

Scottish  
Court Service

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**SCOTTISH COURT SERVICE**  
**BUSINESS PLAN**  
**2011/12**

## **SCS Business Plan 2011/12**

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## Introduction

1.1 This is the Business Plan of the Scottish Court Service (SCS) for 2011/12.

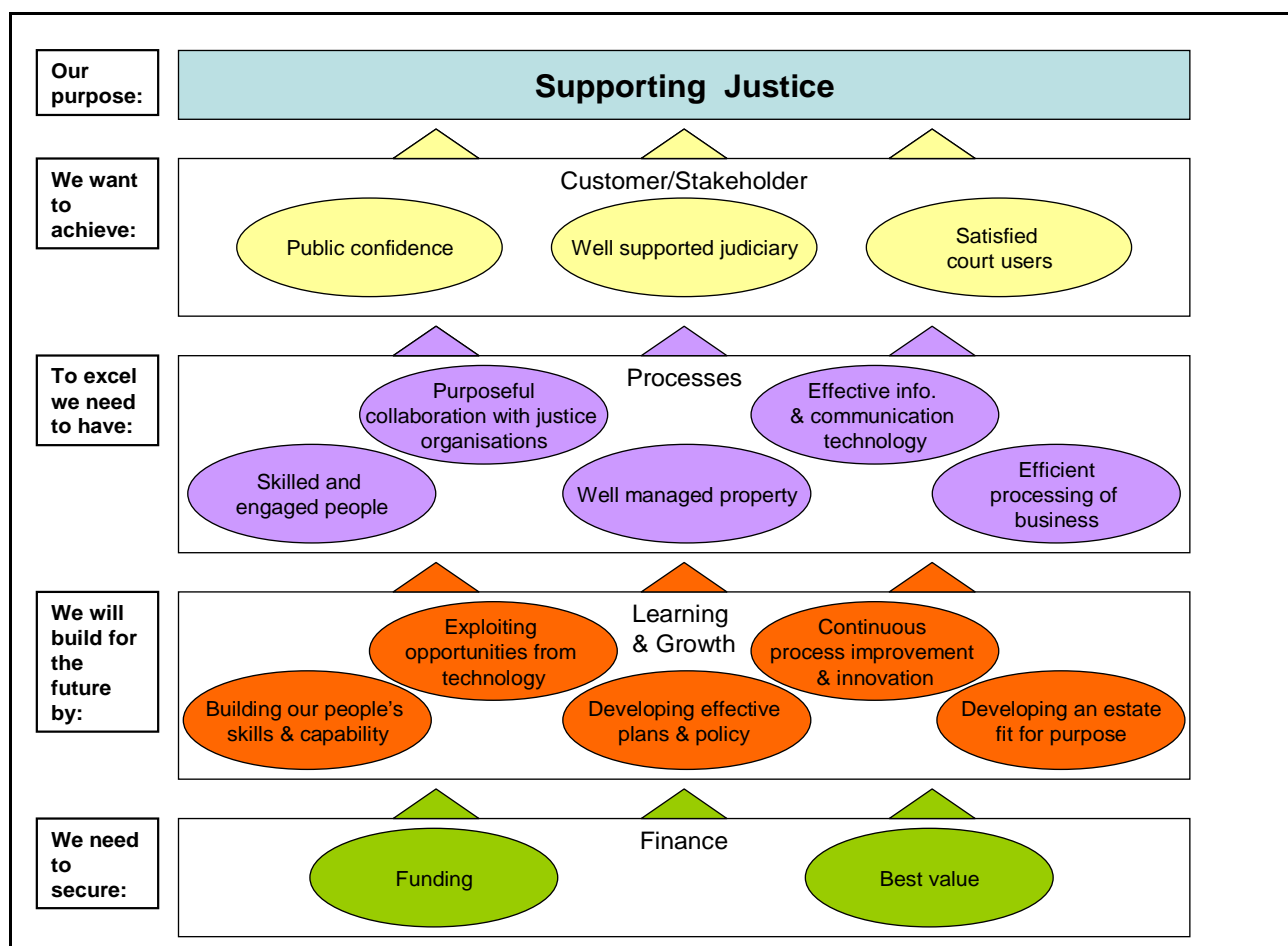
1.2 This Business Plan aligns with the *SCS Corporate Plan for 2011-14*, which describes the SCS Board's strategic vision and priorities over the 3 years from 2011/12 to 2013/14 for building a stronger SCS. Individual Business Plans will be prepared for each year setting out more detailed objectives and milestones.

