

Our strategy for 2023 to 2026

Driving positive
change in social work



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Introduction to our strategy



Who we are and our purpose

Every day, social workers support millions of people to improve their lives. They play a crucial role in supporting change and development and advocate for a fairer society by tackling inequality. They provide a voice for those that need it, and promote the human rights and wellbeing of those they support.

Social work operates in a complex world of rules, regulation and best practice. In their challenging roles, social workers navigate across different organisations, working for a range of employers, while meeting the professional standards which are required of them for safe and effective practice. In December 2019, Social Work England became the specialist regulator of social workers in England and a key part of this world.

Our purpose is to protect the public and raise standards across social work in England, so that people receive the best possible support whenever they might need it in life.

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 requires us to regulate social workers in England to ensure public protection, by (doing all of the following):

- promoting and maintaining professional standards
- promoting and maintaining public health, safety and wellbeing
- ensuring public confidence in the profession

Our journey so far

Our first strategy covered the period 2020 to 2023. It focused on the work we would do to establish ourselves as an effective regulator and an organisation. It also explained the values and behaviours we would bring to all of our work.

This second strategy sets out our 3 year ambitions for the period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2026. It builds on the platform we have created in our first 3 years, detailing how we plan to grow our ambitions and drive even more positive impact.

In developing this strategy we have reflected on what we have learned and the successes and challenges of our first 3 years.

As an organisation rooted in the principles of engagement and co-production, it also reflects our substantial engagement led approach. This has included listening to the views of professionals, key stakeholders and people with lived experience of social work. This engagement has helped us build our awareness of how society is changing, how social work is responding, and the impact this is having on those who rely on social work services for support and advocacy. Examples are well known, such as the impact of (and recovery from) COVID-19, the Black Lives Matter movement, and longstanding challenges around workforce capacity and recruitment and retention. Understanding this context is vital. We cannot effectively regulate the profession without understanding the challenges it faces and how it is evolving over time.

We have also drawn reflections from across the social work profession, as our learning and evidence base continues to grow. This includes learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, which have drawn a national profile and increased the public's desire for change.

The steps we'll take to implement and achieve the objectives set out in this strategy will be detailed in our annual business plans.

Our values

Our values are fundamental to how we operate. We believe they have stood the test of time. Our challenge and our commitment is to ensure we remain true to them as we evolve and new challenges emerge.

Fearless

We'll be fearless in our determination to deliver radically different regulation. In doing so, we'll improve the value placed on social work as a profession and the positive impact social work has on people's lives. Through our leadership, we'll influence and drive change wherever needed and use our intelligence and engagement to shine a light on current social work practice.

Independent

A regulator must always be independent and carry out its work without undue influence from anyone. As the specialist social work regulator, we hold true to this value and will demonstrate this through all aspects of our work.

Transparent

Throughout our work, we'll be open and honest about what we're doing and how we're doing it. We'll seek feedback and continue to talk to and collaborate with everyone who has an interest in social work. We know we'll make mistakes as we develop, but we'll be honest about these and learn from them.

Ambitious

We have high aspirations for the social work profession, for regulation, and for ourselves. Through our engagement, collaboration and our planning, we'll deliver on our ambition.

Collaborative

Since the beginning of our journey, we've spoken to those with an interest in social work about who we are, what we plan to do and how we plan to do it. Wherever possible, we've done this together with our experts in the social work profession, social work education and training providers and other partners. We'll continue to work in this way.

Integrity

We will hold true to our values and our overarching objectives, and work with integrity in every aspect of our business.

How we approach our work

Being the regulator is a privilege and carries responsibilities. We need to be careful and respectful in how we exercise this responsibility. We operate within a clear legislative framework and in delivering that we choose to be guided by 2 main principles:

1. Equality, diversity and inclusion must be integral to and embedded in all we do. This must form a key part of the values and behaviours we bring as individuals and as an organisation.
2. We must always listen to, engage with and co-produce alongside those who are directly influenced by our work.

These principles have guided our work to date and will continue to do so in all of the strategic objectives over the next 3 years and beyond.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

Our equality, diversity and inclusion action plan demonstrates our commitment to (all of the following):

- positive change in line with our values
- valuing diversity
- representation of those we serve
- our legal responsibilities

Over the next 3 years we will continue to pursue positive change in this important area. This applies to both who we are as an organisation and the impact we can have on the profession and those who use and rely on social work services. We will continue to embrace, support and encourage diversity.

