

Chief Executive's Report to the SPCB November 2023

Introduction

This Report looks at activities across the organisation from September to November. It also incorporates the Quarter 2 Finance, Performance and Workforce Data reports.

Items highlighted include:

- An overview of recent committee work
- The revamped Code of Conduct for Scottish Parliament staff
- An overview of visits undertaken by our International Relations Office

David McGill
Clerk/Chief Executive

Overview of Parliamentary Activities

Legislation and Parliamentary Business

Non-Government Bills Unit (NGBU)

NGBU has supported the launch of two new Members' bill consultations at draft proposal stage. Three proposals also moved to final proposal stage. Most NGBU supported bills have commenced the drafting process.

Scrutiny

Conveners Group

At the end of September, the Group held its second evidence session with the new First Minister. The meeting focused on the Programme for Government and saw committee Conveners questioning the First Minister on the areas that were of relevance to their committee, but also on issues that affected all committees such as Government transparency and when information is provided to committees.

The Group also held an evidence session in October with Chris Stark, Chief Executive of the UK Climate Change Committee (UKCCC). This was the second meeting with Chris Stark and built on last year's discussions around the vital role of parliaments in dealing with the climate emergency. As part of the Group's commitment to its strategic priority of cross committee working – net zero scrutiny, it has agreed to continue this annual evidence session with the UKCCC.

Looking ahead to the next quarter, the Group will hold an evidence session with the Minister for Parliamentary Business on 22 November which will focus on parliamentary business as it relates to the work of committees and continue to make progress towards achieving its strategic objectives.

Citizens Participation and Public Petitions Committee

Following the publication of its report on Embedding Public Participation in the Work of the Parliament, the Citizen Participation and Public Petitions Committee had a Chamber debate on the subject. The motion asked the Parliament to agree with the recommendation to hold two further citizens' panels this session and endorse the Committee's recommended principles for future deliberative democracy work, as well as noting the conclusions of the report more generally. The motion was agreed after a positive debate that highlighted the work of the Committee as well as the importance of participation to the Parliament.

As well as ongoing petitions work, the Committee has made one of its open petitions, on dualling the A9, into an inquiry. An evidence session with Alex Neil in early October and a subsequent request to the Scottish Government and former Ministers for information on the project received widespread media coverage including a quote from the petitioner highlighting the role of the petitions system in holding the Government to account.

Economy and Fair Work Committee

The Economy and Fair Work Committee commenced its “Just Transition for the Northeast and Moray” inquiry and held its first formal evidence session in Aberdeen. Whilst in Aberdeen, it held a well-attended engagement event with community groups and representatives. The Committee also started scrutiny of the Bankruptcy and Diligence (Scotland) Bill. As it progressed it became clear that more time was required. The Committee sought and agreed an extension to the deadline for stage 1. During this period, the Committee also wrote to the Scottish Government with its pre-budget views, identifying key over-arching themes from its work since the start of this Session.

Education, Children and Young People Committee

The Committee continued its scrutiny of the Disabled Children and Young People (Transitions to Adulthood) (Scotland) Bill. The Member’s Bill, introduced by Pam Duncan-Glancy MSP, sought to improve the outcomes of disabled children and young people transitioning from child to adult services, across a wide range of settings, including healthcare, social care and education. The Committee heard evidence that, whilst there were significant issues relating to young people’s current experiences of transitions, there were concerns about whether this Bill was the solution.

The Committee had taken the unusual approach of writing to both the Member in Charge and the Scottish Government during Stage 1, to highlight the Committee’s concerns and to encourage dialogue between both parties. The responses to these letters were considered by the Committee in advance of agreeing its Stage 1 report, which concluded that, whilst supporting the aims of the Bill, the Committee did not agree to the Bill’s General Principles.

Given the subject matter covered by the Bill – and the extensive engagement the Committee had carried out with stakeholders – careful thought needed to be given to communicating the Committee’s findings.

An easy-to-read summary of the Stage 1 report was published to ensure that stakeholders had a clear understanding of the Committee’s thinking on the Bill.

In other work, the Committee continued its scrutiny of the Children (Care and Justice) (Scotland) Bill. The Committee's Stage 1 report led to the Scottish Government providing updated costings ahead of Stage 2, with overall costings rising by around 50%.

In late October, the Committee also launched an inquiry into Additional Support for Learning. The inquiry is designed to analyse how the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 has been operating in practice, including in relation to the presumption of placing children with additional support needs (ASN) in mainstream schools; the impact of Covid 19 on children with ASN and the use of remedies in the 2004 Act to resolve disputes around provision. The Call for Views runs until 31 December 2023.

Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee

The Gender Representation on Public Boards Bill has now been introduced. The Committee is expected to consider an approach paper and issue a call for views in mid-December.

Finance and Public Administration Committee

On 6 November 2023, the Finance and Public Administration Committee published its Pre-Budget 2024-25 Scrutiny [Report on the Sustainability of Scotland's Public Finances](#), including the findings from its inquiry into the Scottish Government's Public Service Reform Programme. This substantive report, with robust conclusions and recommendations, led to significant media attention.

The Committee continues to pursue improvements in relation to transparency of information provided by the Scottish Government, including in budgetary data and in Financial Memorandums.

Health, Social Care and Sport Committee

During the period since summer recess, the Committee has been focused on undertaking scrutiny of the Scottish Government's approach to winter planning of health and social care, pre-budget scrutiny for the 2024-25 budget period and concluding its inquiry into female participation in sport and physical activity by agreeing and publishing a Committee report with a debate on this topic scheduled to take place in the chamber on 28 November.

The Committee has also taken further oral evidence as part of its ongoing Stage 1 scrutiny of the National Care Service (Scotland) Bill. The Committee subsequently decided to write to the responsible Minister to request further

information about the implications for the Bill as introduced of an outline agreement between the Scottish Government and COSLA that legal accountability for the proposed National Care Service will be shared between local government and the Scottish Government. It also requested further clarity regarding amendments to the Bill the Scottish Government intends to bring forward at Stage 2 to reflect this agreement. The Scottish Government has been given until 6 December to respond.

Immediately before the October recess, the Abortion (Safe Access Zones) Bill was introduced by Gillian Mackay and referred to the Committee for scrutiny. Following October recess, the Committee considered a detailed approach paper before launching a call for evidence on the Bill, which is due to expire just before Christmas. The Committee plans to start taking oral evidence on the Bill in late February and the Stage 1 deadline for the Bill has been agreed as 3 May 2024.

Local Government, Housing and Planning Committee

Since summer recess the Committee has focussed primarily on local government budgets and the impact of the Verity House Agreement. The Verity House Agreement was concluded just before summer recess and the Committee therefore began its post summer recess work with a session with COSLA and the Scottish Government to better understand the Verity House Agreement.

The subsequent Committee sessions were focussed on the local government budget and more specifically, workforce issues in local government. These sessions were an opportunity to follow-up on the work of its predecessor committee who considered local government workforce issues in 2018. The Committee concluded its work with a letter to the Scottish Government expressing concerns about ongoing workforce challenges.

Subsequent to the issuing of that letter, the Scottish Government announced its intention to freeze council tax until April 2025. The Committee agreed to invite the Scottish Government to give evidence to it on the implications of the decision for the Verity House Agreement and local government budgets more generally. The Committee heard from the Minister for Community Wealth and Public Finance on 14 November.

The other key feature of the Committee's work has been its consideration of the Visitor Levy (Scotland) Bill. The Committee has consulted extensively on the Bill, undertaking visits to the Highlands, holding informal sessions with communities, issuing calls for views that received over 700 responses and

taking evidence over 4 meetings. The Committee will consider a draft report in December.