1.3 SCS Directorates and business units have their own business plans in support of the corporate objectives and local delivery priorities.

## Supporting Justice - SCS Purpose and Strategic Priorities

1.4 The SCS is a non-ministerial public body, responsible for providing the people, buildings and technology to support Scotland's courts and judiciary and the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG). Our purpose is **supporting justice**.

1.5 Our strategic purpose and strategic priorities are illustrated in the following "strategy map" which shows how the strategic priorities are aligned to the delivery of our purpose:



## **SCS Business Change: Building a Strong Scottish Court Service**

1.6 The SCS *Corporate Plan for 2011-14* sets the SCS Board's vision for 2011-14; to build a stronger Scottish Court Service. It identifies the following key requirements for delivering that vision:

- skilled, engaged and motivated **staff** in the courts, OPG and corporate headquarters;
- a well managed **estate** that makes the best possible use of our buildings and meets our environmental responsibilities;
- clear and efficient business **processes** that respond to the needs of the judiciary, court users and the wider public;
- effective **technology** that supports our key processes and communications; and
- appropriate **collaboration** with other justice organisations, to help drive improvement across the justice system as a whole.

1.7 The SCS has established a business change programme to take forward specific actions against each of these requirements for building a stronger SCS. Those actions that require cross-system collaboration with other justice organisations are being taken forward within the context of the Scottish Government's Justice Outcomes Group and specific programmes, including Making Justice Work and Reducing Re-Offending.

### **SCS Priorities 2011/12**

1.8 The following chapters set out key **aims**, **risks** and **opportunities** for the SCS and the specific **actions** that the SCS will take during 2011/12 towards building a stronger SCS.

1.9 Specific **milestones** and **success criteria** are identified against each of the actions. These will be reviewed and updated during the year.

### **SCS Performance**

1.10 Overall performance of the SCS will be monitored by the SCS Board using an agreed framework of performance indicators (set out within the SCS Corporate Plan 2011-14).

### **SCS Corporate Risks**

1.11 The SCS's top corporate risks are listed at Annex A, along with the senior risk owner. Corporate risks and associated controls are monitored at least quarterly by the Executive Team. Each Directorate and business unit is required to maintain its own local risk register and to escalate risks to the Executive Team and SCS Board, as appropriate.

## 1. MEETING THE NEEDS OF JUDICIARY AND COURT USERS

### Aims

Our aims are to:

- Build our understanding of the needs and views of members of the judiciary and court and OPG service users, to help us improve how we deliver our services.
- Demonstrate a high quality of delivery of key aspects of customer-focused service in line with established national standards.

### Key Risks

- Business change activity, to reform and improve how we deliver services, and actions to operate within reduced budget allocations, might result in public and/or political resistance and impact on our relationship with the judiciary and other court users.

### Opportunities

- We will establish baseline information about judicial views and re-refresh our understanding of court users' views about the services and support provided by the SCS, which will help us manage their expectations as we progress our business change activity.
- We will roll out our approach to mainstreaming equality which will help us provide services that take account of the diverse needs of court users.

Action	Milestones	Success Criteria
<b>Court User Survey</b> Commission survey of the views of court users of all types about the services and assistance provided by the SCS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Complete tender process (May 2011)</li> <li>– Undertake survey (Jun-Jul 2011)</li> <li>– Court User Survey results available (Nov 2011)</li> </ul>	Court User Survey completed and results informing SCS service delivery and improvement are acted upon.
<b>Customer Service Excellence</b> Seek corporate status accreditation under the UK Government's <i>Customer Service Excellence</i> (CSE) scheme and progress towards roll-out of CSE across courts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Corporate template of CSE evidence (August 2011)</li> <li>– Successful external verification of the 1st business unit applicant (November 2011)</li> <li>– Successful external verification of the final business unit applicant by August 2012.</li> <li>– Achievement of CSE accreditation across all SCS business units by August 2012.</li> </ul>	SCS achieves CSE Corporate accreditation, ensuring consistent approach to customer service standards.
<b>Equality</b> Roll out SCS <i>Equality Statement</i> and guidance across SCS.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Publish final Equality Statement and Outcomes (Apr 11)</li> <li>– All new policy development subjected to EQIA (Jun 11)</li> <li>– Equality E-Learning package launched (Nov 12)</li> </ul>	Progress made against underpinning equalities action plan and delivery of equalities outcomes.

