

SSAC Bi-annual Update – March 2026

The SSAC provides independent advice, through its Chair, to the Chief Scientific Adviser (CSA) for Scotland, to inform policy development and delivery across all areas of the Scottish Government's (SG) work. It typically develops advice on a medium to long term basis, advising on developments in science and technology and their implications for policy and identifying potential future opportunities and threats.

Chaired by Professor Julian Jones from 1 December 2023, the SSAC has seventeen other members, in addition to the Scottish Government's Chief Scientific Advisers, all of whom are ex-officio members: Chief Scientific Adviser (CSA) for Scotland, Professor Calum Semple, Chief Scientist (Health), Professor Dame Anna Dominiczak, CSA (Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture), Professor Mathew Williams, Chief Social Policy Adviser, Professor Linda Bauld and CSA (Marine), Professor Mark Inall.

The SSAC issues a short report following each bi-annual strategic meeting to provide an update on its latest work streams and areas of interest. The next SSAC operational meeting will be held online on 19 May 2026.

1. SSAC CURRENT WORKSTREAMS

- **NHS Decarbonisation** – A research assistant is currently being recruited to support this project. Key research questions have been agreed, and there has been constructive engagement with external stakeholders.
- **Flexible Energy Demand Management** – Regular working group meetings have been scheduled through to the end of May 2026. Specific workstreams have been allocated to working group members, who are developing drafts to inform the final report.
- **Skills** – A research assistant has been appointed and work has commenced with a review of skills related recommendations from previous SSAC reports. The next phase will involve mapping these recommendations against the current policy landscape to develop SSAC recommendations.

2. SSAC FUTURE WORKSTREAMS

- **Innovation** – The scoping document is being revised to reflect the current focus and direction of the work. Once finalised, it will be published online.
- **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** – Following the launch and publication of the Scottish Government's [Scotland's AI Strategy 2026-2031](#) further discussions are being arranged between SSAC and key SG officials to agree next steps for SSAC's work on AI.

3. SSAC Membership News



The SSAC recruitment exercise closed on 20 March and attracted a strong response. The sift of applications is currently underway, with shortlisted candidates expected to be invited to interview in early May 2026.

For further information, please contact the SSAC Secretariat team at:
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