

Disclosure Scotland

Corporate Plan

2018-2021



Disclosure
SCOTLAND

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Ministerial Foreword

I am privileged to introduce Disclosure Scotland's Corporate Plan for 2018 to 2021, and oversee the work it does in improving the life chances of children and young people in Scotland and keeping our most vulnerable people safe.

This year the Scottish Government reviewed our national outcomes and priorities. The work of Disclosure Scotland directly supports the Scottish Government's purpose '**To focus on creating a more successful country with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish through increased wellbeing and sustainable and inclusive economic growth**'.

It takes all of us to build a safer and fairer Scotland but Disclosure Scotland has taken on a protection and safeguarding role for providing reliable and accurate information which allows employers to make informed recruitment decisions. The agency's management of the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG) Scheme has ensured unsuitable people are prevented from working with the most vulnerable in our society.

Disclosure Scotland recognises the importance of continuing this valuable work and, with that in mind, is conducting a comprehensive review of the PVG Scheme, its digital service and the way it operates to ensure a continued accurate and fair service which is also efficient and cost-effective. Work is already underway to engage with service users and establish how the service should meet the needs of a modern society. This plan details how this will be achieved.

While periods of change always bring challenges, I have confidence that Disclosure Scotland will deliver a more efficient and customer focussed service that continues to keep our people safe.

I wish the Chief Executive and the people at Disclosure Scotland continued success in these endeavours.



Maree Todd

Minister for Children and Young People

Message from the Chief Executive

I am pleased to introduce Disclosure Scotland's Corporate Plan for 2018 to 2021, outlining our objectives for the coming years and our vision for the future direction of our organisation.

The key aim of Disclosure Scotland is to help keep Scotland's people safe. While we undergo a period of significant change, there is the opportunity to use our unique position in society to extend our remit and make Scotland not only a safer place, but a fairer place.

We will be working to improve the safety in Scotland's communities with the review of our PVG Scheme, and to use our distinct skills and knowledge base to better educate and support employers.

We're developing our relationships with charities and other organisations who work with care-experienced young people to see how we can help young people from troubled backgrounds overcome some of the barriers unnecessarily preventing them from gaining employment or volunteering opportunities and moving on to a better life.

By engaging with our customers, we're finding out how we can keep on improving our service. Our current drive to go 'all digital' includes the development of a new system which will dramatically improve the customer experience as well as making us a more efficient and effective organisation.

Internally, we're continuing to work on ensuring Disclosure Scotland's people are fulfilled and engaged in the crucial work they do. Entrenched in our organisational Vision, Mission and Values is our pride in being an inclusive organisation, enriched by the diversity of our workforce, where individual needs are supported and people are treated with respect. Open and adaptable to new opportunities, we encourage creativity to deliver innovative solutions for the good of Scotland's people.

We are at the start of a very exciting journey for Disclosure Scotland and one which, I hope, will take us to a fairer, safer and more productive Scotland.



Lorna Gibbs
Chief Executive

About Disclosure Scotland

Disclosure Scotland is an Executive Agency of the Scottish Government and operates on behalf of the Scottish Ministers. We play an important safeguarding role. The work we do helps Scottish employers make safer decisions when they are recruiting people by providing accurate and timely criminal history information, and barring unsuitable people from working with children and vulnerable adults. Disclosure Scotland also manages the PVG Scheme. This is a membership scheme for people who are in paid employment, or act in a volunteering capacity, with children or vulnerable adults. Employers can check a member's record at any time to make sure they are still safe to work with these groups.

We provide two strands of service in relation to safeguarding and decision-making in Scotland:

Protection

We administer the PVG Scheme. This is the Scottish membership scheme for individuals in regulated work with children or adults.

Under the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007 we:

- introduce individuals undertaking regulated work into the PVG Scheme and issue PVG Scheme disclosure records; and
- act for Scottish Ministers in determining unsuitability for regulated work with children, adults or both groups and administer the barred lists in relation to regulated work.

Disclosure

We process applications for disclosure certificates which enable safer recruitment decisions by employers.

Under Part V of the Police Act 1997 we:

- issue Enhanced Certificates where the individual's role is prescribed in legislation;
- issue Standard Certificates where the individual's role is excepted or excluded by an Order made under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974; and
- issue Basic Certificates.

How we support Scottish Government's Purpose

Our activity supports the Scottish Government's Purpose '**To focus on creating a more successful country with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish through increased wellbeing and sustainable and inclusive economic growth**'.

We link to the [National Outcomes](#). In particular our activity contributes to the following:

- we respect, protect and fulfil human rights and live free from discrimination;
- we are open, connected and make a positive contribution intentionally;
- we live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe;
- we grow up loved, safe and respected so that we can realise our potential; and
- we value, enjoy and protect our environment.

Our Vision, Mission and Values

We have developed our vision, mission and values which we use to inform our business priorities and draw on to influence the approach we take as we strive to achieve our goals. The values in particular will influence how we achieve the objectives detailed in this business plan.