<p><b>Survey of Judicial Views</b> Undertake survey of the views of members of the judiciary, at all levels, about the services and support provided by the SCS to meet their needs and the needs of the courts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Undertake dialogue with judiciary on design and content of survey. (Jul-Oct 2011)</li> <li>– Undertake survey (Nov. 2011)</li> <li>– Survey results available (Jan 2012)</li> </ul>	<p>Survey completed and results informing SCS plans for service delivery and improvement.</p>
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## 2. SKILLED, ENGAGED AND MOTIVATED WORKFORCE

### Aims

Our aims are to ensure:

- A skilled, engaged and motivated workforce able to deliver the SCS's core functions across the courts, OPG and corporate headquarters.
- Staff numbers and costs are aligned to the demand for our services and the level of resources available to us.

### Key Risks

- Reductions in staffing through voluntary redundancy and natural turnover have the potential to impact on the SCS's skill base and capacity to deliver our core functions.
- Business change and Civil Service-wide reforms might impact on staff morale and engagement.

### Opportunities

- Over recent years we have improved the quality of management information about the skills and capabilities of our staff and their deployment and we have invested in technical and other training. Major business change activity will further improve how we align our staff resources to our operational priorities.

Action	Milestones	Success Criteria
<b>Voluntary Release</b> Complete voluntary redundancy scheme and maintain controls on staff recruitment and vacancies to match staff numbers and costs with available resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Complete managed release of staff under voluntary redundancy (Jun 2011)</li> </ul>	Managed process of voluntary staff release equivalent to at least 5% of baseline pay costs, minimising impact on operational capability.
<b>People Strategy</b> Review and update SCS <i>People Strategy</i> to support and inform the future direction of SCS people management policies, practices and activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Submission of revised <i>People Strategy</i> to SCS Board for consideration. (Dec 2011)</li> </ul>	<i>People Strategy</i> agreed by SCS People Sub-Committee and full SCS Board.
<b>Workforce Planning</b> Roll out the SCS <i>Workforce Planning</i> toolkit to assist local managers ensure the effective and efficient deployment of SCS staff and identification of training needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Roll-out workforce planning business information toolkit for use by senior managers (April 2011).</li> </ul>	Workforce Planning toolkit in operation and being used by local managers to inform staff deployment and development decisions.
<b>Learning Strategy</b> Learning Strategy in place to take forward priority learning and development activities, including:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Milestones to be set</li> </ul>	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- management development for all managers at HEO grade and above;</li><li>- technical training for operational staff;</li><li>- training to support business change activity, e.g. application of new technology, etc.</li></ul>		
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### 3. WELL MANAGED SCS ESTATE

#### Aims

Our aims are to ensure:

- A well managed estate that makes the best use of our buildings, minimising running and capital costs, whilst providing appropriate access to our services.
- Safe and secure environments for our staff, court users and the judiciary.
- A reduction in our carbon emissions, consistent with achieving statutory targets for public sector bodies and controlling utility costs.

#### Key Risks

- The SCS's 2011/12 budget allocation has resulted in a substantial reduction (-49%) in our capital allocation for investment in the SCS estate and infrastructure. Reduced capital and revenue funding will impact on the SCS's ability to ensure continuing investment in building maintenance and to respond to urgent compliance issues.
- Failure to secure confirmation of capital funding in future years for Phase III of the Parliament House refurbishment will put at risk the continuing efficient operation of the Court of Session.
- Failure to deliver a robust sustainability programme would undermine our ability to meet our carbon reduction commitments, with both financial and reputational impacts.

#### Opportunities

- The renegotiation of the SCS Facilities Management Contract during 2010/11 and shared service discussions with other public bodies offer the potential for financial savings and specific improvements to how we manage our estates.
- Actions to reduce our split-site court locations (i.e. towns and cities with two or more court buildings) offer the potential for financial savings ahead of a wider, long-term review of the SCS estate.