Public Audit Committee

The Committee has scrutinised several reports published by Audit Scotland during the reporting period. This includes taking evidence from the Scottish Government and the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service on the “Criminal courts backlog” report and the Scottish Government and COSLA on the “Early learning and childcare: Progress on delivery of the 1,140 hours expansion” report. Follow-up written evidence has been sought from the Scottish Government following both evidence sessions and will be considered by the Committee once received.

In mid-September, the Committee took evidence from the Minister for Transport on the Scottish Government’s written response to the Committee’s report, “New vessels for the Clyde and Hebrides: Arrangements to deliver vessels 801 and 802”. During oral evidence, the Minister indicated that there were areas of the Committee’s report that had not been fully responded to by the Scottish Government. The Minister provided follow up correspondence setting this out in more detail and the Committee has responded seeking further information on the work that is progressing to address some of the Committee’s recommendations.

Following an evidence session with the Auditor General for Scotland and the Accounts Commission on its report “Adult mental health” at the end of September, the Committee will commence a series of roundtable evidence sessions during November with stakeholders operating within the field of adult mental health to explore how adult mental health services across Scotland are being delivered.

Rural Affairs and Islands Committee

The Committee work programme from September to November 2023 included its continued consideration of the Wildlife Management and Muirburn Bill; the start of its consideration of the Welfare of Dogs Bill and the introduction of the Agriculture and Rural Communities Bill. The Committee also took evidence as part of its pre-budget scrutiny and on a motion to annul, as well as consideration of the first EU law tracker.

Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee

In September, the Committee published its report on “Scotland's electricity infrastructure: inhibitor or enabler of our energy ambitions”. It described a

National Grid expanded in anticipation of future need as a “public good” necessary to achieve net zero and said governments, north and south of the border, must jointly signal this as an express policy aim. The report called for the Scottish Government to lead a “national conversation” on the impacts (including landscape impacts) of a much-expanded Grid and renewables infrastructure.

Two Committee Members represented the Parliament at this year’s Arctic Circle Assembly in Reykjavik, leading a well-attended breakout seminar on *Scotland’s renewables journey: a Parliamentarian’s view*, with Icelandic counterparts. They met their counterpart Committee at the Althing and had meetings with various Parliamentarians and experts during the conference.

There was a Chamber debate on 7 November on the Committee’s report on the future of Scotland’s ferry services.

Social Justice and Social Security

The Social Justice and Social Security Committee has just concluded its pre-budget scrutiny and has published its report. The focus of the Committee is now moving on to Mark Griffin’s Member’s Bill on the establishment of a Scottish Employment Injuries Advisory Council Bill, as it begins take evidence. This will continue through to Christmas recess. Other ongoing work relates to the new appointment to the Poverty and Inequality Commission and finalising its report on its inquiry work about Addressing Child Poverty Through Parental Employment.

SPICe

Inter-Parliamentary Research and Information Network (IPRIN) – 12 SPICe staff attended the IPRIN conference in Cardiff from 6-8 September (the first in person conference in four years). Most of those who attended had never been to an IPRIN conference before. As ever, it was an excellent opportunity to share experiences with colleagues in similar services and there were many common themes – in particular, in relation to Artificial Intelligence and cross-cutting work.

Parliamentary Services

Engagement and Communications

The **Participation and Communities Team (PACT)** hosted its second Third Sector Conference on 29 September. Around 60 representatives of our third sector partners met to discuss Parliamentary engagement, attend workshops of relevance to the sector and to network with Parliamentary staff and Members, including the Presiding Officer who delivered the opening speech.

Working closely with SPICe, **Scotland's Futures Forum** hosted a half-day conference on 30 October with the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee and the Rural Affairs and Islands Committee on land use in Scotland. With the Parliament due to consider new legislation on agriculture, land reform and the natural environment, along with a climate change plan and biodiversity strategy, the event drew on the Parliament's Sustainable Development Impact Assessment to enable Members and stakeholders to explore the issues across traditional boundaries. Chaired by the two conveners and attended by Members from both committees and beyond, the event supported cross-committee scrutiny and will feed into future work programmes.

The Presiding Officer hosted the **Launch of the 2023 Scottish Poppy Appeal** event on Wednesday 25 October. Members and invited guests heard speeches from those that have benefited from PoppyScotland's service and those that support the charity.

Forward Look

The Scottish Parliament will hold its first **Summit to mark International Day of Persons with Disabilities** on Saturday 25 November, chaired by the Presiding Officer. This hybrid summit will be a day of celebration for all, including keynote speeches on breaking down social barriers and the fight for equality and human rights, a cross-party panel discussion where panelists will share their experiences followed by an audience Q&A session.

The 2023 **Scottish Public Service Awards** will be co-hosted by the Presiding Officer, the Deputy First Minister and the Cabinet Secretary for Finance along with Mandy Rhodes, Editor of Holyrood Magazine on Wednesday 6 December. The Awards in their 10th year celebrate excellence within Scotland's public service and recognise the rich and unique diversity of public life in Scotland and the vital relationships that cut across departmental, geographic and institutional boundaries.

On Thursday 7 December, the Presiding Officer will host a reception to celebrate the start of the eight-day festival of **Chanukah**. This annual event provides an opportunity for Members along with members of the Jewish community in Scotland and others to come together to celebrate the start of Chanukah.

The Scottish Parliament's annual **Christmas Carol Service** will make a very welcome return on Wednesday 20 December. Hosted by the Presiding Officer, the event will include readings and entertainment from the local community and Members.

International Relations

The International Relations Office supported 18 inward visits, 5 outward visits and a week-long Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) Residency course.

Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference, Ghana

Kaukab Stewart MSP, delegate, and Stuart McMillan MSP, Member of CPA Executive Committee, represented the Scottish Parliament at the 66th Commonwealth Parliamentary Conference in Accra Ghana. The conference was attended by more than 600 delegates and took place 1 - 5 October 2023. Kaukab Stewart MSP was also a panellist on the workshop “The Commonwealth Charter: A Charter for all human rights, or just some?”. In addition to the conference agenda the two Members had six bilateral meetings with Speakers, Members and academics from Québec, Kwazulu-Natal, New South Wales, Victoria, New Zealand and Commonwealth Parliamentary Association HQ.

Nordic Council, Oslo

From 31 October to 2 November, the Deputy Presiding Officer (DPO) Annabelle Ewing MSP, Beatrice Wishart MSP and Ben Macpherson MSP represented the Scottish Parliament at the Nordic Council Session in Oslo, Norway. The Session included 700 delegates from the eight Nordic countries and international guests from a further ten legislatures and international organisations. The Deputy Presiding Officer spoke to the Chamber highlighting the close connection we share with the Nordic Region and wish to collaborate with them more in the future. In addition to attending the Session the DPO and two Members held seven bilateral meetings with Deputy Speakers, Presidents and Committee Chairs from Sweden, Faroe Islands, Norway, Baltic Sea Parliamentary Conference and the Nordic Council presidium and secretariat.

Arctic Circle Assembly

Monica Lennon MSP and Mark Ruskell MSP attended the annual Arctic Circle Assembly in Reykjavik on behalf of the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee. This was the fourth time the Parliament has had representation at this annual gathering but the first occasion where Members delivered a breakout session alongside elected Members of another Parliament (Members of the Icelandic Parliament’s Environment and Communications Committee). The session, titled “Views from Parliamentarians from Scotland and the Nordic Region on the challenges of meeting wind energy and biodiversity ambitions” was well attended by a diverse group of international

parliamentarians, academics, non-Government organisations (NGOs) and others. The session was well received and, due to the large number of questions asked by members of the audience, went over the allocated time.