Engaging with the profession, we have developed professional standards which include a focus on anti-oppressive practice, and we are part of an anti-racism partnership to drive commitment from the sector. We will keep working to ensure our professional standards are embedded thoroughly in the profession. We will continue to encourage social workers to exercise accountability and anti-racism in all aspects of practice and all professional pathways.

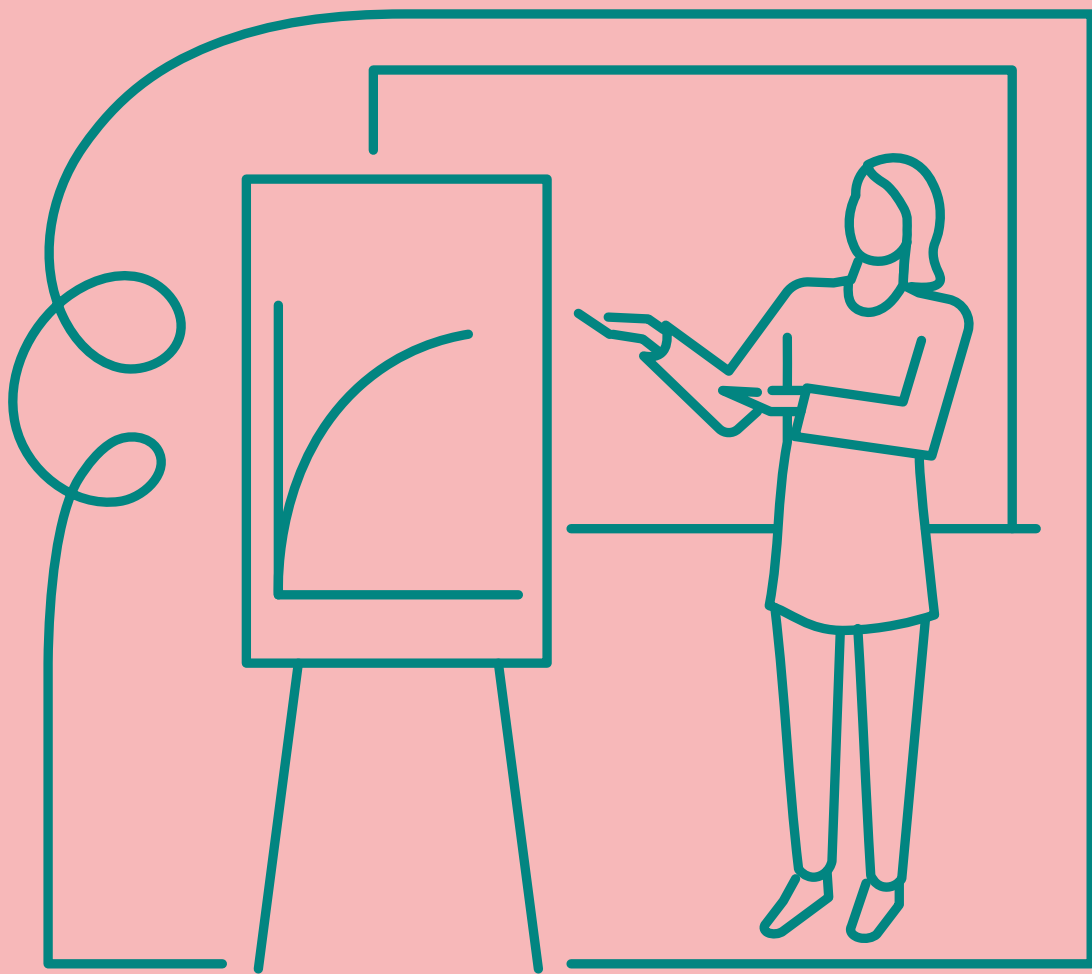
Engagement and co-production

We believe in the power of collaboration and share a common goal with those we regulate - to protect the public, enable positive change and ultimately improve people's lives.

Co-production is about encouraging the people we work with and for to participate in and influence our work. This includes social workers, and people with lived experience of social work. When co-production is done well, people feel heard and that we have listened to their experiences. Critically, too, effective co-production improves our actions and makes them more impactful. Our [National Advisory Forum](#) provides expert advice, support and challenge to our work and on how to continue improving our approach to co-production.



