

Public Sector Climate Change Duties Reporting 2015/16



A functional review of the reporting process to
identify potential improvements

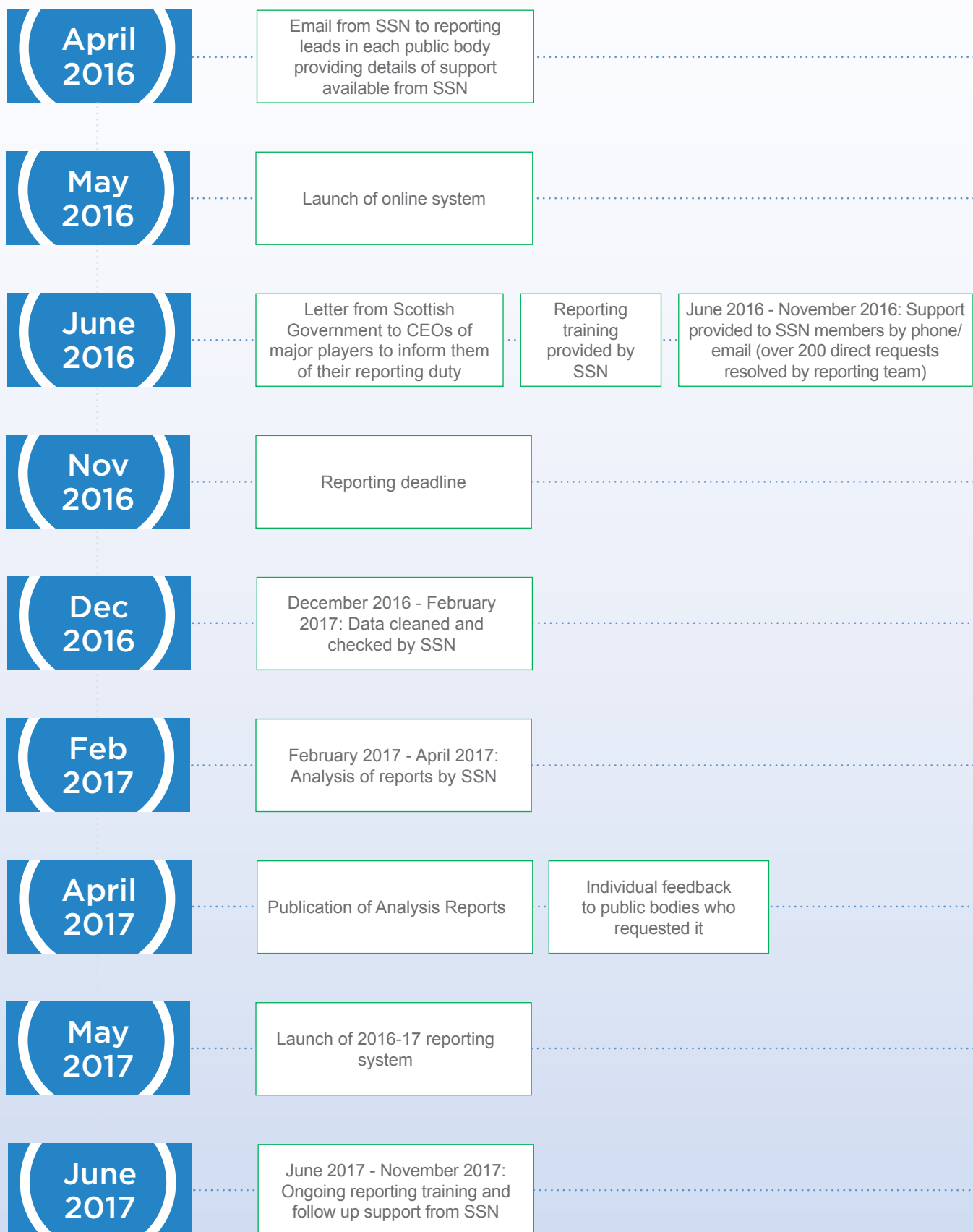
June 2017

Introduction

For continuous improvement of climate change reporting, the Sustainable Scotland Network (SSN) team at Keep Scotland Beautiful (KSB) undertook a review of the 2015-16 reporting process. This review was informed by a user survey issued to reporting organisations, input and feedback from the staff team, functional improvement suggestions from consultants who reviewed the reports on behalf of SSN, and further comments received from SSN members via email and phone.