As the largest annual international gathering on the Arctic, the Assembly provides a unique opportunity to attend a number of workshops and discussion topics of direct relevance to Scottish Parliament committees. Just as importantly, however, is the opportunity this annual gathering of Ministers, parliamentarians, NGOs, academics etc provides to hold bi-lateral meetings on subject matters of direct and topical relevance to members of the Scottish Parliament delegation. As before, bilateral meetings were arranged by IRO with Ministers in the Icelandic Government, international parliamentarians and others. One of the members said *'I really valued the Assembly as it was a great professional development opportunity for Members'*.

People and Culture

Code of Conduct for Scottish Parliament Staff

The revamped [Code of Conduct](#) for Scottish Parliament staff was published in September. The Code was reviewed in response to feedback in the last staff survey, and we committed to develop a code that is in line with our values and culture. The Code has been modernised and is supported by a framework to bring it to life. The Code and the supporting framework are the result of a collaboration of work with colleagues from across the Parliament, supported by independent legal advice. Group Heads and Office Heads/Team Leaders are responsible for the operation of the Code within their areas. The intranet pages provide guidance and support to help staff understand the Code and what it means to them in their role.

Q2 2023-24 Finance Report – SPCB

Executive Summary

Q2 outturn is £1,239k (2.2%) below the year-to-date (YTD) current annual budget. This is within the target underspend for the year of below 5%. In 22-23 the P6 YTD underspend was £3,123 YTD, (5.8%). 23-24 figures are continuing to show significantly reduced YTD underspends in SPS, and Members compared to 22-23 (and prior years).

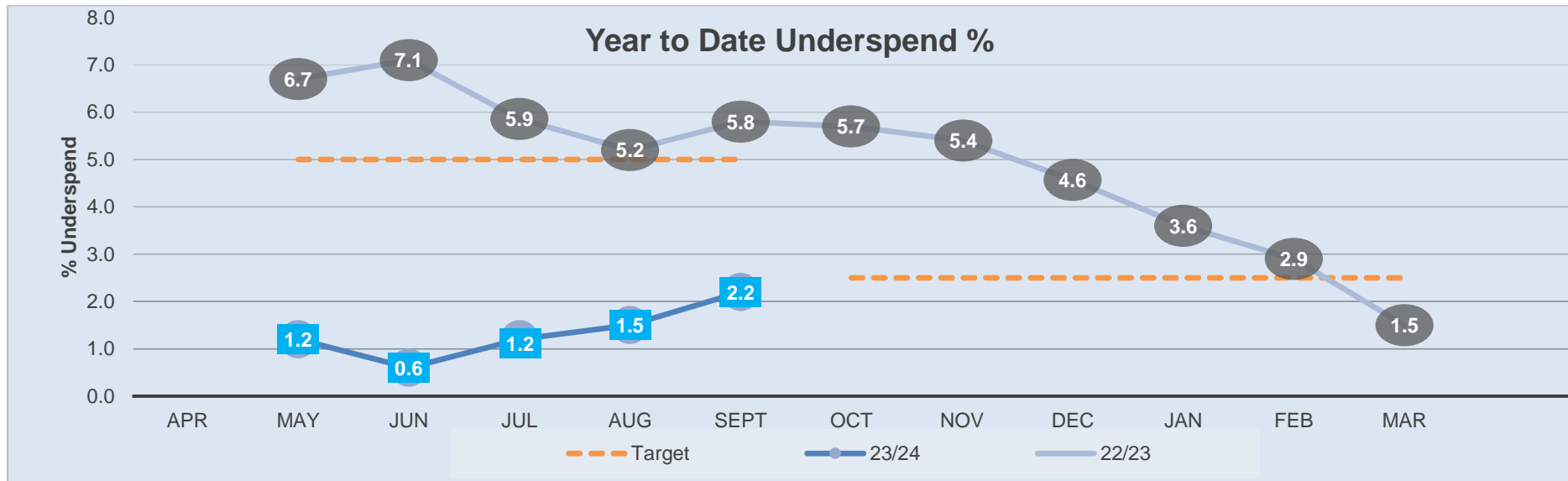
	YTD £000	
	Q2 23-24	Q2 22-23
SPS	727	1,714
Members	418	999
Officeholders	95	410
Total	1,239	3,123

SPCB is forecast to underspend by £112k.

Summary Outturn position year to date including forecast:

SPCB Expenditure Summary Outturn – Q2:

	Q2 Out-turn				Full Year Results			
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Variance	Out-turn	Under/ (Over)	Current Budget	Annual
	£'000	£'000	£'000	%	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Parliamentary Service Costs	28,422	29,149	727	2.5	60,942	(1,169)		59,773
Members Costs	19,034	19,451	418	2.1	39,999	418		40,417
Commissioners & Ombudsman Costs	8,146	8,241	95	1.2	16,543	95		16,638
Sub Total	55,602	56,841	1,239	2.2	117,485	(657)		116,828
Reserves – SPCB contingency					0	769		769
Total SPCB Expenditure	55,602	56,841	1,239	2.2	117,485	112		117,597



Q2 SPS Expenditure Summary Outturn:

	Q2 Out-turn				Full Year Results		
	Actual	Budget	Variance	Variance	Out-turn	Under/ (Over)	CAB
	£'000	£'000	£'000	%	£'000	£'000	£'000
Staff	19,310	18,900	-410	-2.2%	38,386	(900)	37,486
Staff Related Costs	286	376	90	24.0%	784	41	825
Property Costs	4,420	4,422	2	0.1%	9,295	(310)	8,986
Running Costs	3,415	3,692	277	7.5%	7,152	9	7,161
Projects	991	1,758	767	43.7%	5,325	(9)	5,316
SPS Expenditure	28,422	29,149	727	2.5	60,942	(1,169)	59,773

SPS Summary

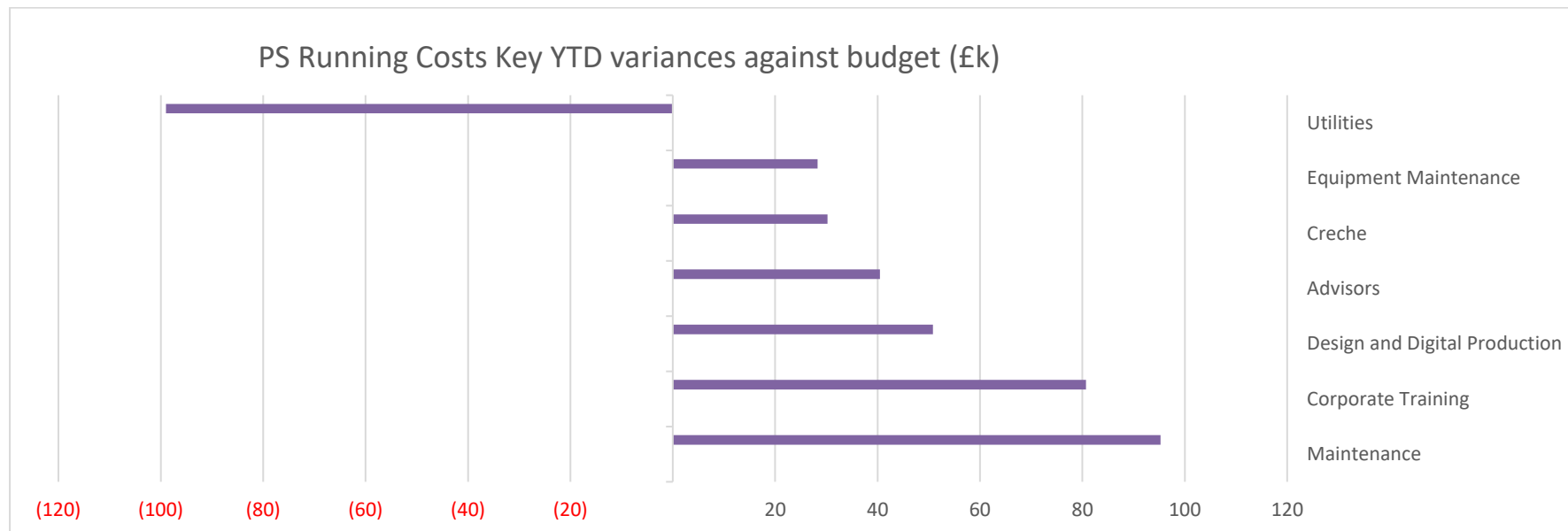
SPS year end forecast overspend (£1,169k) is explained as follows.