Getting ahead of the curve



Our experience over the last 3 years has shown us the value of an increasing focus on prevention and impact. It is a well-established principle that getting ahead of the curve and preventing problems before they arise, or escalate, is better for all.

Fundamental to our establishment was to drive positive change in the profession. The ambition was to achieve this through a new regulatory approach. This would see us promoting professional improvement, and identifying and helping tackle risks in the wider social work practice and employment environment. This would be supported through sustained professional engagement and the use of data and insight. With a new focus, a strengthened evidence base, and continued determination, we can bring about a better balance in social work so that many concerns are prevented from happening at all.

This, we believe, is the right next step for delivering our overarching statutory objective of protecting the public.

The need to get ahead of the curve and act to try to prevent harm is stronger now than ever. Currently, we are receiving about 1,800 fitness to practise concerns per year. Whilst we will always take seriously and investigate the concerns which come to us, the time is right to recognise that this represents significant potential harm to the public. This shows more is needed to protect from harm the often vulnerable people who rely on social work services. Additionally, by their nature, fitness to practise investigations can bring a further impact to the complainant, as well as to the social worker involved.

Increasingly, the time taken to safely and effectively investigate the concerns which come to us risks being too long. Higher rates of cases go into hearings, and hearings often take longer. This intensifies this impact on individuals and brings more uncertainty. Getting ahead of the curve is how we respond to this.

We are not starting from a blank page though. Firstly, we need to better understand the concerns which are coming to us. We know the majority are about social workers in the children and families sector. We need to understand how this compares to risk and harm in other, similar professions. Secondly, we need to better understand changing sources of regulatory risk. In addition to external reviews and reports, we have substantial information on the risks in the system through our own regulatory and engagement activity, as well as commissioned research.

Our strategic themes



In setting out our ambitions for the next 3 years and beyond, we have focused on 3 main themes. These themes capture what we want to achieve with a clear understanding of how we will get there.

1. Prevention and impact

We believe that it is better, where possible, to seek to prevent harm. This approach to public protection will be an increasing focus in how we regulate and the work we will do to get ahead of the curve. Success will be underpinned by building trust and confidence with the profession and creating a clear understanding of the need for and responsibilities of professional regulation. This will be supported by a more powerful and insight driven approach to data and change. We will look at the social work practice environment to identify and lead action on addressing system level risk factors.

2. Regulation and protection

We will ensure that all of our regulatory activity continues to strike the right balance between protection and proportionality. We will ensure that our work is fair, transparent, as efficient as possible and in the public interest. We will identify and implement new approaches to local areas handling concerns raised, where safe and appropriate. We will continue to encourage and promote effective regulation, including continuing professional development (CPD), to demonstrate to the public that social workers meet our professional standards.

3. Delivery and improvement

To deliver our ambitions we will further evolve how we work. We are taking the next steps on our journey, from being a new organisation creating systems and processes for the first time, to consolidating our people and functions and moving into maturity. We will focus on continuous improvement of the approaches and systems which underpin our work. Key to this are our digital services through which so much of our engagement with the public and the profession takes place. Also, the governance and oversight which ensure we are accountable for what we do. A new people strategy will enhance our role as a diverse and inclusive employer and embrace putting people at the heart of change.

Prevention and impact

Getting ahead of the curve and reducing risk can only be delivered in partnership across the sector, to drive the change and positive impact which is in everyone's interest. This includes social workers, educators, employers and above all the public who rely on and benefit from safe, effective and life-changing social work practice.

Building and maintaining trust and confidence in the profession

A vital part of why we exist is to maintain professional standards in social work so that people can have trust and confidence that their social worker will meet their needs. We require every social worker to demonstrate they meet our professional standards. This includes through their own continuing professional development and critical self reflection to improve their practice. To truly embed the professional standards however, we must further develop our relationship with the profession. For some, regulation is still viewed as a process of annual compliance. This needs to shift into a sustained conversation on what it means to be a social worker and why social work is regulated.

To achieve this we need to place greater emphasis on our levers of communication, engagement and policy. This will support us to proactively seek out opportunities to inform, educate, and influence others on the varied role social work plays within society. We are clear that our objective is to build confidence in social work. The perception of social work matters in our work if we are to build and maintain public trust in the profession and ourselves as the regulator. This work could have multiple long-term benefits for areas of regulatory risk, whether increasing a sense of professionalism and pride or elevating the identity of social work to ensure it is visible and valued to support retention.

