SPSO Strategic Risk Register 2024-25

Risk number	Description of area of risk	Strategic Objective	Risk owner	Inherent Likelihood	Inherent Impact (time, cost, quality)	Inherent Score	Control action to mitigate Likelihood (Detailed actions in the Operational Risk Register)	Control action to mitigate Impact (Detailed actions in the Operational Risk Register)	Current Likelihood	Current Impact (time, cost, quality)	Current Score	Management response	Target Likelihood	Target Impact (time, cost, quality)	Target Score
SR1	If the SPSO does not **communicate clearly about our role and remit**, and how we deliver our services, this may undermine access to, and public support, trust and confidence in our service, and inhibit our ability to achieve good outcomes for people.	Access to justice though everyday rights Agile capacity Standards and impact Efficiency	SPSO	3	4	12	Strong governance and innovation structures in place through for example the scheme of control, robust quality assurance processes, active member of Ombudsman's networks, regular engagement with the parliament. Strategic and annual business plans; proactive stakeholder engagement strategy; annual report; regular review of communications tools (web, leaflets, e-newsletter); sounding boards; tracking media coverage and e-newsletter open rates.	Strong body of work published, open and transparent governance, engaging with the Scottish Government to deliver improvement practices. Stakeholder engagement strategy.	2	3	6	Treat	1	1	1
SR2	If the SPSO does not **engage** effectively to **demonstrate the positive impact of our work** this may undermine our reputation and inhibit our ability to drive public service learning and improvement.	Access to justice though everyday rights Agile capacity Standards and impact Efficiency	SPSO	3	4	12	Governance structures explicitly require impact to be integral to corporate decision making - impact reported on in ARFS. Development of stakeholder and engagement strategy.	Impact reported on in ARFS. Development of stakeholder and engagement strategy. Communication strategy.	3	3	9	Treat	1	2	2
SR3	If SPSO has inadequate **funding** we may be unable to resource the organisation to deliver our **statutory functions** to time and quality standards set, and may be unable to deliver value-adding projects.	Access to justice though everyday rights Agile capacity Standards and impact Efficiency	SPSO	4	4	16	Strategic plan sets out medium term resource planning assumptions, scenarios and impacts of various funding levels by business area.	Strategic plan sets out medium term resource planning assumptions, scenarios and impacts of various funding levels by business area.	3	3	9	Treat	2	2	4
SR4	If SPSO has inadequate **resources to run our organisation, and develop capacity** it will impact on our ability to deliver our statutory functions to time and quality standards set and deliver value adding projects.	Agile capacity Efficiency	SPSO	3	4	12	Medium term financial planning in strategic plan, business case to SPCB, ongoing efficiencies.	Continuous improvement through agile working and service review. Horizon scanning to inform future work on SPSO information systems to support capacity development and volume and quality of output, enabling us to leverage more out of resources.	3	3	9	Treat	2	2	4
SR5	If the SPSO does not maintain and develop **human resource capacity** where, and to the standard needed, for all areas of jurisdiction, our work plan will not be delivered by sufficiently, motivated, skilled and supported colleagues to time and quality standards set.	Access to justice though everyday rights Agile capacity	SPSO	5	5	25	Approach to developing capacity outlined in the Strategic Plan, fully engaged in budget bid process, careful consideration of resource requirements through business planning process, engagement with staff representatives.	HR and workforce plan to develop skills and capacity. Agile approaches to business development to identify and apply efficiencies.	3	3	9	Treat	2	3	6
SR6	If the SPSO does not have in place, maintain and apply robust **governance** systems and **policies and procedures,** clearly linked to **output** and **performance,** we will be unable to deliver and demonstrate value for money, effective and efficient service, and not meet all our statutory duties.	Agile capacity Efficiency Standards and impact	SPSO	2	5	10	Strong governance structures in place through the scheme of control, internal and external audit plans. Handbooks for all areas of casework and corporate governance	Strong relationship with the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body. Regular review of performance and learning from reflective practice, QA and CSC	1	2	2	Tolerate	1	2	2