Action	Milestones	Success Criteria
<b>Estate Strategy</b> Review and update SCS <i>Estate Strategy</i> to identify medium and longer term vision for the future of the SCS estate, matching building locations and facilities with the changing needs of the SCS and court users.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Submit options for revised SCS Estates Strategy to SCS Board for consideration (Aug 2011)</li> </ul>	SCS Estates, Health & Safety and Security Committee and full SCS Board sign-off of revised <i>Estates Strategy</i>
<b>Court Structures Project/Split-Site Courts</b> Progress, with other justice organisations, the first stages of a review of court structures, including, regional jury centres, a revised High Court circuit, extended court hours and review and reduce the number of split site court locations in any single city or town.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Project initial documents completed and milestones agreed (Mar 2011)</li> <li>– First 4 split site courts closed (Jun 2011)</li> <li>– First Draft Scenario Planning Documents available (Aug 2011)</li> <li>– Draft Operational Plan for Glasgow &amp; Strathkelvin (Sept 2011)</li> <li>– Identify further options for rationalisation of split site locations ( Dec 2011)</li> </ul>	Court Structures project on track, in-line with agreed milestones and deliverables. Identified savings released from estate running costs whilst maintaining access to services in appropriate and suitable accommodation.

<p><b>Parliament House</b> Complete Phase II of the refurbishment of the Parliament House complex and confirm progress of Phase III to ensure that accommodation for Scotland's superior civil courts is fit for purpose.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete Phase II of the redevelopment in line with agreed delivery plan (Mar 2012)</li> <li>- Confirm agreement and funding for the progress of Phase III of the redevelopment in 2012-13 (Sept 2011)</li> </ul>	<p>Phase II completed on time and within budget. Necessary capital allocation confirmed for Phase III.</p>
<p><b>Carbon Management</b> Publish a <i>Carbon Management Plan</i>, including specific actions and investment priorities to improve the sustainability of the SCS estate and business operations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Publish <i>Carbon Management Plan</i> and roll-out actions (Aug 2011)</li> </ul>	<p>Carbon management reductions on track to deliver 25% reduction by 2015.</p>

## 4. CLEAR AND EFFICIENT BUSINESS PROCESS

### Aims

Our aims are to ensure:

- Clear and efficient business processes that meet the needs of the judiciary and court users.
- The progress of business through the courts and OPG is reliable, economical and avoids inappropriate delays.

### Key Risks

- The SCS's 2011/12 budget allocation resulted in a 5.1% reduction in revenue funding. Resultant reductions in SCS staffing and operational expenditure has the potential to impact on our performance and increases the risk of a significant business resilience or delivery failure.

### Opportunities

- During 2010/11 we reviewed our key internal business processes, identifying opportunities for efficiencies and both cash and time releasing savings. Dialogue with other justice organisations has also identified opportunities for justice-system improvements.

Action	Milestones	Success Criteria
<b>Process Mapping</b> Further progress mapping of key SCS business processes to identify opportunities for cost savings and efficiencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– A further 4 process overview reports available for priority areas (Apr 2011)</li> <li>– A Gap Analysis available covering staff skills in process management (Dec 2011)</li> </ul>	Identification of releasable time and cash releasing savings whilst ensuring continuing appropriate service delivery.
<b>Fines Optimisation</b> Actions to further improve our fines collection arrangements and payment options and to ensure robust enforcement action where individuals fail to meet their fines obligations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Establish automatic benefits deduction arrangements with DWP (Sept 2011)</li> <li>– On-line payment arrangements extended to all non endorseable fines (Jun 2011)</li> <li>– Business Case for an automated telephone response system (Dec 2011)</li> </ul>	Continuing improvement in fines collection rates for sheriff court and justice of the peace court imposed fines, fiscal fines and police penalties and ASBOs.
<b>Court Programming</b> Roll out guidance and support to improve the consistency and efficiency of court programming.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Court Programming guidance circulated to staff (Aug 2011)</li> </ul>	Reduction in inefficiency in court programmes and reduction in reliance on Part-Time Shrieval resources.
<b>Document Optimisation</b> Review the potential to enhance the capacity for on-line registration of civil cases.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Project Plan available (Aug 2011)</li> </ul>	Faster processing of civil registrations and court staff time releasing savings.

<b>Jury Optimisation</b> We will review our processes for jury management and identify areas for potential optimisation	– Project Plan available (Aug 2011)	Reduced staffing requirements and operational costs for jury citation, management and payments.
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## 5. EFFECTIVE ICT

### Aims

Our aims are to ensure:

- Effective technology that improves the efficiency and pace of the SCS's key business processes and communications.
- Enhanced access to SCS services, e.g. through on-line services.
- Reduced costs and environmental impact.
- Secure data handling.

### Key Risks

- Enhanced use of on-line services and electronic transfer may result in additional data protection issues, relating to sensitive and personal data.
- Reliance on ICT systems increases the risk of a major system failure impacting on SCS service delivery.

