 1 will be delivered and evidence shows that the initial benefits will be delivered on time.

3.1.3 There are substantial risks impacting the start up of the Agency, however, the Review Team (RT) is assured that the key risks are known, mitigation is being undertaken where necessary and contingencies are available should the need arise.

3.1.4 None-the-less, it is important that there is no complacency as Post Wave 1 will be more complex and challenging. There is serious intent to deliver a successful start to the Agency.

3.1.5 The recommendations made in this report will further assure the successful launch of the Agency and prepare it for the higher challenges that lie ahead.

<u>RAG</u>	<u>Criteria Description</u>
Green	Successful delivery of the project/programme to time, cost and quality appears highly likely and there are no major outstanding issues that at this stage appear to threaten delivery significantly
Amber/Green	Successful delivery appears probable however constant attention will be needed to ensure risks do not materialise into major issues threatening delivery
Amber	Successful delivery appears feasible but significant issues already exist requiring management attention. These appear resolvable at this stage and if addressed promptly, should not present a cost/schedule overrun
Amber/Red	Successful delivery of the project/programme is in doubt with major risks or issues apparent in a number of key areas. Urgent action is needed to ensure these are addressed, and whether resolution is feasible
Red	Successful delivery of the project/programme appears to be unachievable. There are major issues on project/programme definition, schedule, budget required quality or benefits delivery, which at this stage do not appear to be manageable or resolvable. The Project/Programme may need re-baselining and/or overall viability re-assessed

3.2 A summary of the Report Recommendations and a definition of the CER categorisation is available at **Appendix A**. The Scottish Government is committed to learning lessons from programme and project delivery. To facilitate this the recommendations from this report have been categorised to align with the Scottish Governments Programme and Project Management (PPM) Principles. The SG's PPM Principles are listed at Appendix C. This allows the SG's PPM-CoE (Centre of

Expertise) to analyse lessons across various reviews and present them in non-attributable reports.

## 4. **Findings & Recommendations**

### 4.1 **Policy and Organisational Context**

4.1.1 The Scotland Act (2016) devolves responsibility from UK Government to Scotland to deliver a range of low income and disability benefits to citizens, totalling an annual spend of circa £2.9bn. Successful implementation of these new powers is a critical priority for Scottish Government Ministers and represents a large scale and highly complex endeavour.

4.1.2 A fiscal framework has been agreed by both UK and Scottish Governments to establish the development, set up and delivery of the new devolved responsibilities. This includes a one off contribution by UK Government for implementation (circa £200m) and circa £66m per year to support administration costs. The Scottish Government has committed to meet any shortfall in funding to ensure a successful outcome.

4.1.3 The Scottish Government has established a programme of activity to develop client services (products/benefits), and to set up and launch a new Scottish Government Executive Agency (the Agency) to deliver these devolved benefits to the people of Scotland, based on underpinning values that ensure respect and dignity for all.

4.1.4 The Social Security programme finance team is currently working on a 6 year financial plan. The aim is for the 18/19 budget to be passed to the Financial Reporting Board in June 2018 for approval. This will show the split between the programme budget and the Agency budget.

4.1.5 A programme team of around 200 staff is now in place in addition to an Agency implementation team of circa 60 people. The significant level of both the financial and people resource investment so far is an indication of the criticality that Scottish Government has placed on successful delivery overall.

4.1.6 Key roles have been identified in the Programme and Agency teams. The RT has been impressed by the energy and commitment of staff interviewed.

4.1.7 A comprehensive Governance framework is in place to manage the development of new products and the structure and operations of the Agency. This includes the involvement of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) as a key stakeholder and dependency.

4.1.8 A Programme Board (PB) is in place to oversee all programme related activity and includes senior programme stakeholders. This is chaired by the Director General (Organisational Development and Operations) and supports the Programme SRO. A Delivery Board (DB), chaired by the Programme Director, reports to the PB and provides management direction and prioritisation to the Programme. The Agency SRO is a member of the Programme Board and the Delivery Board. The current Governance structure indicates that the Agency is currently a project within



the Programme, however the connectivity of the structure overall seeks to ensure transparency in planning, development and communication.

4.1.9 An Agency Set-up Project Board (ASPB) has also been established to oversee arrangements for delivery and launch. Membership includes two non-executives to support the Agency senior team. The ASPB is chaired by the Agency CEO (SRO).