This report summarises the review findings and outlines some of the steps being taken in advance and during the 2016-17 reporting cycle. We commend every organisation that submitted a 2015-16 Climate Change Report and would like to thank every officer who attended an SSN training event, completed one of our surveys, or answered one of our phone calls. The strength of our network has been invaluable throughout this process and we thank you again for your support and positivity.

Timeline of developments from 2015-16 reporting process



Improvements for 2016-17 report

We ran a survey on the reporting process from the reporting deadline until January 2017. Below are some of the comments on the online system that were raised and a summary of how we tried to resolve them.

You said	We did/will do	Outcome
It was difficult to print the exported reports (excel, pdf, word).	We have sent your comments to the system developers for them to make as many improvements to the layout as possible.	The functionality to export to pdf, word and excel will remain however if they are not in a format that is suitable, the SSN team will create a template for the output report on request.
There were gaps in some of the download reports.	SSN will improve the guidance to help users reduce validation errors in their submission.	By removing validation errors, the data will pull through to the readout reports.
Move the 'save' and 'save and submit' buttons apart at the top of the portal.	We asked the developers if this was possible.	We were informed that the button locations are fixed.
The online platform had a short time out and sometimes information was lost.	We raised this concern with the developers.	This cannot be changed. SSN will put as many reminders into the template as possible to inform users of this.
The numerical data inputs did not allow for decimal places.	We identified the questions where this was an issue and informed the developers.	Numerical values of up to two decimal places are now allowed throughout.
The platform was slow and took too long to input data.	To try to combat this, we investigated pre-populating data into some of the questions.	It was felt that pre-population could tie public bodies to previous answers and not allow them the flexibility to make changes.
It would be good to include graphics in some of the questions.	The developers informed us this is not possible.	No change.
It would be useful if more than one person could work on the report at any one time.	The developers informed us this is not possible as this security function is in place so that data is not overwritten.	No change.
Our senior manager struggled to gain access to sign off and complete the declaration of the report.	We investigated and believe this is because the users were in 'view' mode instead of 'edit' mode.	SSN to provide clearer guidance.
Some of the questions in the Recommended section were repetitive.	We have removed as many of the columns as we felt we could without losing the richness of data.	We hope now that it will be easier to complete. Further improvements will be made following submission of 2016-17 reports.
Could the format be better so that the questions fitted on one page so we don't need to scroll from left to right.	We forwarded this request to the developers. They informed us that users should decrease the zoom level on their browser.	SSN will include this advice in the Guidance Notes.
When we saved the report it would jump back to the top of the form.	The developer informed us that this was a user browser issue.	SSN will advise public bodies as necessary how to avoid this issue.

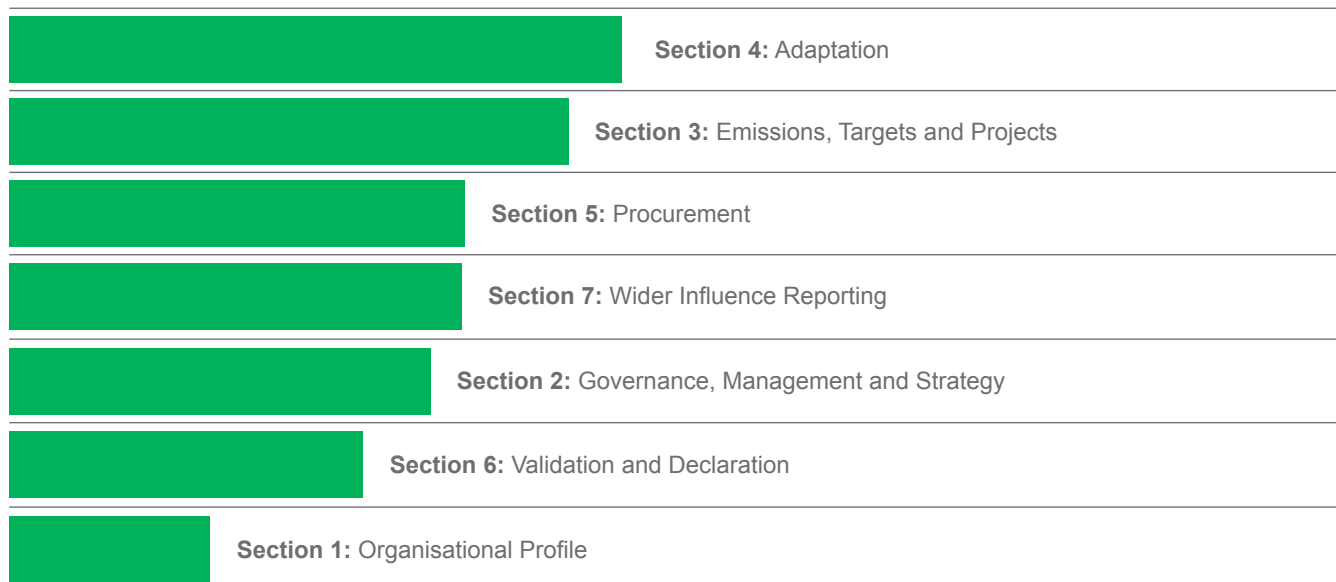
In addition to the comments received above we have made other technical fixes that we hope will make submission easier:

