

Annual
Business Plan

2020-21

Business Plan



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01

Chief Executive's Foreword



It is my pleasure to introduce SLC's business plan for the financial year 2020-21, which sets out our priorities for the year and demonstrates that our focus remains very much on the users of our services – to reiterate, on serving our customers.

Our aim continues to be to provide customers with increasingly modern, accessible and intuitive application, assessment, payment and repayment services, and by doing so enable them to invest in their personal ambitions, and by extension to invest in this country's future economic success.

We plan to provide these services as efficiently and effectively as possible, with year on year enhancements to the quality of our online

functionality and an increasing range of self-service options for our customers; these will also maximise value for money for the taxpayer. This balanced role – in fairly meeting both the needs of customers and of taxpayers – also underpins our approach to ensuring that customers meet their repayment obligations.

Like other organisations, SLC faces significant challenges due to Covid-19. I have been impressed by the way my leadership team has transformed our delivery capability from a largely office-based operation to one which is substantially home-based. I have been even more impressed by our staff's resilience in the face of the crisis and am grateful for their dedication and absolute commitment to our customers.

Our collective success in responding to the crisis has depended on the rapid activation of our business continuity plans and protocols for the rollout of new technology, which have enabled SLC to deal with this year's applications for financial support for the 2020/21 academic year, and to make this transition quickly. The pandemic continues to be an important focus for the company. The two key priorities in SLC's response are: to protect the health and wellbeing of employees, and to continue to deliver core services to customers.

This year's business plan focuses on improving the customer experience and improving the sustainability of our technology, which is embedded in our three-year corporate strategy, launched last year. We continue to build upon the momentum of our transformational Evolve

programme, and also start to see the execution of the new Technology Strategy, which complements Evolve.

One of the goals of the corporate strategy is to transform SLC into an organisation that is "leaner, better, doing more for less". While our budget for the year may be challenging, it is nevertheless essential that we continue to invest in Evolve, and do not lose sight of the longer-term improvements that it will bring to our services and the value for money that it will generate. Success will be demonstrated by improving our customers' experience – in particular, through reducing their need to contact us. It will also be seen by our evolution into a leaner company with an increasingly skilled workforce.

Paula Sussex
Chief Executive Officer

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The Business Environment

SLC is a non-profit making government-owned organisation that administers loans and grants to over 1.5 million students in colleges and universities in the UK. In total, SLC has 8.5 million customers and manages a loan book worth £156.5bn. The four UK Government Administrations are our shareholders.

SLC plays a central role in supporting the higher education (HE) and further education (FE) sectors. It does this by making timely and accurate payments of Maintenance Loans to learners and Tuition Fee Loans to HE and FE providers.

We:

- manage the full end-to-end ‘apply, assess, pay and repay’ process for undergraduates in England and Wales and provide the payment and repayment parts of this service for Scotland and Northern Ireland; we also maintain the assessment systems and online portals used for applications and assessments in Northern Ireland
- manage a range of FE and Postgraduate products and services that are tailored to the differing requirements of Government Administrations, alongside various “targeted support” grants to enable people to overcome barriers to participation in FE and HE
- administer bursary payments on behalf of many UK HE providers
- work with HMRC to collect repayments through PAYE and self-assessment systems while directly collecting from borrowers outside the UK tax system or those nearing the end of their repayment term.

We employ more than 3,300 staff across five sites: in Glasgow (Bothwell Street, Europa and Hillington), Darlington and Llandudno Junction.



Six Directorates:

- Product, Customer and External Relations (PCER)
- Operations
- Repayments and Counter Fraud Services (R&CF)
- Technology Group (TG)
- Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
- People

SLC's Executive Leadership Team (ELT):



Paula Sussex
Chief Executive



Product, Customer and External Relations (PCER)
David Wallace
Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Customer Officer



Operations
Derek Ross
Executive Director, Operations



Repayments and Counter Fraud Services (R&CF)
Bernice McNaught
Executive Director, Repayments and Counter Fraud, and Senior Responsible Owner for Evolve



Technology Group (TG)
Stephen Campbell
Chief Information Officer



Chief Financial Officer (CFO)
Jacqui Smillie
Chief Financial Officer and Executive Director for Finance, Commercial, Estates and Enterprise Risk & Compliance



People
Morven Spalding
Executive Director, People

03

Business Plan
2020-21

Introduction

SLC's business plan lays out our objectives for the financial year 2020-21, set in the context of our three-year **Corporate Strategy**. The business plan also defines how success will be measured.

