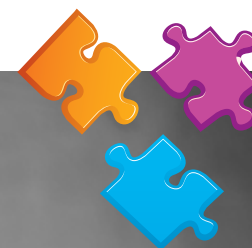


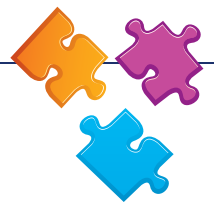
Business Plan 2015-16

Changing for children and young people



SCOTTISH
CHILDREN'S REPORTER
ADMINISTRATION





Welcome to the SCRA Business Plan - 2015/16

Welcome to the SCRA Business Plan for 2015/16, which sets out our key priorities that we intend to deliver and provides detailed actions by which we intend to do so. In March 2014, SCRA published its three year Corporate Plan for 2014/17, specifying five high level desired outcomes and describing core strategies by which we would address them. This Business Plan covers the second year within this three year cycle.

The key themes of the 2014/17 Corporate Plan focus on enhancing SCRA's long term sustainability by:

- consolidating on the significant programme of change and modernisation undertaken in recent years,
- driving further qualitative and quantitative improvements,
- reinforcing our customer focus and having meaningful engagement with service users, partners and our own staff.

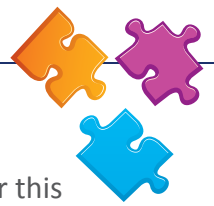
We approach 2015/16 with a sense of optimism, having made progress on these themes during 2014/15. Work on development and consistent delivery of new technology has gradually provided a more stable working environment for staff, enabled increased electronic data exchange with partners and given a sound basis for further improvement. The focus for 2015/16 is using these improvements to create new capacity to support Reporter investigation and decision making for children and young people.

Continuing to improve our understanding of the needs of children, young people and their families has led to the development of a national customer services training programme which lays the foundations for improving our approach to service quality and customer relations. A national sustainability, quality and performance programme has been initiated, with very positive impact realised in the initial phase.

Our work within the strategic, interagency Children's Hearings Improvement Partnership has also been productive, and provides an opportunity for us to continue to deliver a co-ordinating role on issues of national importance with other important partners in the Hearings System. Further activity to fully exploit early successes in each of these areas is projected for 2015/16.

Placing children and young people at the centre of what we do continues to be a key strategic outcome for SCRA to pursue, and this Business Plan includes a range of actions designed to deliver this. The Business Plan also contains sound evidence of our commitment to meeting the expectations placed on all public bodies by the Ministerial Programme for Government and Youth Employment.

Our joint development with Children's Hearings Scotland of a digital strategy for the Children's Hearings System, improvements to our performance management framework that stress the importance of community planning, and the continued partnership with staff in developing our organisational direction and improving our workforce planning arrangements in partnership, with UNISON are all important elements of this.



SCRA remains committed to providing direct opportunities for young people with experience of the Hearings System. We will continue to deliver this through recruiting a further cohort of three new Modern Apprentices in September 2015 with some new exciting developments to help broaden access and secure long term employment opportunities.

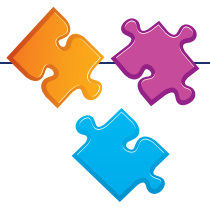
SCRA will also work with partners to make a contribution to Developing Scotland's Young Workforce, specifically building capacity and knowledge/skills across the public sector to support employment/training for young people with care experience and making best use of our experience.

The strategic and financial context in which we operate continues to be challenging, and there are a wide range of cost pressures that require to be effectively managed. The 2015/16 Business Plan therefore has a range of measures by which we aim to address these. Workforce planning, property rationalisation and expenditure reduction initiatives including shared services arrangements will all contribute to our efforts to match resources with the need to continue to provide high quality services to children, young people and their families.

To ensure that we maintain our focus on service quality, we will deliver a quality assurance programme that examines and gathers evidence on how well we deliver our core role and purpose. We will operate a structured mechanism to capture customer feedback and monitor satisfaction with service provision. This will allow us to monitor the effects of our efforts to do things more quickly and effectively, whilst retaining a clear organisational commitment to service quality.