4.1.10 [redacted under s30(b)(i)]. The RT heard that the ASPB is still evolving. An interim 'Shadow Board' (SB) of the Agency is being established ahead of its formal launch. This will help embrace a corporate approach and enable the piloting of working practices, decision-making and culture. In this context, it is important that the role of the independent members of the SB is clear to enable those individuals to maximise their contribution. This Review notes that recruitment of additional independent members has been agreed by the Minister to augment expertise on the SB.

**Recommendation 1: Formalise the role of the Shadow Board with clear Terms of Reference to ensure embedding of Board practices and processes prior to the Agency launch. Critical**

## 4.2 The Business Case: Scope and Stakeholders

4.2.1 An umbrella business case (Programme Business Case v1.0 November 2017) has been developed for the Social Security Programme. In addition to this, two outline business cases have been established for the Agency, one for Agency location and accommodation and another to assess service delivery options. All business cases have used HM Treasury Green Book best practice in their development and have followed the 5 Case Model. The business cases are comprehensive and robust in their identification and justification of delivery strategies.

4.2.2 The scope of this Review is to provide assurance on the set up and launch of the Agency Summer 2018 and the first wave of benefits to be delivered (Wave 1). In addition, the Review has investigated the dependencies of the Agency with the Programme activity as it develops products and supporting infrastructure to enable effective release and deployment.

4.2.3 There is a high degree of confidence that Wave 1 benefits will be delivered successfully. The combination of benefits in this phase has been chosen specifically as they are low volume, one-off payments or individual runs, don't require assessment or reassessment and are relatively low risk. Manual workarounds can be enacted relatively easily if necessary. Confirmation is required on the inclusion of Job Grant and Young Carer's Grant in Wave 1.

4.2.4 Post Wave 1 will be inherently more risky as transaction volumes are high and more complex IT systems are required. Moreover, Post Wave 1 will also be dependent on the Agency local delivery approach. The plan for Post Wave 1 is currently indicative and under discussion.

4.2.5 Stakeholder consultation has been a recurring theme for the programme and Agency staff. Client experience panels have been undertaken, involving circa 2,400 individuals. Additionally, the Review heard that extensive consultation has taken place with other public and Third sector organisations in relation to the plans for local delivery and the potential to house Agency staff in existing local offices to ensure the service is widely accessible. This suggestion has been warmly welcomed by stakeholders.

4.2.6 The Agency will submit half-year annual accounts for the period September 2018 – March 2019 and plans are in place to publish Corporate and Business Plans in March 2019.

4.2.7 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have not yet been set for the Agency though some service standards that the Agency will adhere to will be set in legislation. A Programme Benefits Realisation Plan (with base-lining) needs to be completed to enable Agency KPIs to be realised. **[redacted under s30(b)(i)]**. A programme Measurable Improvements (Benefits Realisation) Management strategy has been drafted, however, this is currently a guidance document.

**Recommendation 2: Develop a Benefits Realisation Plan to demonstrate how Programme Deliverables will be delivered. Critical**

**Recommendation 3: Develop Agency Key Performance Indicators and include them in the Business Plan to enable the monitoring progress against Business Case Outcomes. Critical**

### 4.3 Management of Intended Outcomes

4.3.1 The establishment of the Agency sets out a fresh approach to social security, which both aims to deliver positive outcomes for the people of Scotland and does so with dignity and respect. This Agency has been developed through the Social Security Programme.

4.3.2 The Social Security Programme seeks to deliver in the short to medium term:

- Development and launch of the new government Agency, September 2018;
- Wave 1 benefits of Carer's Allowance Supplement (CAS), from summer 2018; Best Start Grant 1 (BSG 1), by summer 2019; Best Start Grant 2 (BSG 2), by summer 2019; and Funeral Expense Assistance (FEA), by summer 2019;
- Planning for further benefits (Young Carer's Grant, by Autumn 2019; Job Grant; and
- Planning for Post Wave 1 benefits.

4.3.3 The Programme displays robust programme management. This was enhanced by an organisational refresh in October 2017. The Programme has embraced on-going assurance including separate Technical Assessment Framework Reviews and Digital First Service Standard Assessments. Programme and Agency

set-up leads report that resources are in place and escalated issues achieve speedy resolution.