- A (£900k) overspend in staffing. We assumed a 5% underspend in the budget based on the vacancy trend of prior years. Actual turnover in 23-24 has fallen significantly.
- (£310k) forecast overspend in property costs is principally due to electricity price rises exceeding the increased budget from 22-23. This is despite consumption in 23-24 being lower than 22-23.
- Projects assume that the unallocated budget of £582k will be fully utilised.

Staff Costs

The approved FTE 2023-24 is 583.
At Q2 most Offices are fully staffed.

Running Costs



Commentary on significant variances to the annual budget:

Utilities (£99k) YTD overspend. Electricity kwh price rose in April. Consumption to end of Q2 is approximately 8.5% lower than 22-23 but costs are about 65% higher. Electricity is forecast to overspend by (£283k).

Equipment Maintenance - £28k YTD underspend mainly in Broadcasting (£18k) and FM (£10k). This is due to timing differences. Budget is forecast to be fully used by year end.

Creche - £30k YTD underspend in Q2. This is due to the opening being delayed at the start of the year.

Advisors - £40k YTD underspend in Q2. This is a demand led budget which will be fully utilised by the end of the year.

Design and Digital Production - £51k YTD underspend in Q2. There is an ongoing trial using a temporary in-house staff resource, alongside the outsourced service, which is realising savings above the cost of the in-house resource.

Corporate Training - £81k underspend as at Q2. This is primarily due to the delay in procuring an outsourced Managed Learning Service.

Property Maintenance – £95k underspend as at Q2.

Expenditure against Minor works and reactive maintenance budgets are delayed due to resource gaps within both Mitie and the FM property services teams. It is likely that these underspends will persist, and offset utility overspends.

Projects

Portfolio	Actual	Budget	Variance	Variance		Outturn	Under/ (Over)	Current Annual Budget
	£'000	£'000	£'000	%		£'000	£'000	£'000
BIT and Digital	164	141	-23	-16.5%		1,131	0	1,131
FM Building & Equipment	340	539	198	36.8%		1,053	2	1,055
BEMS	226	504	278	55.1%		1,616	0	1,616
Sound & Voting/Broadcasting	11	321	310	96.5%		450	0	450
Other	248	253	5	1.9%		486	(11)	475
Unallocated budget				0.0%		589		589
Total projects	991	1,758	767	43.7%		5,324	(9)	5,316

Categories:	Actual	Budget	Variance	Variance		Outturn	Under/(Over)	Current Annual Budget
Capital projects	240	660	421	63.7%		1,844	(68)	1,776
Revenue projects	751	1,098	347	31.6%		2,892	59	2,951
Unallocated budget	0	0	0			589		589
Total projects	991	1,758	767	43.7%		5,324	(9)	5,316

The unallocated project budget will be prioritised for work that can be brought forward from 2024-25 to release budgetary pressure on next year.

BEMS expenditure was profiled 4 months before the procurement process concluded. The budget will be reprofiled when the project start-up has concluded in P07. The project is on track to fully spend the budget.

FM underspend is partly down to timing differences due to project priorities changing since budget phasing was originally set. Also, there has been a ventilation project which has been delayed until October recess. Budget is forecast to be fully utilised come year end.

Sound and voting /Broadcasting is underspent by £310k as at Q2 representing delays to the receipt and installation of parts for the Chamber consoles. Installation can only take place in recess.

Members Costs

Members YTD Q2 underspend is £418k (2.2%). This compares to a YTD Q2 underspend of £999k (5.3%) in 22-23. The principal underspend is in the Engagement Provision (£472k) offset by small year to date overspends in other provisions.

Trends and expenditure patterns will be kept under review for the year and will support modelling for the 24/25 budget submission.

Officeholders

Officeholders have underspent by £95k (1.2%) against the YTD budget compared to Q2 22-23 underspend of £410k (5.5%).

The main components of this underspend are:

Officeholder	£000
Ethical Standards Commission	133
Scottish Information Commissioner	123
Human Rights Commissioner	90
Public Services Ombudsmen	(204)
Commissioner for Children	(36)
Net Total	106

Officeholders' contingency is £500k and although there are approved calls of £310k against this with further requests for approval to the SPCB anticipated in November, as at Q2 no transfers have been made. Transfers will be made later in the year.






























The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Performance Report

2023-24 Q2: July to September 2023



Performance Overview

Our Services	KPI Overall status	Trend	Strategic Change Objectives	Overall status	Trend
 Members support and resources			 A modern, dynamic parliamentary democracy		 3 rd Qtr
 Scrutiny and debate			 Adapting for a sustainable future		 2 nd Qtr
 Public involvement			 A values-driven culture		
 Corporate services and governance			 Operational excellence		 2 nd Qtr
 Working environment					

Delivering excellence in our parliamentary services

Key Performance Indicators



Members support and resources

Core Members' services operating within targets



Exceptions: Overall, core Members' services operating within targets is reported as **Green** with one **Amber** KPI to note:

- Total number of major incidents (IT) declared that impacted service: Reported as **Amber** for the 2nd consecutive quarter with two incidents declared (target 0) and the major incident process followed:
 - In July 2023, following electrical testing of network equipment some remote users were unable to access services hosted at Holyrood for 1.5 hours until a workaround was implemented and was fully fixed within 36 hours. For future fixed wire testing BIT have added extra testing post-completion.
 - In September 2023, a change made by Microsoft impacted a number of users ability to access shared mailboxes for 4 hours. As this was a Microsoft issue, out-with BIT's control, no further action needed to be taken post incident.



Scrutiny and debate

Parliamentary Business takes place as scheduled*



Parliamentary business services operating within targets



Exceptions: None



Public involvement

Public feedback surveys



Digital engagement



2nd quarter

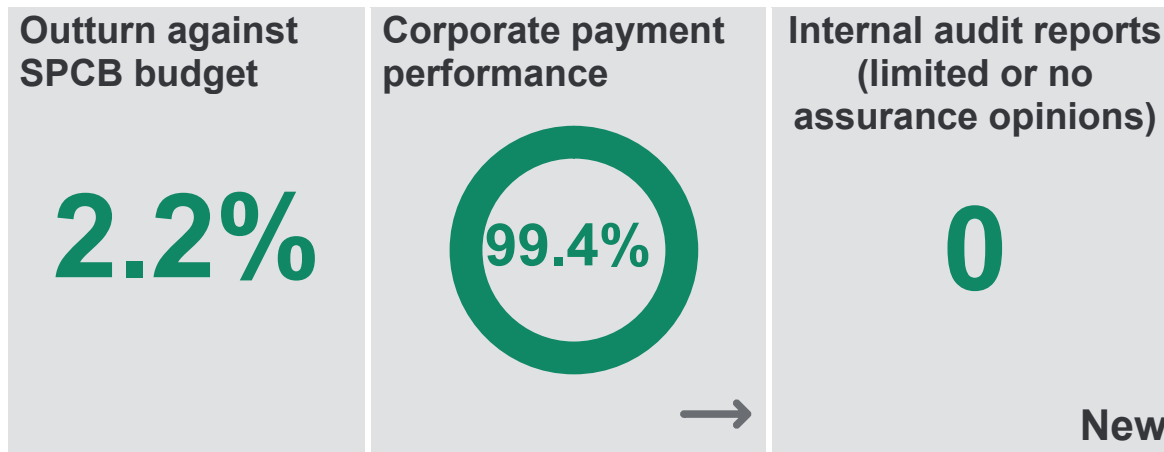
Exceptions: Digital engagement reported as **Amber*** for the 2nd consecutive quarter based on new measures with one **Red** KPI to note:


- Social media channels meet bespoke engagement rates – **red** – achieved 31% (target 75%) due to normal lower engagement rates during summer recess, however, recent changes to X (formerly Twitter) algorithms are also likely to be contributing to the significant drop in results due to the reduction in number of impressions (numbers seeing our posts - Tweets). This is being investigated by the Parliamentary Communications Office.