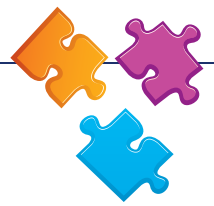
Neil Hunter, Principal Reporter/Chief Executive





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Our Role and Purpose

Focused on children and young people most at risk, SCRA's role and purpose is to:

- Make effective decisions about a need to refer a child/young person to a Children's Hearing;
- Prepare for and participate in court proceedings where statement of grounds or Hearings findings are appealed, and ensure the wellbeing of children and young people – particularly vulnerable witnesses – are protected throughout the court process;
- Support Panel Members (though we are not involved in making Hearing decisions) and ensure fair process in Hearings;
- Enable children, young people and families to participate in Hearings;
- Disseminate information and data to influence and inform the wider Children's Services community;
- Provide premises for Hearings to take place;
- Work collaboratively with partners to support and facilitate the Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) agenda.

SCRA also shares responsibility with other agencies for how the Hearings System performs, and actively works with these partners in support of better outcomes for children and young people.

Our Outcomes

Our Corporate Plan for 2014/17 outlines our vision and strategic direction over those three years, based on achieving five outcomes:

- The views of children and young people influence both their individual cases and how to better deliver services that meet their needs now and in the future;
- Our decisions are proportionate, timely and make a positive impact on the welfare, safety and protection of children, young people and communities;
- We improve the lives of the most vulnerable children and young people in Scotland through the earliest and most effective interventions;
- Together with our partners we will get it right for every child in the Hearings System; and
- Our staff and partners recognise SCRA's quality of service and overall performance as continually improving.

These outcomes contribute directly to the delivery of the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework.

This Business Plan provides details of the specific activities we will be carrying out and detailed indicators of how well we are performing during 2015/16 in pursuit of these outcomes.



Our Strategic Framework

Our Vision

Our vision is that SCRA contributes to ensuring that vulnerable children and young people in Scotland are safe, protected and offered positive futures, which allows them to fulfil their potential

Outcome 1

The views of children and young people influence both their individual cases and how to better deliver services that meet their needs now and in the future

Outcome 2

Our decisions are proportionate, timely and make a positive impact on the welfare, safety and protection of children, young people and communities

Outcome 3

We improve the lives of the most vulnerable children and young people in Scotland through the earliest and most effective interventions

Outcome 4

Together with our partners we will get it right for every child in the Hearings System

Outcome 5

Our staff and partners recognise SCRA's quality of service and overall performance as continually improving

Strategy 1

SUSTAINABILITY,
QUALITY and
PERFORMANCE

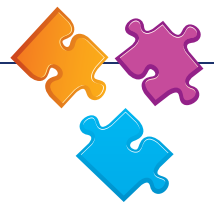
Strategy 2

CUSTOMER
FOCUS

Strategy 3

ENGAGEMENT

Sustaining and Improving our Infrastructure



Core strategy - Sustainability, Quality and Performance

Initially created as two separate strategies, one covering sustainability, the other improved quality and performance – these have now merged into a single integrated approach that underpins much of our development activity. It involves consolidating and building on the significant changes SCRA has put in place in recent years, and exploiting our new arrangements for lasting benefits. It also involves reinstating performance levels to those which predated our change programme, in a balanced way across our full range of services, by establishing stable and effective approaches that can be operated within our reduced resource base whilst minimising risk. Key elements of the strategy for delivery during 2015/16 include reducing the time taken to complete various elements of casework, operating a quality assurance programme to ensure that service quality is maintained, and using workload assessment to identify a sustainable level of workload for individuals and teams.

Core strategy - Customer Focus

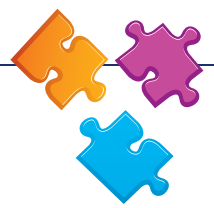
Focusing on the needs of service users provides clarity on the requirements for service design and delivery. Our Customer Focus strategy aims to deliver a more personalised experience for children and young people, and they can come to expect a high standard of customer care when they come into contact with us. Key elements of the strategy for delivery during 2015/16 include provision of a national customer services training programme, launching updated and simplified service standards, implementation of a systematic process to monitor satisfaction of service users and analysis of customer feedback to enable us to identify and act on improvement opportunities.

Core strategy - Engagement

Our Engagement strategy is the mechanism we use to make sure that we interact fully with everyone who has a part to play in making the Hearings System work for the benefit of children and young people passing through it. It allows us to identify the views, expectations, priorities and concerns of service users, staff and partners and use these to plan effectively. Key elements of the strategy for delivery during 2015/16 include conducting Children and Families and Staff Surveys and using these to set improvement targets and action plans, and conducting research for use by ourselves, partners and the Scottish Government to inform future policy, direction and priorities.