4.3.4 The establishment of the Agency has been progressed through the ASPB. The Programme leads the development of the infrastructure for the range of social security benefits and with the responsibility handed over to the Agency for benefits delivery. Currently the policy development is being undertaken within the Programme. The final Target Operating Model (TOM) envisages policy development being retained in the Social Security Directorate.

4.3.5 The relationship between the Programme and operational Agency is key and the planned appointment of an Implementation Manager is good practice and enables the appropriate level of quality assurance to take place.

4.3.6 Currently there is work underway to match individuals from the Programme and the Agency with similar responsibilities (counterparts). This will support coherence and capability to undertake operational readiness, new product/service acceptance and commissioning.

4.3.7 The new Agency launch will take place in September 2018 in line with the launch of the first product (CAS).

4.3.8 Core to the delivery of the Agency is:

- Establishing the brand;
- Establishing governance arrangements;
- Developing technical infrastructure to deliver the new benefits including information technology;
- Recruiting staff to a total of at least 1,900; and
- Providing accommodation for both the headquarters in Dundee and equally sized accommodation in Glasgow as well as local delivery outlets across the country.

4.3.9 An Agency Conceptual Target Operating Model (TOM) aims to inform stakeholders what the new Agency will look like and to guide how to architect, build and deliver the capabilities required. This sets out a central Agency with enhanced phone and on-line support, face to face pre-claim and support services locally in existing public-sector locations. Development of this document is viewed as informing the transition from a DWP delivered current operating model, through a number of interim operating models to the TOM with full business operations. While work has been undertaken on the establishment of the vision and brand, there is a need to translate the TOM document into one that can be readily understood by new Agency staff, Programme staff and stakeholders.

4.3.10 There is currently limited numbers of operational staff in place in Dundee, however recruitment is underway with the processes adopted ensuring that the Agency's strategic values are maintained and embedded. A shared service agreement with Scottish Government is being finalised for human resources, which will allow the Agency to lead on organisational development and coaching. It is envisaged that the build up to 1,900 staff will take place over 24-36 months.

4.3.11 Although the delivery timescale for the Wave 1 benefits is tight interviewees have expressed confidence that the IT infrastructure, being developed using Agile with continuous testing, will deliver applications on time. Establishment of a Model Office will also allow delivery confidence to be built.

4.3.12 The delivery of Wave 1 benefits has been aided by using standard technology platforms involving configuration rather than extensive customisation.

4.3.13 Programme resources are primarily focused on Wave 1 and development is more limited on Post Wave 1 benefits, which are viewed as complex and will require significant development of the Agency's capacity.

4.3.14 Interim accommodation in Dundee and Glasgow is identified for staff with final numbers currently being clarified. It is understood that both locations will be available to move into in June 2018. This will provide the opportunity to test out the Agency's preferred operational model.

4.3.15 Achieving a welcoming environment for the public is viewed as essential as well as a location embedded in the communities served and this is being designed while ensuring security. An 18-month lease is signed for Dundee with the Glasgow 18 month lease arrangements in the final stages of agreement. Both will have the opportunity to extend by 6 months thereafter.

4.3.16 It is understood that accommodation in the interim Dundee site may quickly become constrained. A Property Assurance Group is being established to support the acquisition of the permanent accommodation.

4.3.17 At least 400 staff will work in communities across Scotland and locations within Local Authorities, Third Sector or NHS will be sought.

#### 4.4 Risk Management

4.4.1 The Programme Risk Register identifies higher graded risks all of which are receiving appropriate attention. **[redacted under s30(b)(i)]**.

4.4.2 The recent consideration of the Social Security Bill without significant change has lessened this risk.

4.4.3 **[redacted under s30(b)(i)]**.

4.4.4 **[redacted under s30(b)(i)]**.

4.4.5 Contingency planning is taking place at a tactical level, however, there is a need to establish strategic business continuity planning.

4.4.6 As further, more complex, benefits are implemented there is a need to ensure Agency operational readiness is in place. This could be supported by a joint risk register with dual ownership between the Programme and Agency.

4.4.7 Managing the demands arising from delivering Wave 1 has been well planned and managed. There is some risk that the potential success of delivering Wave 1 could create 'optimism bias' in dealing with Post Wave 1.