- **Updating the information in the pop up information boxes for each question**
- **Formatting tables so they fit on the screen better**
- **Locking down certain parts of the online form so that data is not lost in other parts of the form**

Finally we found that some of the feedback provided reported errors that were unique to individual organisations and could have been created by compatibility errors from browser settings. In light of this, we will update and produce clearer technical guidance for the online system to include a 'problem solve' guide.

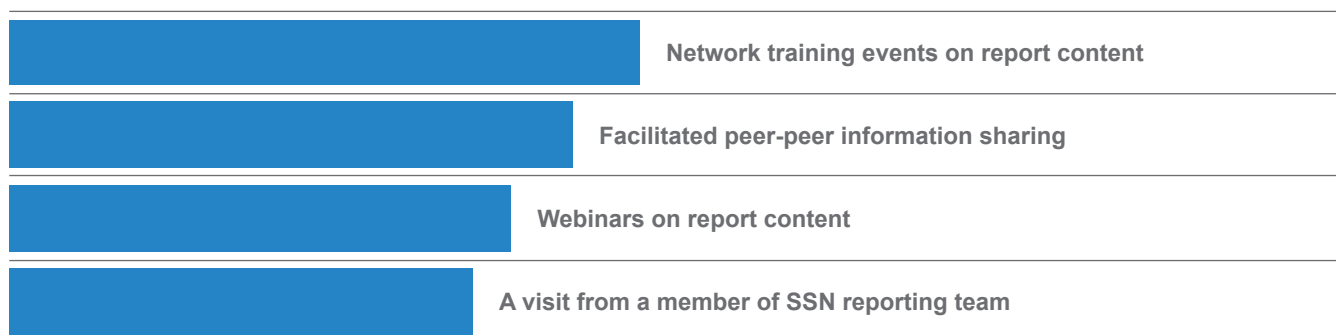
Training and events

The user survey also asked what section of the report would users like most help with for the 2016-17 reporting process.



The results of the survey showed that adaptation was the area respondents felt they would like the most support with. Therefore, SSN will work closely with Adaptation Scotland to identify opportunities to collaborate in delivering adaptation reporting events. Additionally we will also work with our partner organisations to develop support in the other areas as part of our work plan.

Additionally, the survey identified that the preferred method of support is network training events and peer-peer information sharing.



As a result, in addition to our planned programme of events, SSN are investigating smarter, more efficient methods to facilitate training events and outreach (e.g. online sessions). This will enable us to support more public bodies and can link up similar public bodies.

Programme for support to start in May 2017 includes:

- Training events and workshops covering all sections of the reporting template
- Refreshed guidance notes and populated examples on our website
- Telephone and email support
- Explore how to provide tailored support to Regional Transport Partnerships and NHS Boards

Improvements to guidance notes

We will continue to update and improve the guidance notes. A selection of the changes we have made are noted below.

In addition to this, sector specific guidance will be produced for the 31 new Integrated Joint Boards that will also be submitting reports for 2016-17.

Question	Change
Section 1	
Q1d) Metric	Several bodies added a metric but did not enter consumption data or tried to enter text into a value only box. We have updated the guidance notes to advise users how to properly report on this question. We have also advised to make use of the comments if necessary.
Q1e) Budget	Bodies have provided different budgets. Some provided their overall core budget or total expenditure capital and revenue where as some provided overall expenditure for the year. The guidance notes have been updated to clarify what is expected for this question.
Q1F) Report Year	Guidance has been updated to note that this question has been pre-populated in the online form based on last year's responses. Guidance has also been provided on how this can be changed, if necessary.