Objective 1:

Build trust and confidence in the social work profession, and in regulation, by strengthening our relationship with the sector.

Learning and changing through harnessing data and insight

As the regulator we have an important and informed viewpoint, drawing on our data, our research, our engagement, and our experience.

We will develop an insight approach to support improvements to the wider social work profession. Our insight will allow us to better understand the profession we regulate, identifying and understanding the challenges, risks and disproportionalities. This will help manage risk and contribute to helping prevent harm occurring. We will provide knowledge that partners can use to improve how social work is led, delivered, and evaluated. We will also harness data and insight to inform our own activities and how we regulate, linking up the intelligence touchpoints that we have across our own services.

We will deepen our evidence base on our regulation, the profession and the practice environment. And we will consider how we can share insight, making better use of the information we already have available. We will also explore how technology can assist in improving our learning.

Being a learning organisation is essential to our continued development. This means asking what is happening, what the causes are, and how situations can be improved. We will ask these questions of ourselves, and of the sector.

Objective 2:

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.

Leadership for change

Effective public protection and regulation increasingly means prevention. Identifying threats and risks to public protection at a more systemic level, as well as focusing on individual social workers, to mitigate these risks as much as possible. We want every social worker to be able to practise, develop and progress in an environment supportive of sustained safe and effective practice.

We will explore and challenge what can be achieved through professional regulation and within the framework of our legislation. But there are limits to what can be achieved for public protection and professional confidence through professional regulation alone.

To bring about the changes we think are necessary, we need to move more definitively into a broader leadership role. This will be a more deliberate approach for us and will come with challenges. There are 2 factors which we believe will enable us to succeed.

The first is the position we hold as a national organisation across social work in England, with unique responsibility and perspective. This stems not only from our role as the regulator, but increasingly from the insight we can offer. We have a whole profession, and whole career perspective of social work. And we have an increasing evidence base, which we are developing through our regulation and engagement.

The second is the understanding we will need to facilitate engagement across the sector. This includes strengthening our relationship with employers and others to collectively manage risk. We will work alongside other organisations, employers, educators and local and national government, to find and implement solutions to identified public protection risks. In particular, we will focus on (all of the following):

- an improved and strengthened transition from education to employment
- supported and guided early career development
- continuing professional development (CPD) as routine, impactful and core to improving professional practice
- the development and accountability required of specialist roles

This will be a complex process with analysis and engagement required, drawing in evidence and insight. Much of this is brought together in the Social Work in England reports we have published during our first 3 years, providing analysis and commentary on the wider social work environment.

Objective 3:

Collaborate with other sector leaders to develop a clear and shared understanding of risks to the public and agree how to manage those risks.

Reforming qualifying social work education

Ensuring those who register as social workers after graduating from social work qualifying courses are ready to do so is the final strand of prevent and impact. We already regulate here through approving and inspecting social work qualifying courses. We are doing this on a 3 year schedule, finishing in 2024, and by the end of this (all of the following):

- all social work courses have been inspected
- all course providers have evidenced that they meet our education and training standards in order to remain approved
- students who successfully complete a course can meet our professional standards

On completion of this schedule, we will have a clear picture from across the country of the different routes into social work, and how courses are being delivered.

Our wider ambition on pre-qualifying social work education is explained in [our approach to social work education and training](#) which was published in June 2022. The approach sets out the actions we are already planning or considering, to ensure that newly qualified social workers are prepared to start their career. This includes being equipped with the knowledge, values, skills and behaviours to meet the professional standards, which we have already consulted on. It also means the transition from education to employment is effective. We want to have a particular focus on transition to employment approaches and early career development, based on our professional standards.

We will also look at specialisms and advanced practice. This includes the role of annotations to the register in providing public information about the capabilities of social workers to do specialist roles, which we consider to be of higher risk to the public.

Objective 4:

Ensure all social work students receive comprehensive and consistent education and training, in a supportive and inclusive learning environment to prepare them for practice.

Regulation and protection

Protecting the public starts with our professional standards, which apply to every social worker. We are building from that foundation. Our regulation embeds the principles for professionalism to support safe and effective practice. We will interrogate our processes and systems to ensure they are user focused, timely and responsive. And we will continue to explore opportunities to increase efficiency and cost effectiveness. We will also use the data we hold on the profession to help identify any trends or differences in outcomes for people in relation to their backgrounds. This insight will help ensure that our policies and processes are fair and equal to everyone.