Each year on behalf of all shareholders, the Department for Education (DfE) sets out the government shareholders' key priorities for SLC and their agreed funding in the Annual Performance and Resource Agreement (APRA) Letter. The budget for 2020-21 is £291m, as detailed in Section 3.3.

Ordinarily, the APRA Letter would also set out shareholders' priority performance targets ('APRA targets') for the year ahead, which would form a subset of our Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). However, as part of the response to Covid-19, our shareholders decided to suspend these APRA targets for 2020-21 and therefore these targets are not included in the business plan.

SLC's Mission

Our mission is to enable people to invest in their futures through further and higher education by providing trusted, transparent, flexible and accessible student finance services.

This year, we will measure performance using a new Interim Performance Pack (see Section 4) which blends some traditional APRA-style targets with a fresh approach to monitoring Apply-to-Pay performance. We will monitor performance through three "lenses":



"The Customer Lens"

We will deliver a great customer experience based on an increased digital offering, decreasing avoidable contact and ensuring compliance with data protection regulations.



"The Frontline Services Lens"

Through each academic cycle, we will ensure existing products are delivered securely, effectively, sustainably and efficiently. We will also increase repayment compliance, administer the loan book effectively and efficiently, and deliver post loan sale obligations.



"The Corporate Lens"

We will manage change projects in a timely manner, balancing lowest practical cost with the need for achieving quality outcomes and agreed benefits. SLC will also improve financial management and compliance with Government and other controls, through a well-managed, skilled, engaged and properly rewarded workforce.



SLC's Vision

Our vision is to ensure that SLC is widely recognised as enabling student opportunity and delivering an outstanding customer experience in the efficient delivery of the four UK Governments' further and higher education finance policies.

Covid-19 – Impact on 2020-21 Business Plan

Following the Prime Minister's announcement on 23 March 2020, we safely and securely transitioned a predominantly office-based organisation into one where 90% of our 3,300 staff are based at home. We restored 'business as usual' across all of our services within the month. This has been a significant change for SLC, both from a technological and a cultural perspective but the remote operating model will not be sustainable over the longer term, given the nature of the company's operations.

For the rest of this year, our two key priorities in SLC's response to the situation are:

- To protect the health and wellbeing of our employees
- To continue to deliver critical services to our customers

At the time of writing, we remain in 'major incident' mode and SLC is managed as such. Company operations and performance are monitored carefully and all the governments' guidance in response to the pandemic is assessed on a daily basis. However, the original business plan continues relatively unaffected by the impact of Covid-19 with some exceptions, as set out below.

Change Programme and Technology

We have made some minor adjustments to our portfolio change activity originally planned for 2020-21, but will continue to progress these, against revised timeframes in some cases. For example, the launch of the Online Repayments Service (ORS) has been rescheduled from April to July to mitigate the risk of increased incoming customer contact during Quarter 1.

Conversely, the Technology Group's Workforce Mobility programme has been brought forward and significantly expedited to facilitate the transition to home working. This included the accelerated rollout of new devices and the implementation of Microsoft Windows 10, Exchange Online and Microsoft Teams. To enable an organisation of our size to work from home would normally be a year-long project; instead, we have completed it in one month – an exceptional feat reflecting the commitment and resilience from all teams both within Technology Group, and across the organisation.

Frontline Services

Our forecast models to manage Apply-to-Pay processing have been extensively revised and are monitored three times per week against best-case and worst-case scenarios.

In response to these forecasts, and with support from our shareholders, we have relaxed four processing checks to streamline and speed up the application process for our customers. We have also reallocated resources across frontline services; this included re-training around 70 staff from the Repayments and Counter-Fraud Services Directorate to boost application assessment and processing capacity. We have also realigned resources to provide significantly more support to customers through social media channels.