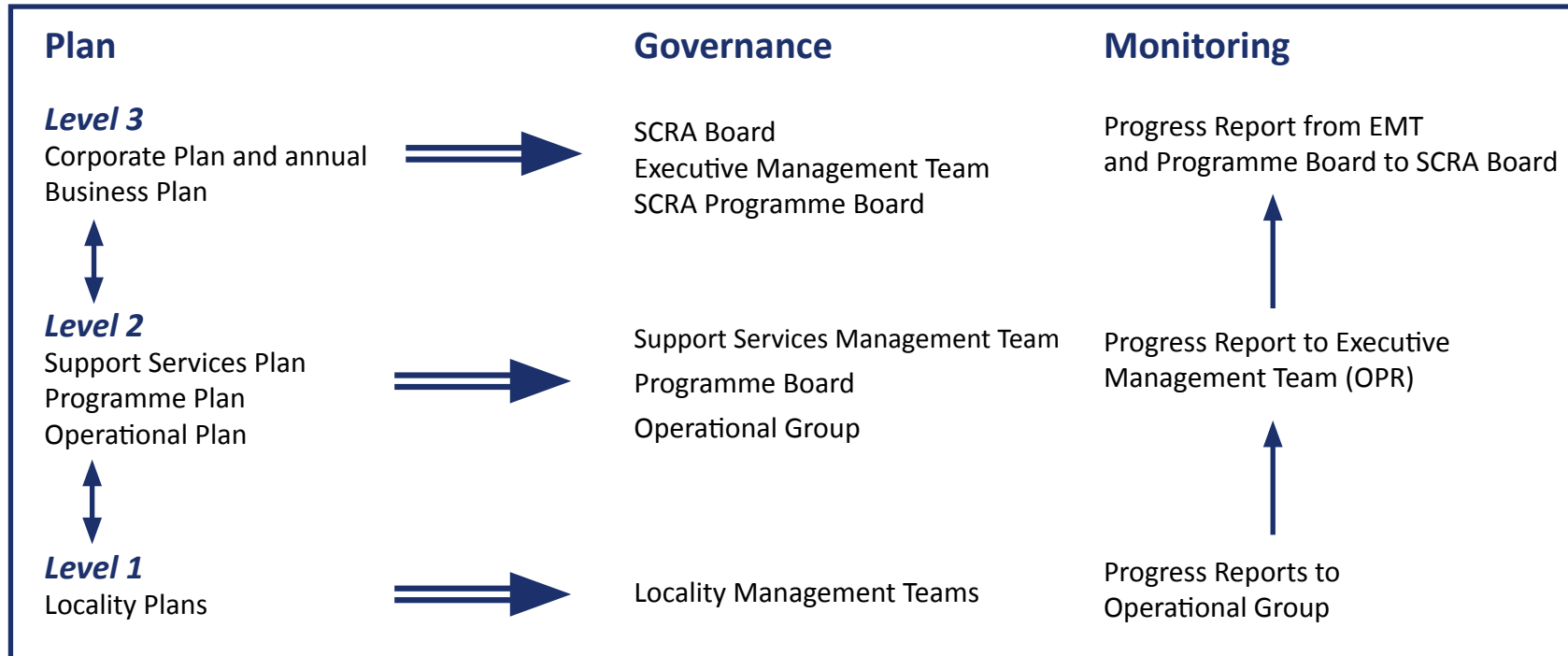
Sustaining and Improving Our Infrastructure

Maintaining an efficient and effective support infrastructure that provides best value is central to successful delivery of our core strategies. Key developments for 2015/16 include implementing the new Case Management System (CMS) development strategy, procuring and awarding new contracts for Finance and HR/Payroll systems, implementing revised network, hardware, telephony and hosting arrangements, building a multi-purpose portal for hosting SCRA data, completing several replacement properties to improve Hearings facilities and completing the first two phases of our Outreach Hearings strategy.