Vision

Protecting Scotland's people: shaping a safer environment to live and work.

Mission

Driving safeguarding outcomes by preventing and removing harmful people from working and volunteering with vulnerable groups, and helping employers making better informed decisions.

Values

Our values are at the heart of our strategy for the future and reflected in all of the work that we do:

- we are an inclusive organisation, enriched by diversity, where individual needs are supported and where people are treated with respect;
- we are open and adaptable to new opportunities and encourage creativity to deliver innovative solutions that make a difference;
- we work collaboratively to achieve the best outcomes for the public; and
- we are professional in our handling of people and their personal data.

Our Strategic Goals and Programme for Change

To support our safeguarding role and to ensure that Scotland is a safer place to live and work we will deliver a fast, efficient and effective service so that unsuitable people are unable to work or volunteer with children or vulnerable people. We will take a more educational role so that employers are fully aware of their legal obligations and are able to interpret the information we provide regarding unspent convictions.

We will ensure that we efficiently and effectively respond to the predicted future demand for our services and closely monitor the cost of our operations against future income forecasts.

Application type	2017-18		2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
	Volume received	Actual vs. Forecast	Forecast volume	Forecast volume	Forecast volume
Basic Disclosures	1,465,200	2.5%	243,100	270,000	301,000
Standard/Enhanced Disclosures	20,600	12.6%	18,300	18,300	18,300
PVG Scheme	292,500	-10.2%	293,000	287,900	287,900
Total	1,778,300	0.3%	554,400	576,200	607,200

In 2018-19, we expect volumes to be substantially lower than in previous years as English and Welsh Basic applications are now handled by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), delegation having ended on 31 January 2018. We also anticipate PVG volumes to stabilise over the coming year as the retrospective checking activity declines, although any changes to the regulated workforce as a result of the on-going PVG review may change this. A major focus of the Agency will be shifting applications from paper based applications to an online platform.

Our Agency has already started to transform. Over the next three years we will complete our extensive transformation programme which will involve a review of our entire organisation to improve the way we operate, our service delivery and to enhance our Information Technology (IT) so that our service is easy for our customers to access and use, is responsive and is adaptable to changes in policy, demand and user needs.

Our Corporate Plan sets our vision in context and details the key facts which influence the way we will deliver our outcomes. To achieve this we have set four strategic goals:

- 1 to deliver a fair, rigorous and supporting safeguarding service;
- 2 to have a fast, accessible and accurate digital service;
- 3 to provide excellent customer experience; and
- 4 to make Disclosure Scotland a great place to work.

We have developed a set of business principles which will guide our transformation programme and allow us to deliver our strategic goals:

- 1 to have a customer centric organisation;
- 2 to be a digital first organisation;
- 3 to be automated where affordable and advantageous;
- 4 to have a proportionate and affordable risk appetite;
- 5 to have a skilled and flexible workforce;
- 6 to have an IT self-sufficient organisation; and
- 7 to take a holistic approach to change.

Strategic Goal 1: To deliver a fair, rigorous and supporting safeguarding service

The PVG Scheme helps protect Scotland's most vulnerable people by making sure that those working with them are checked and, if there is a background that suggests they might do harm, considered for barring.

The Scheme has been operating since early 2011 and over the past year we have increased our engagement with our customers and stakeholders to hear what they think is good about the Scheme and to identify areas where it could be improved. We are using this information to review the PVG Scheme so that it is as efficient and effective as it can be. Formal consultation started in April 2018, and this will inform the parliamentary process during 2020 before we start the legislative process, to support any change, during 2021.

We will support the wider employability agenda by working closely under the 'Scotland Works for You' Alliance, which is made up of key charities, universities and businesses, to develop tools to help employers interpret and use disclosure information. All of this will support our transition to becoming an organisation which is a driver of fairer, better and safer recruitment decisions.

The PVG review will greatly influence the transformation of our organisational structure, will influence how our IT is developed and will impact positively on our customer experience and our people.

Strategic Goal 2: To have a fast, accessible and accurate digital service

We are delivering a digital infrastructure for the disclosure service in Scotland developed in partnership with our customers and stakeholders. It will support a range of exciting new services and capabilities, moving new and redesigned disclosure products away from paper and into the digital world. Our digital service will afford businesses and individuals greater visibility and control over how they use our services than ever before.

We will invest in new technology to check criminal history systems and provide the accurate and thorough disclosures that our customers rightly expect. This will be underpinned by new technical infrastructure that increases the resilience of our data storage and provides the best possible platform upon which to build new and improved services in the most efficient way.

Wherever appropriate, we will use digital to automate repetitive manual tasks - speeding up the production of disclosure information and allowing our people to focus more effectively on resolving it when there is a problem or a requirement for the human touch. By 2021 we aim for all our services to be available online; providing a service where our customers will be able to submit and track applications, manage accounts on-line and offer self-service where possible. However, we will always provide appropriate ways for people who cannot use digital to access our services.