Registration

We believe it is primarily the professionalism of individual social workers, supported and encouraged by robust regulation, that keeps the public safe. Registration is at the heart of our approach to encourage and require this professionalism. We require social workers to demonstrate they meet our professional standards annually. This shows that they are capable of safe and effective practice, ensuring public protection and increasing public confidence in social workers.

As part of this, we set annual requirements for the CPD we require of social workers to maintain their registration. We have started to focus more on how we require social workers to demonstrate in their CPD the core behaviours which we think underpin safe and effective practice. This includes self-reflection, the application of learning to practice, and peer reflection. This encourages a culture of learning and development that is ongoing, sustained and embedded in practice.

We want CPD to be a continuous process of learning and reflection across the year. This means social workers moving away from recording CPD only near the end of the annual registration period. CPD is a key element of our growing relationship with social workers. We will continue to build on this relationship to drive the journey of the profession forwards. This includes increasing the adoption of learning, development and reflection as a routine and valued part of professional life. We will explore whether changes to our guidance, engagement and digital delivery are needed to support this ambition.

Objective 5:

Ensure that our registration processes are fair, responsive and efficient.

Fitness to practise

In a profession as complex and challenging as social work it is expected there will be times when things haven't gone as well as they might have. This will lead to concerns being raised about the ongoing fitness to practise of a social worker. It is our responsibility to investigate these concerns. A fair and transparent fitness to practise investigative approach is necessary for addressing concerns that relate to how a social worker is meeting our professional standards.

Fitness to practise cases can be difficult and sometimes distressing for both the social worker and those who raise concerns. Ensuring that our processes and outcomes are fair, efficient, proportionate, and in the public interest will always remain critical for us.

We have developed a range of quality assurance activities to help us understand where we need to develop or improve our work. Where appropriate, we involve those with lived experience of social work, including through our National Advisory Forum. We have a particular focus on building our evidence base. This will help us to understand and address concerns about equality, diversity and inclusion at all stages of the fitness to practise process. We will use this learning to further improve our processes. This will also help us to provide continuing assurance to the public, social workers, and other stakeholders about the quality of our regulatory processes and outcomes.

As more referrals come to us, and the complexity increases, this brings challenges to remain as user focused, timely and cost effective as possible. The time taken to safely and effectively investigate the concerns which come to us risks being too long, with higher rates of cases going into hearings, and hearings often taking longer. We may need to review the fitness to practise process and the nature of investigation and decision making within it. We will continue to review and develop our processes at all stages to ensure that fairness, efficiency, and timely conclusion of processes remain at the forefront of our approach to our work. And we will work within the resources and frameworks available to us.

Objective 6:

Review our fitness to practise case resolution approach, to improve service quality and fairness, and ensure value for money.

In some cases, local resolution is often the most appropriate, quickest and efficient way of resolving concerns or issues that arise. This can offer real advantages to all of those concerned, but we know it must never get in the way of our role as regulator in investigating fitness to practise concerns. We want to encourage increasing use of this local resolution approach. But we understand this journey needs careful management to be safe and to provide confidence to all involved. In progressing this area of our work, we will ensure that our approach is appropriate and proportionate, looking to resolve concerns as efficiently and effectively as possible, at the earliest appropriate stage.

We have started work with employers and others to understand how local processes are working. We will continue this work, finding a balance between (both of the following):

- ensuring that we continue to provide a route for fitness to practise issues to be investigated and resolved
- helping others deal with complaints as close as possible to where the issue may have arisen

Objective 7:

Develop our work with employers and the public to resolve more concerns locally (where it is safe and appropriate to do so).

Delivery and improvement

In our first 3 years we have established a solid platform of high quality, responsive enabling and support services which allow the organisation to thrive. We have learnt a great deal in this time. For example we adopted a hybrid model of virtual and in-person fitness to practise hearings. We will continue to learn and innovate as there is still much to be done as we mature and develop, and these services will keep improving over time. For this strategy, we have identified key areas to focus on, to give us the best chance of success.