Implications of New Home-Working Arrangements

We understand that working predominantly from home will be challenging for many of our people. In response, we have created SLC@Home – a package of resources to embed consistent ways of working, to support leaders in managing remote teams and, crucially, to help colleagues to maintain positive health and wellbeing. SLC@Home includes tools to recognise impacts on wellbeing, advice on how to get support, guidance on channels of communication and home technology, productivity and managing remote teams.

We have also revised our home-working policy and introduced a new policy on caring for dependants. Both SLC@Home and the revised policies will be reviewed and updated throughout the year.

At the time of writing, the Business Continuity and Estates team continue to effect significant changes to our offices to facilitate a safe working environment for our designated office-based "Minimum Essential Team" and for occasions when home workers need to come to the office. These modifications include touchdown spaces – Covid-secure, socially-distanced, bookable desks and meeting rooms within dedicated areas with one-way systems and deep-cleaning in operation. Limits on the number of people working on site at any one time are being rigorously controlled.

Business Objectives



3.1. The Customer Lens

This year, through Customer Engagement Management (CEM) – a key part of our Evolve transformation programme – we will begin to offer our customers more self-service options and reduce the need for them to telephone. As we move to an omni-channel service delivery organisation, we will increasingly focus on measuring, understanding, reporting on and improving how our customers experience and rate our services.

Our focus on customer experience will cover every interaction that they have with SLC – from their initial awareness or discovery of our products or services, through to the end-to-end ‘apply, assess, pay and repay’ processes. Our drive on customer experience will be led by our Chief Customer Officer.

During the year we will analyse data from all areas within the business that capture customer insight and will, for the first time, bring it all together in one place to better understand how customers experience using our services.

We have previously laid foundations for this work using Enterprise Design Thinking tools, to build understanding of various customer personas, their associated journeys and pain points. Through CEM, we will soon be able to capture detailed customer experience feedback in real time and use that to plan for future improvements. We will also capture real time customer sentiment analysis from our social media platform, again providing invaluable feedback on what and where

to make things better. We intend that everyone in SLC will understand that what they do and how they do it directly contributes to our customers’ experience.

We will improve access to clear and accessible information on our online application, payment and repayment interfaces, allowing customers to interact with us and self-serve in a fully informed way. More responsive use of IVR is already directing customers to additional extensive support on social media, and this will continue to develop.

We will engage more closely with our partners – for example the Office for Students (OfS) and the University and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) – to work together to provide customers with trusted student finance expertise and clear, comprehensive and easily accessible information.

Customer Performance Metrics

As part of the response to Covid-19, our Government shareholders decided to suspend the normal APRA targets for 2020-21. However, we will continue to monitor performance across a range of metrics, as set out in Section 4.

Each of SLC’s six Directorate Business Plans contains detailed lower-level metrics and initiatives that focus on the customer. Directorates have also established targets for services to “internal” customers within their plans.

Cyber Security and Data Protection

We take cyber security and data protection seriously. Home-working arrangements could mean that organisations are more exposed to the risk of cyber-crime and we are taking additional steps to mitigate such risks. SLC’s Technology Group has strengthened existing security measures, will be implementing new controls and improving our visibility and monitoring capability. The ongoing migration from Lotus Notes to Microsoft Exchange Online will continue to add a greater level of email data security as the workforce transitions across through June.

We will continue to make active progress towards full GDPR compliance; however, budget constraints mean that we are obliged to delay the bulk erasure of historic personal data until next year.

We have a ringfenced budget provision to improve our disaster recovery capability and SLC’s Technology Group will continue to remediate our IT estate, de-risk our platforms by improving supportability and security. As well as providing increased resilience, this will also reduce the future operational cost of the infrastructure estate by 10%.



3.2. The Frontline Services Lens

The Frontline Services lens covers two areas: Apply-to-Pay and Repayments.

Apply-to-Pay

We are committed to ensuring customers receive their funding efficiently and effectively. We will continue to focus on getting things Right First Time for our customers. Lean methodology, now transferred online through our SLC@Home programme, empowers staff to own the service that they deliver and incentivises individuals to want to do everything that they can to ensure the right outcome for each customer. We have new Right First Time metrics, for both assessment and contact services.