*Note, reported as amber rather than red as the other 3 digital engagement KPIs were reported as green with the red result likely due to the new “X” algorithm.



Corporate services and governance

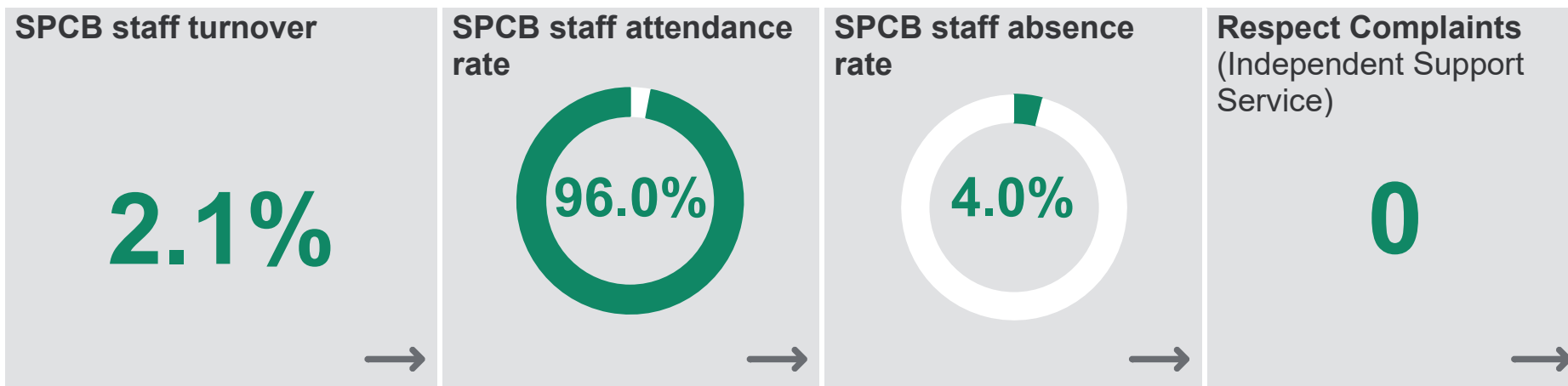


Fulfilment of compliance obligations  New	Resilience and Sustainability		Business Assurance	
	People and Culture		Engagement and Communications	
	Scrutiny		Digital Services	
	Legislation and Parliamentary Business		Financial Governance	

Exceptions: None



Working environment



Exceptions: None

Strategic change objectives: key activities

Status

A red, amber, green status (RAG) sets out the overall performance against the project, programme or activities time, cost, people and change resources, and outcomes and benefits:

Indicator	RED	AMBER	GREEN
Time	Milestone(s) and/or activity completion date delayed by more than one month	Milestone(s) and/or activity completion date delayed by up to one month	Milestones and activity completion date remains on schedule
Cost/Budget	Costs exceed approved budget for current financial year and/or overall agreed activity cost by more than 5% or over £50,000	Costs exceed approved budget for current financial year and/or overall agreed activity cost up to 5% or a maximum of £50,000	Current approved budget and overall agreed activity cost is on target
People and Change Resources	Lack of resources to deliver activity impacting ability to meet activity plan.	Risk to resources as not yet committed and is being managed	Resources committed and plans in place.
Outcomes and benefits	Significant change in outcomes and/or benefits are not or highly unlikely to be delivered.	Risk of / or minor changes in outcomes and/or delivering benefits	Outcomes and benefits will be delivered in line with business case and benefits plan
Overall	RED if one or more indicators are red OR If one or more indicators are reported as Amber for the 3 rd consecutive quarter	AMBER if one or more indicators are amber and none are red	GREEN if all indicators are green.

If there are any issues and/or risks either addressed during the reporting quarter or are currently being addressed and remedial action taken, the activity must be reported as Amber or Red.



A modern, dynamic parliamentary democracy

Activity	Overall status & trend	On track Time	Total cost/ current fy budget	People/ Change Resources	Outcomes/ Benefits	Delivery Plan milestones Q2 completed milestones
Conveners Group Session 6 Priorities Callum Thomson	✓ →	✓	-	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conveners Group agreed strategy and S6 action plan for participation, diversity and inclusion to support committee scrutiny in September 2023.
Scrutiny Improvement Programme* Callum Thomson	✓ →	✓	-	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programme Board agreed workstreams recommendations in September 2023.
Constitutional Issues Board Judith Morrison	✓ ↑	✓	-	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivered a session on post-EU scrutiny toolkit - open to all Scrutiny/Legal staff in August 2023. Delivered snippet session for SPS staff (inc some Office Heads/Team Leaders) on the boards remit, activities and implications for the Scrutiny functions in September 2023.
Engagement Strategy Delivery Plan Susan Duffy	✗ ↓	!	!	✗	!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussed scope with Office of Presiding Officer and project bids submitted for major event and Presiding Officer community engagement activities.
Implement recommendations of the Parliaments' Gender Sensitive Audit Susan Duffy	✓ →	✓	-	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Established Advisory Group comprising Members and external experts and met on 4 October 2023.

*Activities to be completed within 2023-24

Exceptions:






- Engagement Strategy Delivery Plan – **Red** – timescales, budget, outcomes/benefits (amber) and people/change resources (red) are all not on track as additional funding needs to be secured for the 25th anniversary programme of events (all relevant approvals have been sought); installation of the new digital screen has been further delayed and now planned for October 2023 rather than June 2023; and there is no capacity to deliver in-house focus groups (was to be completed by December 2023) PEG are due to determine in October 2023 if this activity will progress or stop.



Adapting for a Sustainable Future

New ways of working

Activity	Overall status & trend	On track Time	Total cost/ current budget	People/ Change Resources	Outcomes/ Benefits	Delivery Plan milestones Q2 completed milestones
Workplace Flexibility* Lynsey Hamill	✓ ↑	✓	✓	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leadership Team (LT) met in October 2023 and agreed that the NWOW space commitments would merge with the Net Zero programme. This would ensure a clear focus on supporting the Net Zero estate work.
New ways of Working Toolkit and Working Practices* Lorna Foreman	! ↓	!	-	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carried out teams/business area case studies of NWOW to share learning across organisation as part of communications and engagement.










Activity	Overall status & trend	On track Time	Total cost/ current budget	People/ Change Resources	Outcomes/ Benefits	Delivery Plan milestones Q2 completed milestones
Hybrid Parliamentary Business Systems and Support* Tracey White						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committee room hybrid systems were operational in all committee rooms by September 2023.

*Activities to be completed within 2023-24

Exceptions:

- New ways of Working Toolkit and Working Practices - **Amber** – timescales are not on track as the MSP staff survey will now be conducted in November rather than September 2023; and many updated Team Agreements remained outstanding as at 30 September 2023 feedback was provided to Group Heads.