Utilising the power of digital to transform how we work

We are a user focused organisation with increasing levels of activity taking place digitally. We and our users use digital to do (all of the following):

- information sharing (such as publishing guidance)
- active listening (such as through public consultations)
- managing individual transactions through online accounts (such as the registration renewal service)
- raising fitness to practise concerns
- supporting our business and its processes to be more efficient

Our digital platforms are our main point of contact with the public and professionals. For many, our digital services will be the only point of interaction they have with us. The experience they have will significantly impact on the trust and confidence they have in us as a public body. Our approach to digital must therefore be inclusive, informative and intuitive for our users, whilst always keeping data secure.

Objective 8:

Further develop our digital channels and services, to ensure they are inclusive and focused on user experience.

Our people are at the heart of all we do

Successful delivery is achieved through skilled, committed and valued people, supported to be their best. Our people have collectively built the organisation and our culture and values, drawing on expertise in regulation and social work. They have our purpose and success at the centre of what they do. Being a diverse, inclusive and values driven organisation is of paramount importance to us. Our investment in people is for the long term as we recognise this as fundamental to being a successful organisation.

At this stage of our development, we need to focus on (all of the following):

- attracting and retaining the people we need to deliver our strategy
- cultivating our culture
- promoting health and wellbeing
- developing leadership and talent

All of this will drive the change and impact we want to see. That means being adaptive, curious and creating an environment that stimulates learning and improvement and where everyone contributes.

Objective 9:

Be a diverse and inclusive employer, which supports and motivates its people so they can deliver for the people we serve.

Assurance through effective governance and organisational management

Our governance and management must support and assure the delivery of our strategic ambitions. We have established effective governance and management structures and processes and, in the light of experience over the previous 3 years, have refined and updated them. This includes encouraging innovation, and empowering our people whilst ensuring the necessary assurance performance and risk management is in place. We will continue to develop our governance and quality assurance frameworks to ensure we can demonstrate how these drive continual improvement in the quality and timeliness of decision making and promote public confidence. This will be supported by our improved use of data and insight to understand and challenge in more detail our own performance and identify the changes necessary to deliver the right outcomes.

We want to contribute positively to societal and environmental challenges. We are committed to sustainable development. By this we mean meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, as a guiding principle within our work. Our sustainability plan contains a vision and practical steps now and in the future for how we will achieve this. The plan integrates our corporate social responsibilities and environmental, social and governance commitments. We are committed to procuring products and services that minimise our environmental impact, complying with all applicable legislative requirements and continuously improving our knowledge of environmentally and socially responsible supply chain management.

Our infrastructure and operating systems are now in place. The investment in our digital technologies and infrastructure, including Forge (our customer relationship management system) has been particularly successful. It proved to be flexible and stable as we moved to work from home during the pandemic, and continues to support our hybrid model of working. We will continue to develop Forge and our digital ways of working. This will ensure efficiency through process improvement and automation, and increase our system capacity and stability.

Objective 10:

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

Our resources



This strategy should enable us to find a better balance of expenditure between responding to concerns and prevention of harm. Much of our expenditure so far (with additional financial support from the Department for Education) has necessarily been directed at fitness to practise. This has been due to (both of the following):

- the high level (and complexity) of the legacy fitness to practise cases we inherited from our predecessor regulator
- the volume of new concerns we received and continue to receive after becoming the regulator (which was higher than expected)

Whilst the inherited legacy case load will largely be completed in 2023, the fitness to practise position remains challenging. Because of the increase in the volume of concerns we have received, we have a large caseload at the final hearings stage of the process. Over time we will need to ensure there is sufficient continuing investment in this area to bring it in line with our timeliness targets and objectives. Building from that, we will accelerate our progress on working with employers and others, moving towards a position where we are dealing only with concerns where there is a risk to the protection of the public.

As an organisation funded by the taxpayer and registration fees from individual social workers, it is our responsibility to deliver excellent value for money. Over our first 3 years, we have demonstrated a strong track record of performance. We have made a number of changes to improve the efficiency of our processes whilst continuing to maintain fairness and quality. For example, consulting on and making amendments to our rules and regulations. Over the 3 year strategic period, we will be focused and determined in seeking out further opportunities to innovate, improve and demonstrate value for money in all that we do.

We have an agreed baseline with the Department for Education as our lead sponsor department which will remain under review against policy goals and spending priorities. This is in line with normal practice. We anticipate that our forecast for fee income will remain stable. We may review our current fee structure at some point during this 3 year strategic period. Any such review would involve engagement with the profession and ultimately a full public consultation.