Section 2	
Q2a) Governance	Layout of guidance has been revised to a concise list of bullet points of information that will be more useful for users answering this question.
Q2b) Management	Layout of guidance has been revised to a concise list of bullet points of information that will be more useful for users answering this question.
Q2c) Corporate Plan or similar document	To avoid duplication with other questions, the guidance has been clarified to explain the types of documents that we are looking for here. For example, several bodies listed strategies or other plans here which are noted elsewhere. Guidance has been updated to remove the wording 'strategic planning' to combat any misinterpretation that may have occurred. Some bodies inputted multiple entries in one column of the table rather than adding extra rows for each objective. Guidance has been revised to advise 'that each objective should be entered separately in additional rows'. Pop up text has been revised to reflect that CMP/ SDAP are not applicable here.
Q2d) Climate change plan or strategy in place?	Pop up box guidance has been amended to state that providing a date in the response would be useful. Example of a good response within the guidance has also been included. Examples of what strategies / plans there are in place across the sectors has also been included. There was some confusion over the time period. Some responses provided the names of documents that were in place for the following reporting year. Guidance has been updated to advise users how to properly report on this question.
Q2e) More detail on climate change plans and/or strategies	Guidance has been updated to advise that all documents should be listed. Users should be discouraged from signposting to other sections of the report. Guidance has been updated to include definitions of what is meant by Business Travel and Staff Travel. Guidance has made clearer that strategies / policies and plans that are listed should include reference to climate change. Guidance has been updated to include information on how to deal with plans stated that are out of date.
Q2g) C-CAT or equivalent	The question asks if the body has used the Climate Change Assessment Tool (or equivalent) but does not ask the body to specify when this was carried out. Guidance has been updated inform users to note when the assessment was undertaken to see if this corresponds to the report year in question or earlier / after.

Question	Change
Section 3	
Q3c) Renewables	We have updated the guidance notes to reflect that information entered in Q3c should also be entered into Q3b (and it will not be double counted). Also, it has been made clear that the input value in kWh is expected to be larger than the output (consumption + export) because a technology is never 100% efficient.
Q3d) Targets	Guidance has been updated to inform that progress against targets should be a number, using the same units as the baseline figure.
Q3f) Carbon savings from projects in reporting year	Guidance notes has been updated to inform that for this question we are only looking for projects where the first FULL year of CO ₂ e savings is the year after the reporting year (e.g. if the reporting year is 2016-17, only projects with the first FULL year of savings in 2017-18).

Section 4	
Q4d) Progress towards SCCAP	Guidance have been updated to state that if a public body is not listed in SCCAP, that the body should put N/A in the progress box.
Q4f) Monitoring and evaluating action on adaptation	Guidance has been improved to state that if the public body does not have monitoring or evaluation in place, they should state this instead of providing an answer that isn't relevant.

Section 5	
Q5a) Procurement policy	Guidance has been improved to include the following prompts: - Does your organisation have a policy? - How does the policy contribute to compliance with the climate change duties? Additionally, there has been a revision to reduce confusion / duplication of response between Q5a and Q5b.
Q5b) Procurement activity	Guidance has been updated to provide more examples of what this question is specifically asking for to reduce duplication of response with Q5a.

Section 6	
Q6) Validation	Guidance (including pop up guidance) has been updated to provide a better definition of peer review.

Section 7	
Q1) Wider influence on GHG emissions	This question is now applicable to all public bodies. Non-local authorities should include any data that they capture here. Additions to guidance now reflects this.
Q2a) Wider influence targets	Guidance has been updated to reflect that the sector names have changed from 2014-15 to align with the new draft Climate Change Plan.
Q3) Policies and actions to reduce emissions	Guidance has been updated to reflect that the sector names have changed from 2014-15 to align with the new draft Climate Change Plan. Additionally, guidance has been updated to reflect changes to column titles.
Q4) Partnerships, communications and capacity building	Guidance has been updated to reflect changes to column titles.
Q5) Other notable activity	Guidance has been updated to reflect changes to column titles.

We are continually improving the process and have welcomed the input from users as we refine the system to suit the needs of the public sector and we look forward to continuing to work with you as we strive to improve this process. For further information on the changes that were made to the 2016 - 17 reporting system and information on our plans for support, please contact ssn@keepsotlandbeautiful.org.

Keep Scotland Beautiful is the charity that enables action on sustainable development by working with organisations and communities to change behaviour to reduce carbon emissions and environmental impact. It's part of our work to make Scotland clean, green and more sustainable.



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