A key objective for 2020-21 is to prepare our Operations team for new technologies and ways of working that will decrease the need for customers to telephone us. This is being introduced through our Customer Engagement Management programme (CEM), a key part of Evolve. CEM, and other Evolve initiatives such as Online Repayments Service, will enable faster application processing and also increase the number of customers who are able to self-serve online.

By reducing the total time between an application being submitted and being ready to pay, we aim to minimise the need for customers to call us about the progress of their application. Reducing contact is a key factor in successfully achieving efficiency savings, especially during the peak period.

SLC is also accelerating changes to how we handle and direct incoming contact from customers with resources moved

to service customers via social media platforms.

Challenges to Apply-to-Pay Services

We have already made significant changes to our customer application services to reflect the need for our staff to work from home during the Covid-19 crisis. We have also simplified some processes for our customers to ensure that we can assess applications as quickly as possible. We anticipate some changes in customer decision making as a result of the pandemic (such as delays and revisions to their choices of courses or institutions, and also an increase in the number of applicants seeking to use the Current Year Income process). As a result, we have therefore developed detailed plans to allow us to make rapid adjustments to our workflow modelling across the academic cycle in order to support potential increases in and changes to the timing of assessment and contact workload.

We will also respond to the unprecedented strategic challenges faced by education providers. For example, we anticipate that some may change term dates, and some may pause delivery altogether – both scenarios resulting in increased numbers of applications requiring reassessment. We will actively engage with the Office for Students and the Education and Skills Funding Agency this year to improve the monitoring and accuracy of course and attendance information and to enhance the administration of withdrawals and overpayments.

SLC has developed detailed scenario planning as part of our response to Covid-19, and active monitoring of and revisions to our workload models will be key to delivering an accurate and on-time financial service to both students and educational providers.

Repayments

SLC's Repayments and Counter Fraud Services Directorate's key goal is to ensure that funds are returned to the taxpayer via HM Treasury. We do this by making sure that customers who are due to repay comply with their terms and conditions; that we prevent and respond to fraud and error; and that we effectively manage post loan book sale servicing. Repayments and Counter Fraud Services is the directorate whose plans and targets have been most affected by Covid-19, as DfE and SLC have agreed to make some temporary modifications to arrears and debt collection activities.

Covid-19 may have a significant effect on the income of customers who are repaying student loans. We will take a responsible approach to all debt collection activities and the difficult circumstances in which our customers may find themselves. We will ensure fair and supportive treatment of vulnerable customers and those facing financial hardship. However, we will continue to run counter-fraud campaigns and will also perform fraud checks specific to the revised processes in Apply-to-Pay.

Key new service improvements that will go ahead in 2020-21 include:

- Launching the new ORS in July to make it easier for customers in repayment to manage their loans and avoid over repaying them
- Implementing new end-of-year

processes with HMRC, also aimed at improved customer experience

Several new processes have recently or are about to go live, including:

- Automated refunding of credit balances up to £750
- Updating customers' accounts with weekly repayment information received from HMRC

SLC will continue to progress the delivery of strategic programmes of work within the Evolve portfolio, such as driving out fraud through improved analytical capability and fraud checking at the point of application. We will continue to address data quality issues with this year's focus switching to root-cause prevention, as part of the Excellence in Data Programme.

By maintaining accurate and up-to-date details of borrowers and their current employment status, we will provide a better quality of service whilst minimising leakage from the loan book.

Asset Management

SLC will continue to ensure the effective operational assurance, compliance and reporting on delegated Master Servicer obligations for all sold securitised loans; and will continue to manage the Mortgage Style Loans (MSL) deferment process on behalf of owners from past MSL debt-sales.

Frontline Services Performance Metrics

As with the Customer Lens, our Government shareholders decided to suspend the normal APRA targets for 2020-21. However, we will continue to monitor performance across a range of metrics, as set out in Section 4.



3.3. The Corporate Lens

The corporate lens focuses on reforming our technology, managing change, managing public money, governance and people.