We will be mindful of external risks and pressures, including (all of the following):

- challenges to public funding
- inflation pressures impacting our major supplier contracts
- increasing recruitment and retention issues in a potentially higher cost labour market

How will we evaluate our success?



This strategy details (all of the following):

- how we will drive change (through 'prevention and impact')
- clear ambitions for improving our regulation and our positive impact (through 'regulation and protection')
- the approaches and values we will hold to (through 'delivery and improvement')

However, without a clear and rigorous approach to evaluation, we risk not succeeding.

Evaluation is core to how we operate, how we improve, and how we are held to account for our activities and the public money we are spending. The first step on this journey is learning through data and harnessing insight.

This section explains our approach to strengthen the collection, analysis and use of data to drive insight and activity. One way it will be used is through our evaluation focus; the 2 go hand in hand. We will take a holistic approach to monitoring and evaluation.

We will also work with the Department for Education on a detailed review of benefits realisation. The details will be explored over time but the context is clear. We were created as a single profession regulator to focus on the unique needs of social work regulation, set up with innovative legislative powers that were further refined in 2022. The legislation set out overarching objectives on public protection and promoting and maintaining the health, safety and wellbeing of the public, public confidence in social workers and proper professional standards for social workers. Demonstrable benefits will derive from achieving those objectives, as well as feeding into wider goals around a highly capable and skilled social work workforce.

This strategy will follow an evaluation approach more aligned to testing and ensuring we have good processes in operation. We think this will follow 2 slightly different paths.

Prevention and impact

From the beginning, prevention and impact will need to include an action learning approach. In this area in the strategy, we have not listed detailed actions as we are not yet in a position to do so. Rather, we identify (all of the following):

- the problems to be solved
- the risks to be managed
- the broad leadership approach we will take in achieving this

This evaluation activity will be needed to provide the evidence to manage risk and uncertainty. We will be developing a theory of change based on agreeing goals, understanding the system, testing, evaluating and refining. We will develop this approach to change by working with the sector to design the policies we will collectively deliver.

Ongoing evaluation will help us to understand whether what we are doing is working as intended. It will also help us to understand which parts are successful or unsuccessful, and what needs to be adapted to improve performance.

Regulation and protection; and delivery and improvement

We will test whether we are delivering our systems and services as well as we can, and consider if they can be improved. This will help to realise the anticipated benefits and demonstrate our effectiveness, and to understand how to maximise the efficiency and effectiveness of delivery. We will use an expanded range of data to guide this evaluation.

We will also maximise the value from user research, including surveys, interviews and focus groups. Sector engagement and outreach will provide valuable information and a wide range of perspectives at both a local and national level. We will always use the output of this alongside the performance management and monitoring data available to us.

Appendices



Our strategy on a page

Our purpose:

To regulate social workers in England so that people receive the best possible support whenever they might need it in life.

Our strategic themes:

Prevention and impact



Building trust and confidence within a safer practice environment.

Regulation and protection



Being transparent, efficient, responsive and fair in how we regulate.

Delivery and improvement



Putting our people at the heart of the positive change we want to drive.

Our guiding principles:

- Equality, diversity and inclusion is embedded in all that we do - driving positive change, valuing diversity and representing society
- We will listen to, engage with and co-produce alongside those who are directly impacted by our work
- We will learn through data and use insight to understand our impact and inform our plans

Our values:

- Fearless
- Independent
- Transparent
- Ambitious
- Collaborative
- Integrity

A summary of our objectives

Objective 1:

Build trust and confidence in the social work profession, and in regulation, by strengthening our relationship with the sector.

Objective 2:

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.

Objective 3:

Collaborate with other sector leaders to develop a clear and shared understanding of risks to the public and agree how to manage those risks.

Objective 4:

Ensure all social work students receive comprehensive and consistent education and training, in a supportive and inclusive learning environment to prepare them for practice.

Objective 5:

Ensure that our registration processes are fair, responsive and efficient.

Objective 6:

Review our fitness to practise case resolution approach, to improve service quality and fairness, and ensure value for money.

Objective 7:

Develop our work with employers and the public to resolve more concerns locally (where it is safe and appropriate to do so).

Objective 8:

Further develop our digital channels and services, to ensure they are inclusive and focused on user experience.

Objective 9:

Be a diverse and inclusive employer, which supports and motivates its people so they can deliver for the people we serve.

Objective 10:

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

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