SR7	If the UK or Scottish governments **introduce, or fail to introduce, and update** legislation, regulations, guidance or policies, or take decisions that **impact on the delivery of Scottish public services**, this may result in systemic delivery and resourcing issues across the public sector, SPSO included. This could impact (positively or negatively) on our ability to meet statutory duties to achieve the best outcome for service users.	Access to justice though everyday rights Agile capacity Standards and impact	SPSO	3	4	12	Engage in consultation on legislation, policy etc, and with strategic stakeholders and networks during development and review to suggest updates and improvements.	Report our findings and views, adapt our services as far as possible, engage with stakeholders for collaborative approaches.	3	3	9	Treat	2	2	4
SR8	If SPSO or one of our stakeholders, is subject to a **cyber incident** (black swan, grey swan or at local, national or international level) we may be unable to meet our statutory functions and deliver our strategic plan to time and quality, and incidents may undermine trust and confidence in our services.	Agile capacity Efficiency	SPSO	5	5	25	Cyber plan, business continuity plan, technology of home working.	Business Continuity Plan reviewed regularly with appropriate testing and liaison with third parties. Cyber resilience plan in place, CR accreditation confirmed with major contractors; LT and ISA to attend relevant briefing sessions and remain informed of the risk and implement appropriate protections.	3	4	12	Treat	3	4	12
SR9	If SPSO cannot maintain **business continuity** due factors (separate to cyber incident) outside our control (at local, national and international level) and do not have effective contingency plans we will be unprepared and unable to meet our statutory functions and deliver our strategic plan.	Access to justice though everyday rights Agile capacity Standards and impact Efficiency	SPSO	3	5	15	Business continuity plan, scheme of delegation and technology base to be home working.	LT and LPO horizon scan, monitor developments and attend briefing, information and discussion sessions, overview of devolved and non-devolved matters, and wider economic policies. Monitor internal impact and respond to Scottish Government (and where appropriate UK Govt) impact surveys.	3	3	9	Treat	2	3	6
SR10	If SPSO fails to understand and adapt to the threats and opportunities posed by **climate change**, then this may lead an inability to meet our statutory duties, reputational damage, environmental damage and potential financial penalties.	Access to justice though everyday rights Agile capacity Efficiency	SPSO	4	5	25	Climate Change and Green group to horizon scan, monitor developments and keep LT updated. SPSO is developing a Climate Change, Environment and Sustainability Strategy and Adaptation Risk Assessment that will plan and control this risk. Progress towards the Strategy and associated actions is managed through the Climate Change and Green group.	Climate Change and Green group to horizon scan, monitor developments and keep LT updated. SPSO is developing a Climate Change Strategy that will plan and control this risk. Progress towards the Strategy and associated actions is managed through the Climate Change and Green group.	2	2	4	Tolerate	2	2	4
SR11	If SPSO fails to understand and adapt to the threats and opportunities posed by **technological (including digital and AI), economic and structural public sector change** in a flexible and agile way, this may impact on our ability to meet our statutory duties to achieve the best outcomes for the public.	Agile capacity Efficiency	SPSO	3	4	12	Technology monitoring, stakeholder engagement and horizon scanning to identify the application of technology and extent to which is being used.	Recognise need to further develop the approach to identify what impact this is having on the way public services are delivered, and the extent to which SPSO is keeping pace.	3	4	12	Treat	3	2	6
SR12	If the SPSO does not have in place strong employment, wellbeing and workplace policies and procedures we may not meet our statutory duties and organisational aims, in line with our values and in such a way that builds trust and confidence in the organisation. This in turn could impact on morale and capacity.	Access to justice through every day rights Agile capacity Efficiency	SPSO	1	4	4	Strong supportive policies and procedures built on a culture of trust and collaboration.	Review and listen to views based on ongoing consultation and review, staff surveys and IIP feedback.	1	2	2	Tolerate	1	2	2