Reforming Technology

This year, SLC's Technology Group will start to implement our new technology strategy. This is the beginning of a three-year transition to a target enterprise architecture, simplifying and consolidating our existing platforms and decoupling the architecture to reduce total cost of ownership and to enable long term sustainability. We will also introduce new governance through a Strategic Change Planning function and a Business Design Authority. We will develop new metrics to allow measurement of performance against a defined baseline to enable demonstrable improvements and savings arising from more effective working practices. These changes will be managed through the Evolve transformation programme.

In parallel, the directorate will implement its new operating model, and will progress the Strategic Partner Procurement programme, which covers the majority of SLC's technology spend. The change to a primarily outcome-based technology delivery model will, together with the pay and grading changes executed as part of the People Strategy, address historic recruitment and retention challenges.

Managing Change

Our objective is to continue to be viewed as a trusted partner in the delivery of government policy. A key priority for us this year is to work with government shareholders to simplify the commissioning process and rationalise the existing policy landscape. Specifically, we will engage with stakeholders with the aim of bringing forward the policy commissioning process by one month this year and by a further month next year, ensuring policy commissioning timetables align with budgetary, APRA and business planning process – thus enabling more robust governance. This project, along with policy simplification, also forms part of the Evolve transformation programme.

Programme Assurance and Planning

SLC will continue to ensure that change is implemented safely and that the business is ready to accept and adopt changes to people, process and technology.

SLC's central Programme Management Office (PMO) guides and controls standards for planning, reporting, benefits definition, management and realisation, business readiness and user acceptance testing and management of the annual APRA resourcing activities.

SLC will significantly strengthen programme assurance and planning. Key initiatives include:

- Transforming the central PMO service to deliver higher quality analysis, increasingly online self-service project tools and an Agile Policy to Production framework
- Creating a database-driven benefits tracking service

Public money, governance and people

(a) Public Money and Governance

As a public body, we adhere to the provisions of the Cabinet Office Code on Corporate Governance. SLC is committed to maintaining sound governance, internal control and risk management that supports our policies, aims and objectives while safeguarding public funds and assets, in accordance with the responsibilities set out in our **Framework Document**.

Key Initiatives for 2020-21

Commercial activity

SLC will continue to enhance commercial capacity and capability. Commercial Services will work with the business to deliver timely services for contract renewals and appropriate commercial activities, striving to deliver the commercial savings target. It will strengthen its assurance and compliance functions to deliver a consistent and rigorous adherence to guidance.

A new Commercial Committee, chaired by the CFO and with membership from across the business, Cabinet Office and DfE, will provide early sight and challenge of commercial activity. It will support SLC in discharging its responsibilities for ensuring that commercial activity:

- supports the SLC strategic objectives
- demonstrates value for money
- is compliant with the Framework Document

Forecasting and Financial Management

We will continue to strengthen financial forecasting across SLC. Work is underway to focus on the considerable change programme budget and ensuring that there is clear accountability for budget holders, and that they have the necessary skills and knowledge to meet their responsibilities. This will be complemented by financial modelling capability to give SLC greater insight and analysis of our future costs and savings to aid our decision-making.

Framework Document

SLC will work with DfE to complete the annual review of the company's Framework Document, to ensure that it continues to provide clarity on ownership, accountability and governance for the company (SLC is both an NDPB and a limited company) and that the authority of the SLC Accounting Officer is clarified and balanced with the oversight of our shareholders.

Robust standards of financial control, transparency and accountability and a strong regime of compliance with the Framework Document is critical for SLC.

A key focus for the year will be to increase SLC-wide awareness of the regime and provide additional guidance and training where required.

We will ensure that SLC operates within its delegated authorities, as set out in the Framework Document. We will embed a new SLC Compliance and Risk Framework, which will complement the joint review with the Company Secretary of the Framework Document to ensure it is fit for purpose.

Workday Phase 2

We will implement further functionality to Workday, SLC's new Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. Adaptive Insights, a new financial budgeting and forecasting system, will reduce manual processes and provide more automated forecasting. Phase 2 also supports our People Strategy with new functionality on performance management, absence management and strategic workforce planning.

Financial Plans

SLC's overall budget for the financial year 2020-21 is set out in the tables below.