We will use agile methodologies to ensure that our new digital services improve continuously and become very responsive to what our customers tell us about their experiences when using our services and how we can get better. We will test all changes to our services with staff, stakeholders and users before deploying them and release new iterations to deliver improvements over time. The agile approach will allow us to innovate new services more quickly and refine them as we go along, but always in full partnership with customers.

Our new digital platform and services will deliver the right solutions and allow us to far more readily adapt, for example we are anticipating that the PVG Review may deliver a new range of products and services which require new digital processes to deliver.

Strategic Goal 3: To provide excellent customer experience

We will put understanding the needs and aspirations of our customers before everything else when we plan changes to our service. We will do this by ensuring that we think about how we can engage customers and stakeholders in everything that we do, and by investing in professional user researchers to help us reach out and fully engage a broad and representative spectrum of customers, from individuals to businesses and organisations.

We will carry out a comprehensive review of the policy and law underpinning disclosure and protection services to ensure that the disclosure system is progressive, accessible and fair as well as retaining its current sharp focus on safeguarding and protecting valuable business assets. Supporting all of this will be a radical review and redesign of how our business is formed and organised to ensure we deliver our public services to customers in the most effective, modern and efficient way.

Strategic Goal 4: To make Disclosure Scotland a great place to work

We will actively encourage learning, creativity, innovation and new ways of working, and empower our people to embed a culture of continuous improvement.

We will focus on having engaged people that live and breathe our values: providing them with the opportunity to develop their skills; recognising talent and rewarding excellence; and developing our leadership capability and capacity to adapt and respond to change within a complex and dynamic environment.

Transforming the organisation will improve roles and change current business processes. Our people will be at the forefront of these changes and be empowered to design the future roles required to meet our customer needs.

Resourcing our Plans

As an Executive Agency of the Scottish Government, Disclosure Scotland operates at arms-length, but is accountable to Scottish Ministers for performance and use of public funds. The Budget Bill set annually in February by Scottish Ministers details the Scottish Government spending plans for the forthcoming financial year, including the financial resources to be allocated to Disclosure Scotland, and the authority to incur expenditure. The budget builds on plans outlined in the Scottish Government's Programme for Government, 'A Nation with Ambition' which invests in economic opportunity for all, in public services that are fit for the future and in a fairer, more inclusive Scotland.

This aligns with our strategic financial plans, with investment in transformational change already underway. The table below summarises our current financial cash-based estimates for Resource and Capital Departmental Expenditure Limits (DEL) covering the period of this Corporate Plan. As can be seen, investment in our Transformation Programme will continue over the next two years, attracting additional cost over the short-term in order to realise significant operational efficiencies and cost savings in the future.

Financial Overview	2018/19 £m	2019/20 £m	2020/21 £m	2021/22 £m
Operating income	(14.6)	(15.0)	(15.8)	(16.6)
Operating expenditure	29.3	18.0	17.5	17.2
Resource DEL - Income less Expenditure	14.7	3.0	1.7	0.7
Capital DEL - Investment	8.1	2.0	0.0	0.0
Total DEL	22.8	5.0	1.7	0.7

There are a number of variable factors underpinning the financial forecast and therefore this could be subject to change. These include the progress of transformational change including channel shift, volume demand, the outcome of the PVG Review and the environment within which Disclosure Scotland operates.

We will be self-financing as soon as possible. Our annual Business Plan sets out the detailed financial planning to support the implementation of this strategy. Our resources are focussed on delivering service excellence for customers, improved outcomes, efficiency and best value.

Measuring Success, Delivering Improved Outcomes

We have clear links that run from our Corporate Plan through the business planning process. Our objectives are reflected in individual objectives and personal development plans which provide clarity for our people on their contribution towards our goals. We measure, track and manage performance and progress against our strategic goals through business plan monitoring and achievement of key performance indicators on our balanced scorecard.

Impact and Outcomes

Over the course of 2018/21, this Corporate Plan will achieve real strategic impact through the way we deliver our services. Our success will be measured in a number of ways, but the outcomes we will achieve by 2021 include:

- a new PVG Scheme which will set the future direction for service delivery;
- an adaptable, responsive and resilient IT system which achieves a move from a paper-based to an online service and which we will continuously improve in line with our customers' needs;
- a more efficient organisation;
- a Vision, Mission and Values which is embedded into our processes and our interactions with each other, our customers and stakeholders;
- increased skills and capability amongst our people; and
- an embedded culture of continuous improvement.

Contact information

You can contact us by letter,
telephone or email:

Disclosure Scotland
PO BOX 250
Glasgow
G51 1YU

Tel: 03000 2000 40
(Monday to Thursday 08:30 to 17:00, Friday 08:30 to 16:30)

Email: info@disclosurescotland.co.uk
Twitter: @DisclosureScot

www.mygov.scot/organisations/disclosure-scotland



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