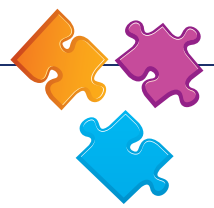
Governance Arrangements

Monitoring and Review - All plans within SCRA must support the delivery of the outcomes and priorities which are set out in SCRA 's Corporate Plan 2014-17. The Business Plan outlines the detailed, high level actions requiring implementation in 2015/16. The diagram below demonstrates the various levels, governance and monitoring arrangements for all SCRA plans.



SCRA has three key groups who are accountable through EMT for the delivery of the activities contained within the Business Plan. They are the Locality Management Teams, the Operational Group and the Support Services Management Team. They monitor progress against their key areas within the Business Plan, lead out key pieces of work and report performance to the Executive Management team and SCRA's Board.

Monitoring and reporting arrangements for this plan take the form of: routine Locality performance reports against Locality plans, quarterly Organisational Performance Reports (OPRs) to the Operational Group, Executive Management Team and SCRA Board, and high level milestones reporting against the Business Plan to SCRA's Board.

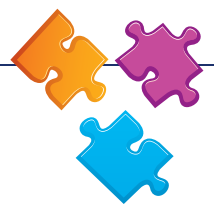


Delivering SLRA Outcomes and Priorities 2015/16

Core Strategy 1: Sustainability, Quality and Performance

What we will achieve in 2015/16

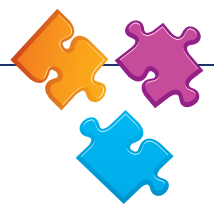
No.	Actions	Lead	Timeline	
			Start	End
1.	We will adjust our performance management framework to better link organisational, Locality and individual planning, and to include accurate reporting, analysis and appraisal of Locality performance	Ricky Mallon	01/04/15	30/09/15
2.	<p>We will continue to operate workforce planning, with a focus on the following key areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Using workload assessment to understand resource versus capacity in terms of workload ■ Examining development of a workload measurement tool specifically for support roles to assist Localities in managing workloads ■ Developing a formal Succession Planning Policy ■ Delivering an Equal Pay Audit in consultation with UNISON, and ensuring that the outcomes and action plan are considered in the 2016/17 pay remit 	Susan Deery	30/09/14 30/06/15	30/09/15 31/12/15 31/12/15 31/03/16
3.	<p>We will progress our plans for “paper-light” processes and associated efficiency gains by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Undertaking an e-Hearings paper proof of concept programme with Children’s Hearings Scotland ■ Increasing the proportion of incoming email that we can import to our Case Management System (CMS) from 38% to 80% 	Lorna McNaughton	01/04/15 01/04/15	31/03/16 31/03/16
4.	<p>We will improve service delivery by focusing on achieving sustainable reductions in cycle time for key process steps in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Receipt and initial assessment of referrals ■ Investigation and decision on referrals ■ Scheduling Hearings and issuing notifications ■ Managing court activity 	Elliot Jackson	01/04/15	31/03/16
5.	We will improve the quality and consistency of service provision by implementing and demonstrating adoption of all standard processes across all of the areas mentioned in action 4 above.	Tricia Morris	01/04/15	31/12/15



Core Strategy 1: Sustainability, Quality and Performance contd ...

What we will achieve in 2015/16

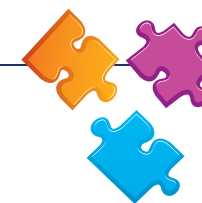
No.	Actions	Lead	Timeline	
			Start	End
6.	We will ensure consistent application of operational and practice direction by all staff by operating a Quality Assurance Programme centred on case sampling	Kirsty MacDiarmid	01/04/15	31/03/16
7.	We will improve information and records management by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Implementing all aspects of the information governance action plan ■ Implementing the SCRA records management policy for all over 18s 	Gillian Henderson	01/04/15 01/04/15	31/03/16 31/03/16
8.	We will ensure alignment of strategy by mapping: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ the Hearings System against the principles of GIRFEC ■ SCRA outcomes against the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators 	Neil Hunter	01/04/15 01/04/15	31/12/15 31/12/15
9.	We will develop SCRA's and the Principal Reporter's joint Records Management Plan for submission to The Keeper of the National Records of Scotland as required by Part 1 of The Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011.	Gillian Henderson	01/04/15	30/11/15
10.	We will use our research programme to inform improvements to the quality of our services and changes to operating practice, focusing on the following priority areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Permanence planning for looked after children (commissioned by Scottish Government) ■ Analysis/comparison between 2011/2015 research on permanence for looked after children ■ Offending by 8 – 11 year olds ■ Outcomes for children looked after at home (development of collaborative project) ■ Involvement of children from ethnic minorities in Hearings System – scoping study 	Gillian Henderson	01/05/14 01/07/15 01/07/15 01/11/15 01/01/16	30/06/15 31/12/15 31/12/16 31/03/16 31/03/16