Revised Budget					£m
Operating Expenditure	Admin	Programme	Capital	Total	
Product, Customer & External Relations	4.2	11.7	0	15.9	
Technology Group	17.3	31.3	3.4	52.0	
Operations	0	63.3	1.3	64.6	
Repayments & Counter Fraud Services	0	20.2	0	20.2	
People	4.5	1.5	0	6.0	
CFO	9.5	15.9	1.3	26.6	
Corporate	0.7	-4.6	0	-3.9	
CEO	0.7	0	0	0.7	
Operating Expenditure Total	36.9	139.2	6.0	182.0	
Change Projects	Admin	Programme	Capital	Total	
Policy	0	6.4	11.1	17.5	
Technology	2.5	2.9	10.2	15.6	
Corporate	0.9	11.0	3.5	15.4	
Repayments	0	2.0	1.9	3.9	
Change Projects Subtotal	3.4	22.3	26.7	52.4	
Central Adjustment (formerly HLA)	-0.4	-3.7	-4.5	-8.6	
Change Projects Total	3.0	18.6	22.2	43.8	
Technology Group Evolve Benefits	-2.5	-1.9	0	-4.4	
Total Company (excl. Evolve & Cent. Adjust.)	37.8	159.6	32.7	230.0	
Central Adjustment	-0.4	-3.7	-4.5	-8.6	
Total Company (excl. Evolve)	37.3	155.9	28.2	221.4	
Evolve Projects	4.7	18.5	15.6	38.7	
Central Adjustment	-0.5	-3.8	-2.8	-7.1	
Evolve Projects Total	4.2	14.7	12.8	31.7	

Total Company (Cash)	Admin	Programme	Capital	Total
Operating Expenditure	36.9	139.2	6.0	182.0
Change Projects	3.4	22.3	26.7	52.4
Evolve Projects	4.7	18.5	15.6	38.7
Technology Group Evolve Benefits	-2.5	-1.9	0	-4.4
Sub Total	42.5	178.1	48.3	268.7
Central Adjustment	-0.9	-7.5	-7.3	-15.7
Total Company	41.5	170.5	41.0	253.0
Non-Cash	Admin	Programme	Capital	Total
Ringfenced DEL*	9.5	28.6	0	38.1
AME*	0	0	0	0.2

* DEL refers to Departmental Expenditure Limits, and AME is Annually Managed Expenditure, both as defined by HM Treasury.

(b) People Strategy

Our People Strategy, developed during 2019, sets out how we aim to harness the capabilities of our greatest asset – our colleagues – and help make SLC a great place to work. The People Strategy’s key initiatives are set out below.

Pay and Grading

The grading structure and skills make-up of SLC’s workforce no longer supports today’s business model or the business we want to become. It does not support our job evaluation framework or the development of skills; and current grades do not have sufficient differentiation to support transparent and fair pay.

We have designed a pay and grading framework within defined job families and career pathways. This framework has narrower salary bands for each grade, is benchmarked and linked to the external market and aligned to a new job evaluation process. If approved by HM Treasury and Cabinet Office, implementation of the new structure could be complete by October 2020.

In order to support strategic demands and to address the increased competition for talent, we propose to adopt the Government Digital Services’ Digital, Data and Technology (DDaT) competency model for technical roles and the pay framework for the DDaT group 1 roles.

Career Pathways

The People Strategy makes clear our commitment to developing the skills of our existing workforce, support colleagues in adopting new technologies and ways of working that meet our customers’ needs and ensure colleagues have fulfilling, rewarding careers with SLC. Career Pathways will provide the structured support to enable this, while helping to develop a new culture where colleagues are rewarded for their skills and contribution to SLC. There will be five Career Pathways: Functional, Technical, Operational, Project and Business.

Emerging Talent

Our emerging talent programme gained momentum in 2019 with a number of highly successful applicants to our Graduate Apprenticeships intake. We also commenced an intern programme last year and, throughout this financial year, we will build on this success by providing further and wider opportunity for people to consider SLC as a chosen career path.