#### **Recommendation 4: Establish a strategic business continuity plan. Critical**

### **4.5 Readiness for Next Phase**

4.5.1 As detailed above, the Agency Set-up Project is broadly on track and on schedule. With three months to go before the launch of CAS, substantial work is in train to ensure Day 1 is managed successfully. There is a high degree of confidence that Wave 1 (CAS, BSG, FEA) will be delivered.

4.5.2 However, there is a need to confirm whether Job Grants and Young Carers Grants are part of Wave 1 and on what timeframe. This is likely to have an impact on the preparedness of the Agency to a) deliver the grants and b) effectively manage the business continuity of existing services.

4.5.3 The considerable growth in staff numbers risks diluting the vision, values and culture that is the desired bedrock of the Agency. The TOM document should be reworded and restructured to assist in communicating to all staff (and inductees) what the future Agency is going to be like. This work will reaffirm the vision and be of use in creating 'marketing' material for the various communication and contact channels to potential and existing benefit recipients.

4.5.4 Development work, including configuration, is also on schedule, although end-to-end testing is not expected to be completed until mid August, which leaves very little contingency in the event of problems surfacing.

4.5.5 Both buildings in the required locations have been identified. Dundee House, Dundee is at the fit-out stage. 220 High Street, Glasgow is in the final stages of clarifying lease arrangements, with completion imminent. The Agency is aware that the interim accommodation lease in Dundee may not provide sufficient accommodation in the medium term. **[redacted under s30(b)(i)]**.

4.5.6 A number of key activities need completion before Day 1, specifically:

- The appointment of an Implementation Manager within Agency Operations to ensure quality assurance, operational readiness and new product/service commissioning is managed robustly;
- Establishing a strategic planning process to ensure business continuity is maintained; and
- Building a Model Office to 'Shadow' the working environment of the Agency, to trial processes and procedures and create the start of a working culture that reflects the espoused values.

4.5.7 The Agency executives are very aware of the need to recruit a substantial number of people to manage the delivery of large volume benefits payments arising from the implementation of Post Wave 1. The RT note that careful consideration is being paid to balancing the needs of acquiring the appropriate number of people,

with the appropriate skills/capability, whilst focusing on building and maintaining an organisation culture true to the espoused values of the Agency.

4.5.8 As the Agency moves towards fulfilling its role as a deliverer of Social Security Scotland benefits it will need to ensure that its governance structure reflects the autonomy of the Agency whilst ensuring that appropriate consultation, support and challenge are also in place.

4.5.9 Preparation for the massive increase of work expected from implementing Post Wave 1 needs to begin as early as possible. The initial work of the Post Wave 1 plan needs to be more detailed and should be a priority for both the Programme and the Agency.

**Recommendation 5: Ensure that the availability of space in Dundee is aligned with the recruitment plans. Critical**

## **5. Next Healthcheck/Gateway Review**

5.1 It is anticipated that the Social Security Programme will desire a repeat Gate 0 Review towards the end of 2018, as it will be over a year since the last review. Consideration should be given to the best time to undertake a second review on Agency start-up and whether there would be benefit in reviewing at the same time as the Programme.

## **6. Distribution of the Healthcheck Report**

6.1 The contents of this report are confidential to the SRO and their representative/s. It is for the SRO to consider when and to whom they wish to make the report (or part thereof) available, and whether they would wish to be consulted before recipients of the report share its contents (or part thereof) with others.

6.2 The Healthcheck Team Members will not retain copies of the report nor discuss its content or conclusions with others.

6.3 A copy of the report is lodged with the Scottish Government's Programme and Project Management Centre of Expertise (PPM-CoE) so that it can identify and share the generic lessons learned from Healthchecks/Gateway Reviews.

6.4 The PPM-CoE will copy a summary of the report recommendations to the organisation's Accountable Officer (and to the appropriate Accountable Officer within the Scottish Government where the review has been conducted on behalf of one of the Scottish Government's Agencies or NDPBs).

6.5 The PPM-CoE will provide a copy of the report to Healthcheck/Gateway Review Team Members involved in any subsequent review as part of the preparatory documentation needed for Planning Meetings.