Sustainability and Climate Change

Activity	Overall status & trend	On track Time	Total cost/ current budget	People/ Change Resources	Outcomes/ Benefits	Delivery Plan milestones Q2 completed milestones
Net Zero Infrastructure Programme Lynsey Hamill			-			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awarded contract Building Energy Management System (BEMS) in July 2023.
Embed Sustainable Development thinking across the organisation Lynsey Hamill						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustainable Travel Plan was published in August 2023. Induction on Sustainable Development made role essential in September 2023 and is now available on the learning management system.

Exceptions:

- Embed Sustainable Development thinking across the organisation - **Red** – timescales are not on track with the business travel policy now to be reviewed by SPCB in November, originally September 2023. Also, although training modules have been developed for Biodiversity and Sustainable Travel and Circular economy, they could not be uploaded to the learning management systems due to technical issues. This was resolved and the modules made available in October 2023.



A values-driven culture

Activity	Overall status & trend	On track Time	Total cost/ current budget	People/ Change Resources	Outcomes/ Benefits	Delivery Plan milestones Q2 completed milestones
Power Imbalances* Lorna Foreman	✗ ↓	✗	-	✓	✓	N/a
Positive Action* Lorna Foreman	✓ →	✓	-	✓	✓	N/a
Organisational Training Needs Analysis (TNA) and Review of our Approach to Setting Training Budgets* Lorna Foreman / Lynsey Hamill	✗ ↓	✗	-	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy on mandatory training for both new and existing colleagues was completed in September 2023. SRB approved recommendations from a review of training budgets in September 2023 and decision communicated to Group Heads in October 2023.
Performance Management* Lorna Foreman	✓ →	✓	-	✓	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff objectives were captured in Weekly10 by June 2023 and reported in July 2023.

*Activities to be completed within 2023-24





















Exceptions:

- Power Imbalances - **Red** – timescales are not on track, as the review and implementation of a revised Dignity at Work Policy was due to be completed by December 2023. However, due to new information and external factors including the publication of the UK Parliaments' [Speaker's Conference report on the employment conditions of Members' staff](#) during Q2. Guidance and direction will be sought from SPCB on the revised approach by December 2023 based on its response to the issues reported on by the Speaker's Conference. Thereafter, a revised plan, milestones and timescales for reviewing the Dignity at Work Policy will be produced for implementation by December 2024.
- Organisational Training Needs Analysis (TNA) and Review of our approach to setting training budgets - **Red** – timescales are not on track as the new mandatory training policy was due to be published by July, however, completed in September 2023 and will now be published in November 2023 aligned to the new code of conduct.



Operational excellence

Activity	Overall status & trend	On track Time	Total cost/ current budget	People/ Change Resources	Outcomes/ Benefits	Delivery Plan milestones Q2 completed milestones
Strategic Resourcing Review Deliverables* Sara Glass			-			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Group Heads have an objective for 2023-24 to deliver the Strategic Resourcing Review outcomes. With support from Finance, from July 2023 all Group Heads created strategic resourcing review action plans/trackers to monitor progress. Trackers will support progress updates during performance review meetings.
Workforce Planning Sara Glass / Lorna Foreman			-			N/a

Activity	Overall status & trend	On track Time	Total cost/ current budget	People/ Change Resources	Outcomes/ Benefits	Delivery Plan milestones Q2 completed milestones
Corporate Systems Programme Sara Glass						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SRB approved final Business Case in September 2023.
Official Report Digital Transformation Programme Tracey White			-			N/a
Business Bulletin Improvements Tracey White			-			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project was initiated in July 2022, with SRO onboarded in September 2023 and an extended team of BIT and business stakeholders informed investigation of options.
Self Service Meeting Room Booking Alan Balharrie			-			N/a
Skills and Capability to Support Operational Excellence* Sara Glass / Alan Balharrie			-			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed investment decision-making blueprint scoping in August 2023 Digital literacy and leadership: Set up networks/interest groups with first group running by August 2023; implemented regular top tips communication by September 2023 Deliver Executive briefing programme (quarterly series of briefings and discussions) to LT: Digital Services Cyber Security Specialist delivered a briefing to SPCB in June and to LT in September 2023

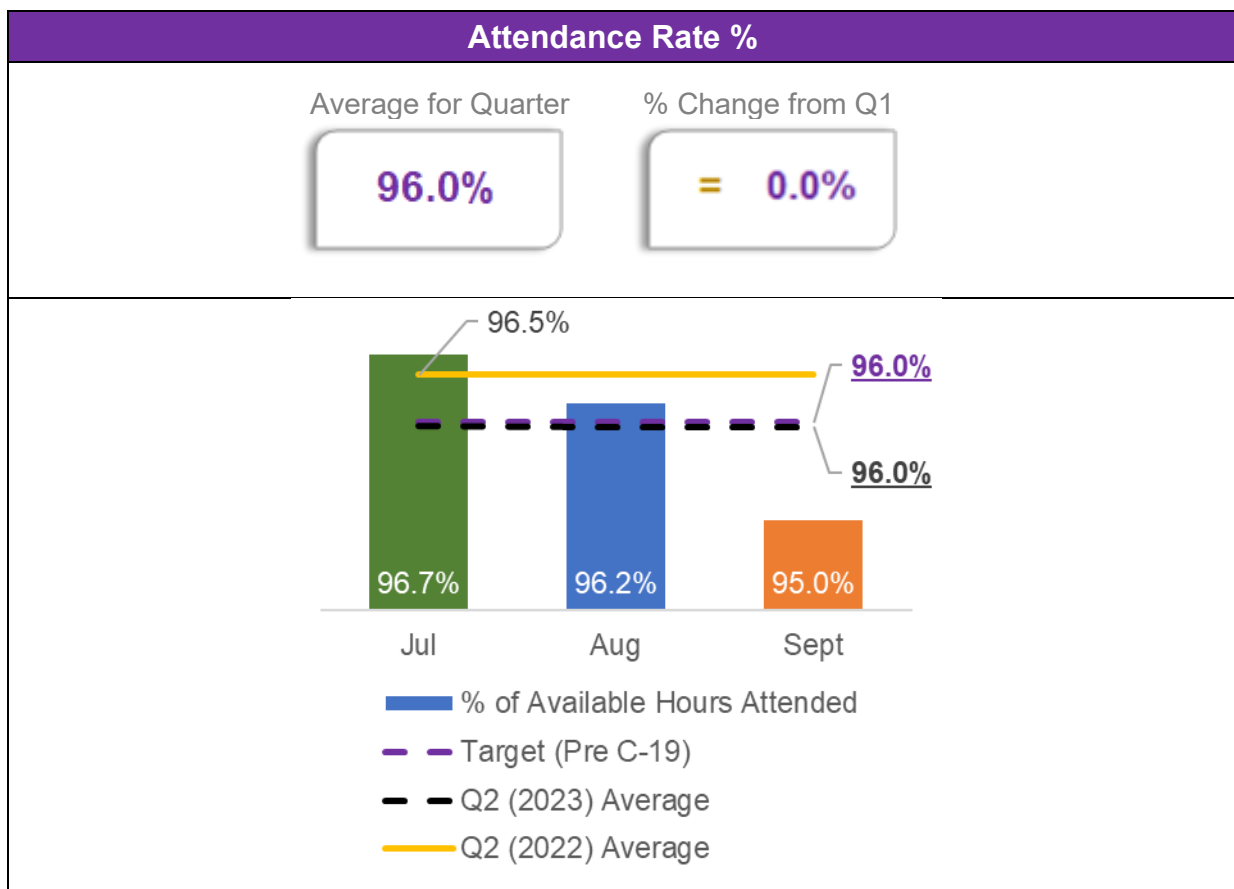
*Activities to be completed within 2023-24