Returners to Work Phase 2

With significant and increasing recruitment competition, SLC will build on the Returners to Work project to implement flexible working arrangements. Employees may be sourced from a variety of groups, for example armed forces, returners from caring duties and term time students. A pilot began at Llandudno Junction and working patterns included term time working, evening shifts, part time and full time. If successful, the project will build significantly across SLC.

Productivity and Efficiency Gains

SLC had drawn up detailed productivity and efficiency gains for 2020-21; however, these have been reviewed and will be subject to further assessment in light of Covid-19.

Operations Directorate

Through the Evolve programme, Operations Directorate are committed to achieving £2.7m in savings in 2020-21, to be achieved via:

Lean

With an ongoing focus on operational excellence and staff engagement, empowering and motivating staff enabled by robust policies and processes, there has been a reduction in shrinkage and absence rates across the Operations Directorate. This efficiency saving has been built into the Directorate’s budget submission for 2020-21; and

Digital Evidence and Automation

Savings are achieved through reduced Pre-Assessment resource requirement and a reduced outsource requirement

Repayments and Counter Fraud Services Directorate

The Directorate aims to deliver benefits in 2020-21 by realising priorities within the Repayment Programme, strategic programmes of work within Evolve, and business as usual activities. However, Covid-19 may have a significant impact on repayment and recovery activities during 2020-21, and therefore a subsequent impact on benefits achieved.

Expected benefits (original target and revised forecast due to Covid-19 impacts) for Repayment and CFS are as follows:

Benefit Type	Original Target		Revised Forecast (Covid-19)	
Increasing yield by driving increases in amounts collected and reducing overseas non-compliance	SLC Direct Collection	£22.3m	SLC Direct Collection	£13.4m
	Collected via HMRC	£12.3m	Collected via HMRC	£11.4m
Reducing costs efficiency savings		£2.9m		£2.8m
Auto refunding to customers with credit balances		£2.5m		£2.5m
Preventing fraudulent funding being paid out through CFS investigations		£23.6m		£23.6 m
Offsetting against future funding amounts for customers who have received grant and loan overpayments		£30.2m		£30.2m

04

Performance Monitoring

Although Government shareholders have suspended our traditional APRA targets, SLC will continue regular monitoring of its performance using a range of metrics. As part of our response to the pandemic we have developed a new Interim Performance Pack that will cover the key high level indicators and will be discussed at monthly Executive Leadership Team meetings, at all SLC Board meetings and at other forums including the Quarterly Shareholders Meeting (QSM) and DfE's Performance, Finance and Risk (PFR) Committee meetings.

The Interim Performance Pack (IPP)

The IPP is structured around the three lenses described above and contains metrics which will be monitored against a mixture of previous years' trends, internal targets and scenario plans.

The Customer Lens will include metrics covering:

- Satisfaction survey results for Apply-to-Pay customers and for repayers
- The average number of incoming telephone calls per application
- The percentage of applications with no incoming telephone calls
- Quality assurance ratings ("Right First Time") scores for both processing and customer contact
- Survey results covering a broad range of customer touch points (two examples are how easy customers found the application process and how quickly issues were resolved)
- Availability of online services for customers

The Frontline Services Lens will include metrics covering:

- SLC's actual processing of SFE core application tasks compared to our original forecast for the year (pre-Covid-19); and compared to our original less adverse and more adverse Covid-19 scenarios
- Volume and throughput of customer applications
- The percentage of applications fully processed end-to-end within 70 calendar days
- The percentage of calls answered, and the percentage answered within 180 seconds
- The value of direct cash collected
- The percentage of borrowers compliant with their repayment obligations
- The take-up of new online services such as ORS

The Corporate Lens will include metrics covering:

- The RAG status of each of SLC's five change portfolios
- The performance of SLC's key technology systems
- Absence and turnover of SLC staff
- Employee engagement
- Budget monitoring against SLC's administration, programme and capital budgets

More Detailed Performance Monitoring

In addition to this company-wide Business Plan, each of SLC's six Directorates now produces an individual annual business plan aligned to the company's objectives. These plans contain more detailed, lower-level objectives and targets and are monitored through SLC's Quarterly Business Review meetings attended by all senior managers.



Student Loans Company

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