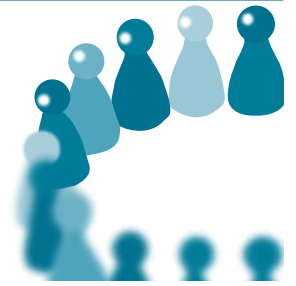



Social work in Scotland



ACCOUNTS COMMISSION

Self-assessment checklist for council members

This checklist sets out some issues that elected members may wish to consider in relation to social work in their own council. Members may also wish to consider the elected members checklist included in [Supplement 2](#)  of our self-directed support report.

Questions for elected council members to consider	Assessment	Required actions
Councillors' role in social work governance		
When the council is making budget decisions about social work, do we have good information about how this may affect services, the number of people affected, and how the decision-making process will take account of the budget decision?		
Is there a committee(s) with specific responsibility for social work in the council or Integration Joint Board (IJB)? If not has the council identified which committees have a role in monitoring social work?		
If there is more than one committee within the council or IJB with responsibility for social work services, how do we ensure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that there is consistency in social work decision-making? • there is no duplication or gaps in the scrutiny of social work services? • that risks are being effectively managed? 		
Are the roles and responsibilities of committees clear and set out in terms of reference, and are links to statutory decision-making responsibilities clear?		
Do the committees of which I am a member have any specific responsibilities for social work processes?		
Am I clear about the principles of good decision-making and social work and my role in monitoring the council's performance in this area?		
Do I have a good understanding of the main social work services in the council, including the key decision-making processes involved?		

Cont.

Questions for elected council members to consider	Assessment	Required actions
Does my council have service charters setting out what service users and carers can expect in relation to decision-making, outcomes, complaints and appeals?		
Do social work staff work to clear and published policies and guidelines so that users can understand the criteria against which decisions are made?		
Do I understand the statutory role of the Chief Social Work Officer (CSWO) and have I good access to the CSWO if I require advice on any aspect of social work?		
Do I have access to, and take-up, training and development opportunities about social work policies and processes?		
Councillor's role in health and social care integration		
Do I understand how health and social care integration is working in my council and my role in achieving the objectives of integration, including developing a shared culture?		
Has the IJB agreed a strategy to move to improved models of health and social care and are IJB leaders fully committed to this strategy?		
Is there a commitment with IJB partners to align management arrangements for services in the community and share resources, such as aligning budget setting, rationalising the public sector estate, co-location of services, and aligning technology such as IT systems to facilitate information sharing?		
Are there adequate arrangements for communicating decisions made by the IJB to council members who are not members of the IJB?		
Are you confident that the governance arrangements covering health and social care are working well (are there any gaps or overlaps)?		
Do the council and IJB have adequate workforce plans to ensure social work and social care services have sufficient numbers of properly trained staff?		
Councillors' role in consulting local people		
How does your council consult stakeholders (local people, service users and carers and service providers) about their priorities for social work and social care work services, the funding available and the way in which services are provided? How does it manage the expectations of service users?		
Are services designed around the needs of service users and the outcomes important to them and do IJB partners share data to enable this to happen effectively?		
Performance management		
Am I clear about the principles of good decision-making and social work and my role in monitoring the council's performance in this area?		

Cont.

Questions for elected council members to consider	Assessment	Required actions
Are effective and regular monitoring arrangements in place within the council and/or the IJB to ensure that decisions comply with council quality and timeliness standards?		
Does the council or IJB publish clear customer service and operational standards and performance data by which I expect residents to judge social work service performance?		
Are effective and regular monitoring arrangements in place within the council and/or the IJB to ensure that decisions comply with council quality and timeliness standards?		
<p>Do committees with a social work remit receive regular reports about:</p> <p>(a) the performance of systems where decisions affect service users and carers, including the management of risk?</p> <p>(b) social work outcomes including progress against:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the council's own key performance measures? • the time taken to make decisions and the number of avoidable errors made in each social work decision-making system? • the number of appeals made against decisions, including the percentage upheld and the time to take decisions? <p>(c) comparative performance against similar councils?</p>		
Do I challenge officers on the performance information presented to me where it is unclear or where it indicates poor performance?		
Promoting and sharing best practice		
Is there a shared understanding of the objectives of prevention within health and social care and a commitment to fund the changes needed to make prevention work?		
Are prevention initiatives based on good evidence that they are likely to be successful and are outcomes measured?		
Does my council play an active role in relevant social work networks and national working groups to gather and promote best practice?		