Exceptions:

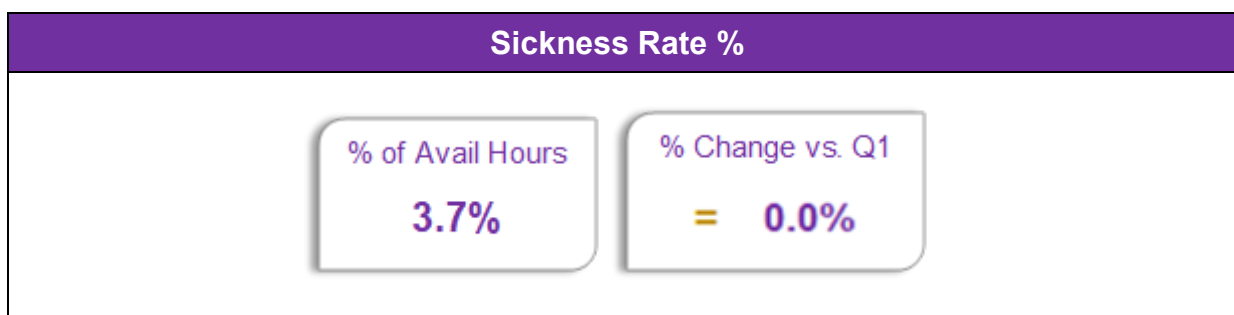
- Corporate Systems Programme – **Amber** – timescales and resources/change resources are not on track - there is a possibility of time slippage on both the SG shared service and HR/Payroll projects so acting to mitigate issues and factored into the approved Business Case. In addition, it has taken time to put in place staffing resources, with recruitment exercises underway to fill remaining posts.
- Business Bulletin Improvements - **Red** – timescales (red) and people/change resources (amber) are not on track due to delay in submitting Business Case to Digital Strategy Board for approval, originally planned for October and now December 2023. Currently, the Business Case is being reviewed by SRO and requires further development to complete.
- Self Service Meeting Room Booking - **Amber** – timescales and people/change resources are not on track as the discovery and design phase will now be completed by November 2023 (originally October) due to scope and objectives not being fully agreed by Project Team. Project Manager now on board and leading on business case development, and, planning and delivery of outcomes from discovery and design. If the project is approved delivery should be achievable within 2023-24. In addition, resources required to complete discovery and design have not been confirmed – Project Manager is identifying activities and resource required to submit resource request.
- Skills and Capability to Support Operational Excellence - **Red** – timescales and people/change resources are not on track due to prioritisation and lack of resources delaying the submission of the investment decision making blue-print proposal for approach to SRB for review and approval from September to November 2023.

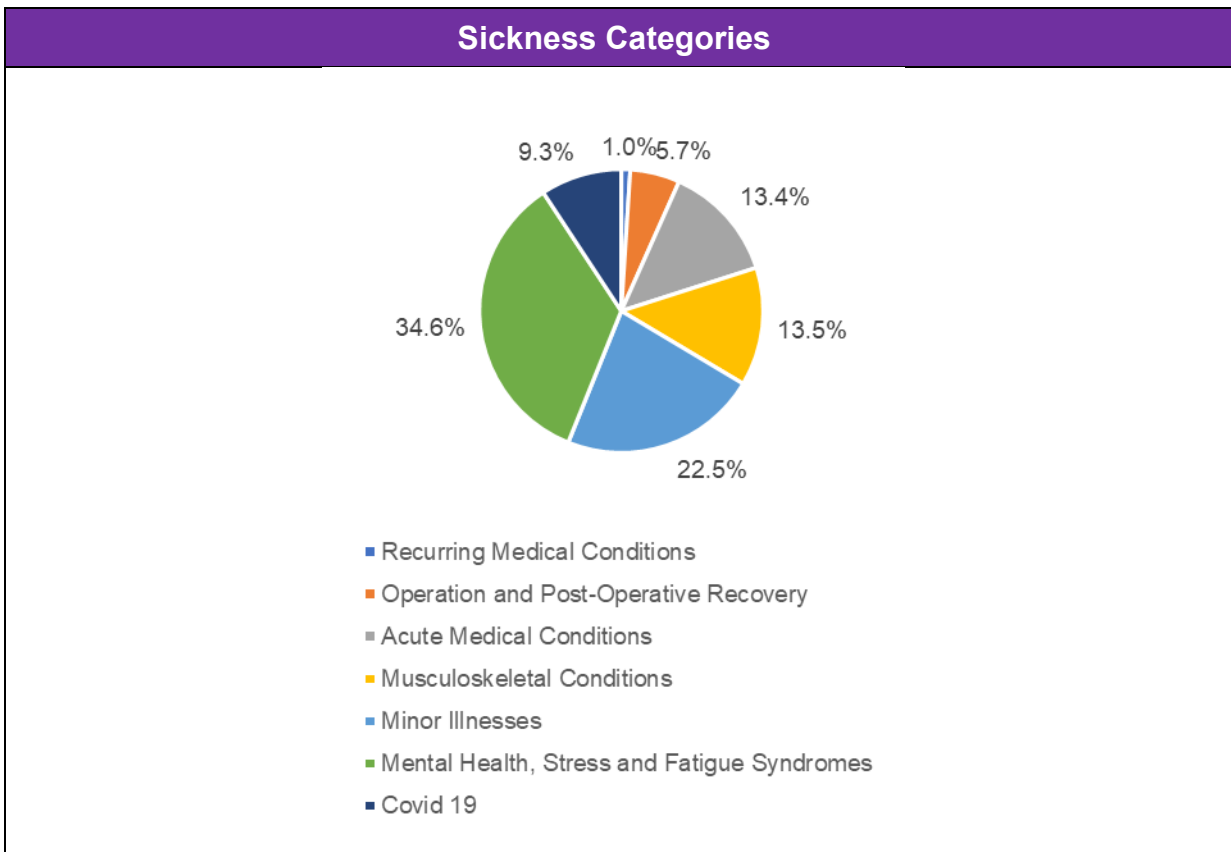
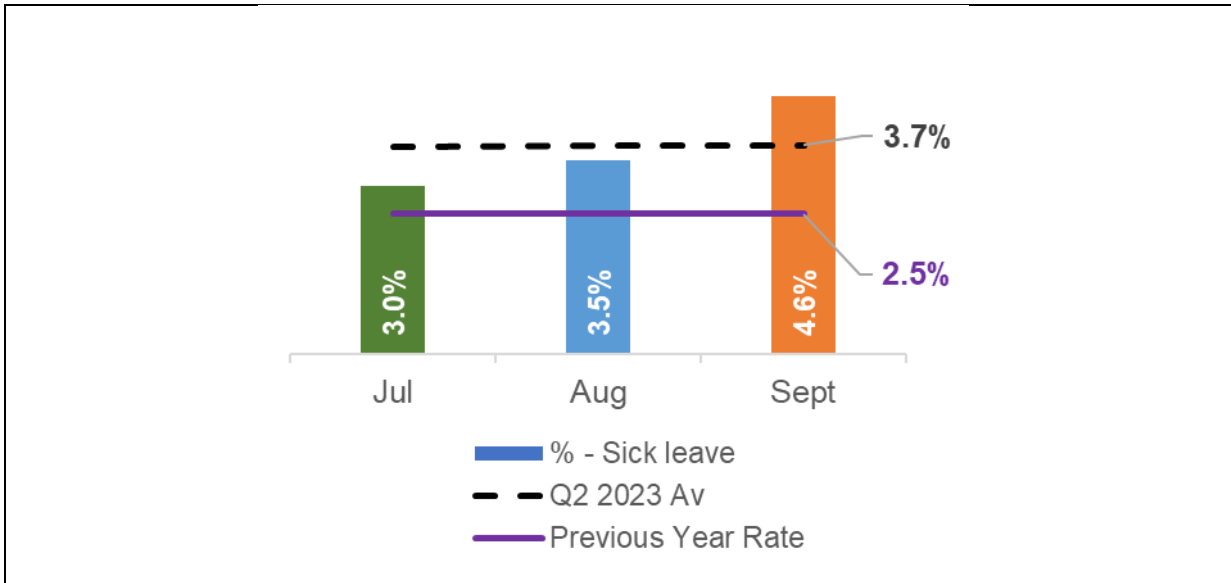
Quarter 2 2023/24 Workforce Report