Core Strategy 2: Customer Focus

What we will achieve in 2015/16

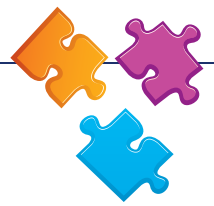
No.	Actions	Lead	Timeline	
			Start	End
1.	To drive improved accessibility of information, we will publish a Children's Hearings System digital strategy	Lorna McNaughton	01/04/15	31/06/15
2.	We will improve our arrangements for children and young people by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Updating and simplifying our standards and commitments to service users ■ Developing and piloting a systematic process to monitor satisfaction of service users 	Maryanne McIntyre	01/04/15 01/04/15	31/06/15 30/09/15
3.	We will support and equip staff with the knowledge, skills and awareness required to deliver effective customer services across the organisation by delivering a national customer services training programme	Joe Rafferty	01/04/15	31/03/16
4.	We will manage equalities outcomes by implementing SCRA's Equalities Action Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Report to Board and Equalities Network on delivery of outputs in our revised Equality Outcomes ■ Create and publish new Equality Outcomes for 2016-2018 ■ Ensuring that SCRA's December 2014 equal pay audit and statement are considered in the 2016/17 pay remit 	Neil Murdoch	01/04/15 01/10/15 01/04/15	31/03/16 31/03/16 31/03/16
5.	We will improve support and orientation of children and young people to the Hearing Centre environment, enhance their quality of experience and understanding, and reduce stress by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Providing an opportunity for a pre-Hearing visit for all children and young people attending their first Hearing ■ Improving scheduling of Hearings ■ Implementing the findings of the Review of Hearings management ■ Promote children and young people's ability to participate in and influence their Hearing. 	Malcolm Schaffer	01/04/15 01/04/15 01/04/15 01/04/15	31/03/16
6.	We will work with Police Scotland to develop consistency and common standards of information sharing and communication, particularly in influencing the development of concern hubs	Malcolm Schaffer	01/04/15	31/03/16



Core Strategy 3: Engagement

What we will achieve in 2015/16

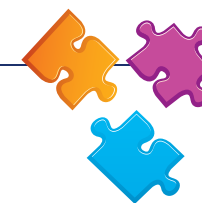
No.	Actions	Lead	Timeline	
			Start	End
1.	We will identify new improvement opportunities, by updating our Children & Families Survey to understand the current needs, priorities, expectations and concerns of service users	Gillian Henderson	01/03/15	31/07/15
2.	We will identify new improvement opportunities, by updating our Staff Survey to understand the current needs, priorities, expectations and concerns of our staff	Joe Rafferty	01/11/15	30/11/15
3.	We will set improvement targets in key areas using the baselines provided by the above surveys, and agree associated improvement activity	Ricky Mallon	01/12/15	31/12/15
4.	We will enhance provision for service users and partner agencies by introducing WiFi to all available SCRA centres	Douglas Cameron	01/04/15	31/03/16
5.	We will promote national (GIRFEC) guidance to improve understanding and practice among all agencies of when to refer a child or young person to the Reporter	Malcolm Schaffer	01/04/15	31/03/16
6.	We will publish an organisational development strategy and implement the first phase, bringing forward a range of initiatives to impact on morale, motivation and recognition of the value of staff contributions	Joe Rafferty	01/06/15	30/11/15
7.	We will develop a communications strategy to support effective communication with customers and partners	Maryanne McIntyre	01/04/15	31/07/15
8.	We will recruit a third cohort of Modern Apprentices and progress the planning and development of a Young People's Board	Neil Hunter	01/06/15	30/09/15
9.	We will implement any findings from permanence research currently in progress which have relevance for our practice	Malcolm Schaffer	01/07/15	31/12/15
10.	We will conduct wellbeing research of looked after children to better understand their needs and to develop measures of SHANARRI	Gillian Henderson	01/04/15	31/12/15
11.	We will conduct research into assessment and support of the sibling relationships of long term fostered and adopted children through a joint project with Edinburgh University (externally funded)	Gillian Henderson	01/02/14	31/08/16
12.	We will improve the experience of the Hearings System for children, young people and parents with disabilities through work with partners to review our data, information provision, processes and decision making	Maryanne McIntyre	01/04/15	31/03/16