6.6 Any other request for copies of the Healthcheck Report will be directed to the SRO.

## Appendix A - Summary of Recommendations

Ref No.	Report Section	Recommendation	Status (C.E.R.)	Aligns with SG PPM Principle No.(s)
R1	4.1.10	<b>Formalise the role of the Shadow Board with clear Terms of Reference to ensure embedding of Board practices and processes prior to the Agency launch.</b>	<b>Critical</b>	1
R2	4.2.7	<b>Develop a Benefits Realisation Plan to demonstrate how Programme Deliverables will be delivered.</b>	<b>Critical</b>	4
R3	4.2.7	<b>Develop Agency Key Performance Indicators and include them in the Business Plan to enable the monitoring progress against Business Case Outcomes.</b>	<b>Critical</b>	4
R4	4.4.7	<b>Establish a strategic business continuity plan.</b>	<b>Critical</b>	6
R5	4.5.9	<b>Ensure that the availability of space in Dundee is aligned with the recruitment plans.</b>	<b>Critical</b>	7

Each recommendation has been given a Critical, Essential or Recommended status. The definition of each status is as follows:

**CRITICAL** - Critical for immediate action, i.e. to achieve success the project should take action immediately to address the following recommendations:

**ESSENTIAL** - Critical before next Healthcheck/Review, i.e. the project should go forward with actions on the following recommendations to be carried out before the next Healthcheck/Gateway Review of the project:

**RECOMMENDED** - Potential Improvements, i.e. the project is on target to succeed but may benefit from uptake of the following recommendations.

Each recommendation has been aligned with one (or more) of the Scottish Government's PPM Principles (Appendix C lists the principles)



**Appendix B - Review Team and Interviewees****Review Team:**

Healthcheck Team Leader:	<b>[redacted under s38(1)(b)]</b>
Healthcheck Team Member(s):	<b>[redacted under s38(1)(b)]</b>
	<b>[redacted under s38(1)(b)]</b>

**List of Interviewees:**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation/Role</b>
David Wallace	Chief Executive, Social Security Agency Implementation
<b>[redacted under s38(1)(b)]</b>	Head of Local Delivery (Social Security Agency Implementation)
<b>[redacted under s38(1)(b)]</b>	Non-Executive Board Member (Chief Executive, Revenue Scotland)
<b>[redacted under s38(1)(b)]</b>	Social Security Service Design Manager, Social Security Programme
<b>[redacted under s38(1)(b)]</b>	Service Manager for Carers, Disabilities and Universal Credit (Scottish Choices), Social Security Programme
<b>[redacted under s38(1)(b)]</b>	Head of Corporate Services (Social Security Agency Implementation)
<b>[redacted under s38(1)(b)]</b>	Service Manager for Local Delivery and Operational Support, Social Security Programme
<b>[redacted under s38(1)(b)]</b>	Head of Governance (Social Security Agency Implementation)
<b>[redacted under s38(1)(b)]</b>	Digital Operations Manager, Chief Digital Office
<b>[redacted under s38(1)(b)]</b>	Head of Operations (Social Security Agency Implementation)
<b>[redacted under s38(1)(b)]</b>	Operational Finance Lead (Social Security Agency Implementation)
<b>[redacted under s38(1)(b)]</b>	Chief Surveyor (Scottish Procurement and Commercial Directorate)
<b>[redacted under s38(1)(b)]</b>	Non-Executive Board Member

## **Appendix C - Scottish Government - Programme and Project Management Principles**

### 1. *Governance.*

- Our approach to managing programmes and projects is proportionate, effective and consistent with recognised good practice.

### 2. *Business case.*

- We secure a mandate for our work; identify, record and evaluate our objectives and options for meeting them; and ensure that we secure and maintain management commitment to our selected approach.

### 3. *Roles and responsibilities.*

- We assign clear roles and responsibilities to appropriately skilled and experienced people and ensure their levels of delegated authority are clearly defined.

### 4. *Benefits.*

- We record the benefits we seek, draw up a plan to deliver them and evaluate our success.

### 5. *Risk.*

- We identify, understand, record and manage risks that could affect the delivery of benefits.

### 6. *Planning.*

- We develop a plan showing when our objectives will be met and the steps towards achieving them, including appropriate assurance and review activities, and re-plan as necessary.

### 7. *Resource management.*

- We identify the financial and other resources, inside and outside the organisation, required to meet our objectives.

### 8. *Stakeholders.*

- We identify those affected by our work and engage them throughout the process from planning to delivery.

### 9. *Closure.*

- We ensure that the transition to business as usual maximises benefits and that operational delivery is efficient and effective.

### 10. *Lessons learned.*

- We record lessons from our programmes and projects and share them with others so they may learn from our experience.