Attendance



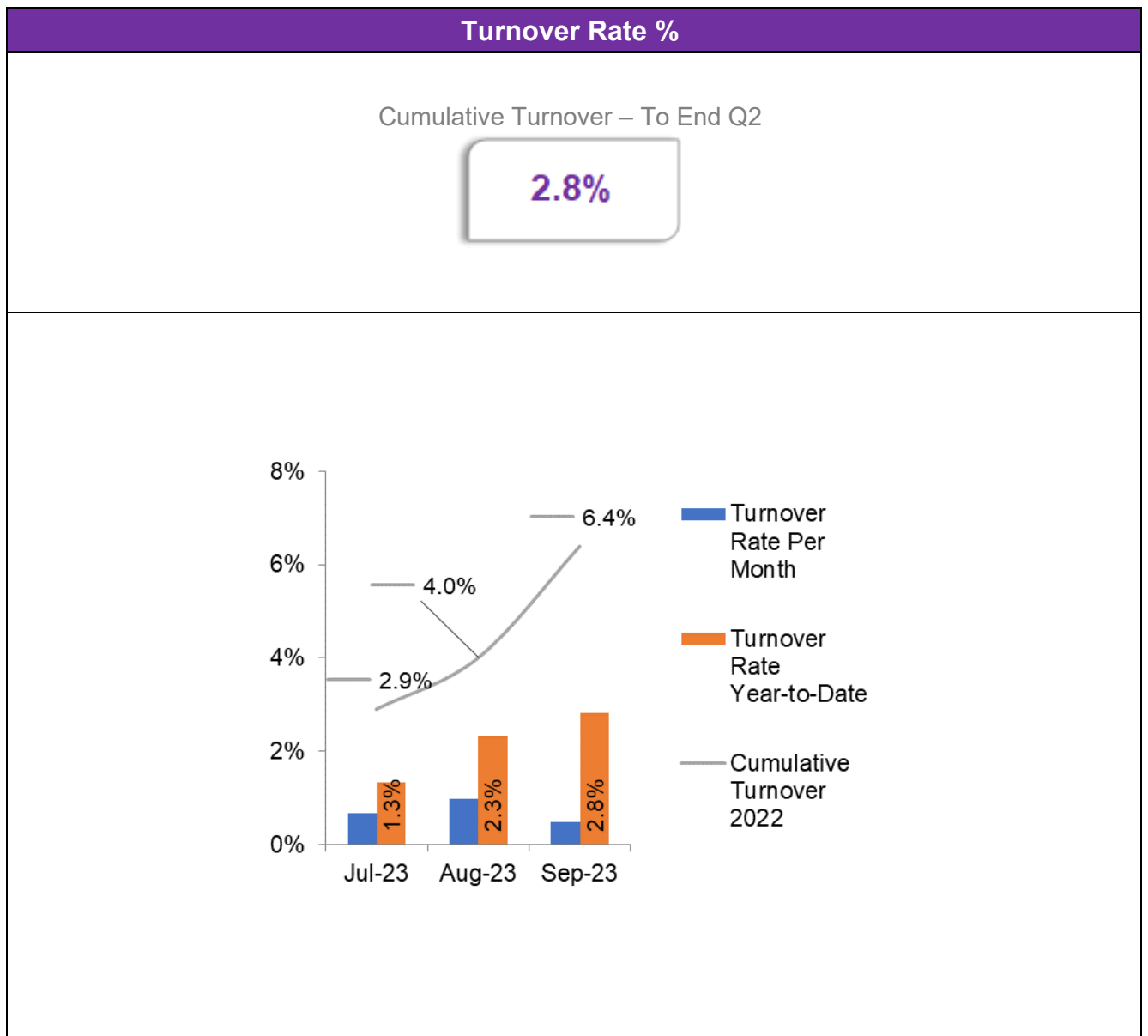
There has been no change in the Attendance Rate in Quarter 2 compared to Quarter 1. Average attendance for Quarter 2 is aligned with the organisational target.





The rate of Sickness Absence is 3.7% which is the same as in Quarter 1. Mental Health, Stress and Fatigue Syndromes accounted for the largest proportion of absence due to sickness.

Turnover

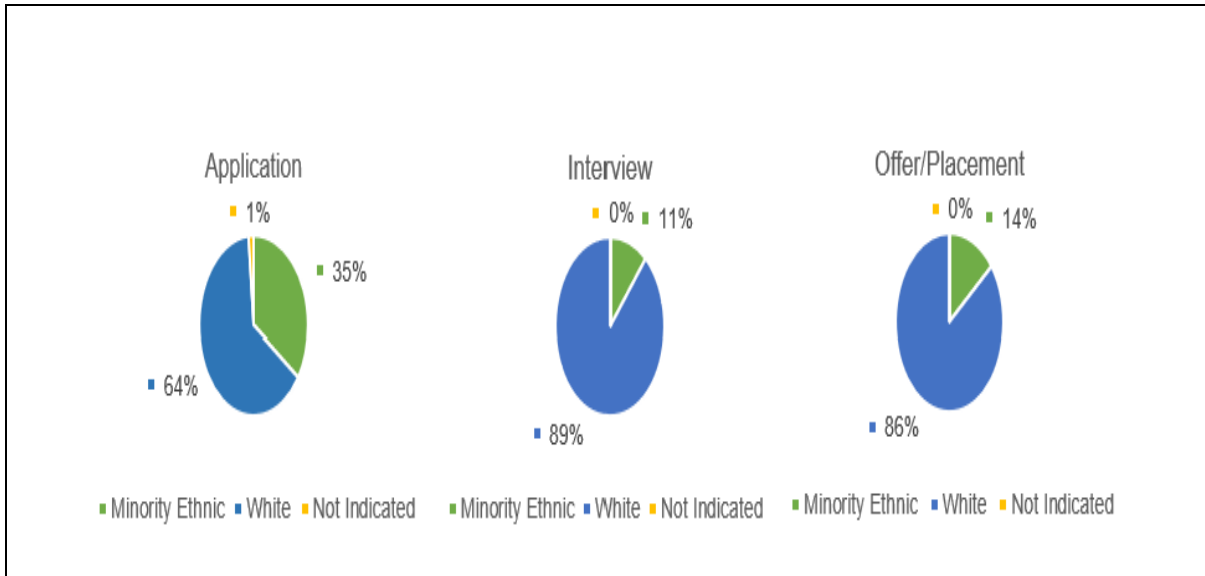


The cumulative turnover for the reporting year to the end of Quarter 2 was 2.8%. There were 13 leavers in Quarter 2. Total headcount at the end of Quarter 2 was 610 which was an increase of 9 over the period.

Recruitment

In accordance with our commitment to increase the diversity of our organisation and our focus on increasing applications from minority ethnic backgrounds, we monitor the progress of success rates at interview and appointment stage.

Recruitment



Thirteen recruitment campaigns were carried out in Quarter 2. 14% of all job offers were made to candidates from a minority ethnic background.