



SUMMARY: Halfway Point Report: August 2026

About this report

This report marks the halfway point in my 18-month work programme. It considers what I have done, the contribution that work has made, whether the intended impact is happening and what needs to change during the remaining nine months.

Shared with

Scottish Government, COSLA and Solace

Shared on

7 September 2026

Why this matters

Scotland is beyond the halfway point between making the promise in 2020 and the deadline for keeping it in 2030. There is significant commitment, determination and activity across Scotland. The question is whether that activity is yet adding up consistently to the experiences and outcomes promised to babies, children, families and care experienced adults.

The remaining nine months of my work programme will increasingly focus on what turns evidence and advice into action: where responsibility lies, where authority sits and what would accelerate progress now and beyond the end of my current work programme.

What I have concluded so far

Commitment is not the problem. Despite activity, progress, babies, infants, children, young people, families and care experienced adults are not yet consistent experiencing what they were promised. And all of this activity does not yet add up to coherent collective delivery.

Keeping the promise cannot be delivered by individual organisations acting alone. Plan 24–30 provides a shared framework with many of the barriers to implementation are connected to the wider conditions in which public services operate, including funding, governance, workforce, data, accountability and policy.

What happens next

My focus in the second half of my Work Programme will be on turning what I have learned into action by those with the authority and responsibility to act. To be clear about where progress is being made; the barriers that persist; where responsibility and authority sit; and how keeping the promise connects to wider public service reform and prevention.

Evidence and advice must lead to decisions, responsibility must lead to action, and that action must result in better experiences and outcomes.

Status: action underway / further action required

Scotland is making progress. There is stronger strategic alignment and a growing understanding of what enables change and what gets in its way. But the intended impact is not yet being achieved consistently. The next phase of my work will use those insights to provide focused advice and support coordinated action.

Read the full report below