Sustaining and Developing Our Infrastructure

What we will achieve in 2015/16

No.		Lead	Timeline	
			Start	End
1.	<p>Information and Communications Technology</p> <p>We will use ICT as an enabler of sustainability, quality, performance and value for money by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Developing and publishing a five year ICT strategy ■ Implementing the CMS development strategy ■ Procuring and awarding new contracts for Finance and HR/Payroll systems ■ Implementing revised network, hardware, telephony and hosting arrangements ■ Improving CMS data quality ■ Build a multi-purpose portal for hosting SCRA data 	Ed Morrison	01/04/15 01/04/15 01/04/15 01/04/15 01/04/15 01/07/15	30/06/15 31/03/16 30/09/15 31/03/16 31/12/15 31/12/15
2.	<p>Property</p> <p>We will continue to improve our Hearings facilities by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Having our new Stornoway office completed, occupied and delivering services ■ Having our new Lerwick office completed, occupied and delivering services ■ Having our new Inverness office completed, occupied and delivering services ■ We will complete phase two of our Outreach Hearings Strategy ■ We will rationalise our property requirements within the Ayrshire Locality 	Ian Allen	01/07/14 01/01/14 01/01/13 01/10/14 01/04/15	31/07/15 30/04/15 31/12/15 31/08/15 31/03/16
3.	<p>Finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ We will contribute to the 2015 Scottish Government spending review 	Ed Morrison	01/04/15	30/06/15



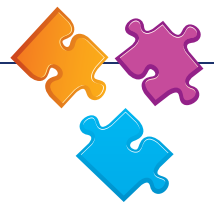
Monitoring and Managing Performance

For 2015/16, as part of our development of our Performance Management Framework, we have introduced a revised mechanism for target setting in some areas. This is based on each of our nine Localities setting their own targets based on evaluation of recent performance, assessment of their operating context and determination of customer focused performance targets that will be challenging but realistic and achievable. These are then aggregated to provide national targets. This has meant revising some of the targets set in our 2014/17 Corporate Plan. Although it varies from the “top down” approach previously adopted, we consider this to be a more sustainable way of driving improvement and anticipate extending its use in future years.

Targets for 2015/16 are shown below.

Outcomes for Children and Families	Target 2014/15	Performance 2014/15*	Target 2015/16
The percentage of Hearings scheduled to take place within 20 working days	74%	67%	74%
The percentage of decisions on referrals made within 50 working days of receipt	75%	66%	73%
Outcomes for Panel Members, Partners and Staff			
The degree to which SCRA core properties comply with SCRA property standards	90%	86%	90%
The percentage of initial Hearings proceeding to disposal	75%	76%	75%
Organisational Efficiency Outcomes			
Variance in annual revenue spends as a percentage of the available revenue budget	Within 5%	0.8%	Within 1%
Variance in annual capital spends as a percentage of the available capital budget	Within 10%	0.4%	Within 5%
The Scottish Government efficiency savings target will be met	Meet Target	On Target	Meet Target
The percentage of revenue savings achieved in the year	3%	1.99%	2.8%
The percentage of working days lost to absence	n/a (new target)	5%	4%

* Financial, Property and HR based performance figures are forecasts for the year. All other performance figures are April – December



SLRA Resources

The 2015/16 Revenue and Capital Budgets are shown below and are aligned with the budget provided by the Scottish Government. The revenue plans are based on the existing organisational structure and workforce and incorporate a 2.9% savings target. The capital plans include resources for development of the Case Management System, implementation of the initial phase of a Digital Strategy and completion of works on property projects in Inverness, Lerwick and Stornoway.

Revenue Budget 2015/16	£'000
Staff Costs	15,824
Property Costs	2,846
Travel & Subsistence	218
Supplies & Services	2,194
Unfunded Pensions	200
Income	-482
Total	20,800

Capital Budget 2015/16	£'000
Information Technology	177
Digital Strategy	135
Property Strategy	625
Fit For Us Programme	34
Property Disposals	-471
Total	500



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