### Opportunities

- Opportunities exist for us to use technology to improve the range and quality of services that we provide to court and other service users, for example through the on-line submission of registrations.
- Technology also offers the opportunity for the SCS to make savings, for example by releasing staff time and printing costs.
- More efficient use of technology will help reduce carbon emissions by reducing the need for travel, etc.

Action	Milestones	Success Criteria
<b>ICT Strategy</b> Prepare a new SCS ICT Strategy, providing a basis for planning and prioritising ICT investment and activity to support new ways of working.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– <i>ICT Strategy</i> to SCS Board for approval (May 2011)</li> </ul>	<i>ICT Strategy</i> approved by SCS Board.
<b>Cross-Justice ICT</b> As part of the Making Justice Work programme, work with other justice organisations to establish the potential for further cross-justice ICT initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Milestones to be set</li> </ul>	Delivery criteria to be set.
<b>Video Links</b> As part of the Making Justice Work programme, work with other justice organisations to review the potential for enhanced use of video links, e.g. between courts, prisons, solicitors, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Complete initial feasibility analysis (Jun 2011)</li> <li>– Further milestones to be set.</li> </ul>	Releasable cross-justice financial and environmental benefits.
<b>High Court COPII</b> Transfer High Court case recording to the COPII system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Complete transfer High Court cases to COPII IT system (Sept 11)</li> </ul>	More efficient and accurate recording and processing of High Court cases,

		freeing staff time.
<b>OPG On-Line</b> Develop capacity for on-line submission of requests for powers of attorney to the OPG.	– On-line submission operational (Jan 12)	Faster processing of applications and OPG more efficient use of staff time releasing savings.

## 6. COLLABORATION WITH JUSTICE ORGANISATIONS

### Aims

Our aims are to ensure:

- Positive collaboration with other justice organisations, including the police, Scottish Legal Aid Board, Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, Scottish Prison Service, Scottish Government, etc., on joint initiatives to reduce costs and improve efficiency.
- Increased public confidence in the justice system.

### Key risks:

- As individual organisations seek to reduce costs and change how they deliver their functions, without effective collaboration, there is a risk of individual organisations pursuing their own objectives at the expense of system-wide improvement
- Policy decisions about one aspect of the justice system can lead to increase pressures on other parts of the system, e.g. courts and prisons, leading to imbalance and undermining the efficient progress of civil and criminal cases.

### Opportunities

- The Scottish Government Justice Outcomes initiative and individual programmes, e.g. Making Justice Work and Reducing Re-Offending, offer the potential for co-ordinated cross-justice activity to tackle inefficiencies and improve public confidence in the justice system.
- Major reviews of the operation of the civil courts, summary justice and sheriff and jury procedures have identified the potential for substantial long-term reform which should enable service improvements and, potentially, longer-term financial savings.

Action	Milestones	Success Criteria
<b>Shared Services</b> Progress options for shared services with other public bodies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Complete feasibility analysis of shared estate options with COPFS (Apr 2011).</li> <li>– If approved by SCS and COPFS Boards, have shared service operational (Jul 2011)</li> </ul>	Shared service agreement in place, with approved governance arrangements, releasing identifiable financial savings and maintained or improved service standards.
<b>Justice Systems Model</b> As part of the Making Justice Work programme, progress cross-justice review of the operation of the justice system model following summary justice reform.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– 3 concurrent workstreams agreed: Initial decision making, Preparing for Court, Preparing for trial.</li> <li>– Stage1–Development and Set-Up (May 2011)</li> <li>– Stage2– Implementation (Nov 2011)</li> <li>– Stage 3 – Review and Assess (Feb 2012)</li> <li>– Cross Justice Quarterly Focus Group/Business Improvements Meetings in 6 busiest courts initiated ( Apr 2011)</li> </ul>	Devise and implement an improved summary justice system model that builds on the success of SJR and reduces churn and ensures that cases are disposed of appropriately and at the earliest opportunity.

<p><b>Getting People to Court</b> As part of the Making Justice Work programme, contribute towards the progress of the ACPOS led project for improving attendance at court by accused and civilian witnesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Complete pilot project on improving witness attendance (May 2011)</li> <li>- Identify key actions for improving witness attendance / reducing un-necessary citations (Dec 2011)</li> </ul>	<p>Improvement in key indicators of 'churn' and inefficiency in court programmes. Reduction in police witnesses and wasted police resources.</p>
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## SCS CORPORATE LEVEL RISKS

Risk Title	Risk Owner
<b>Customer &amp; Stakeholder Relationships</b>	
– Political and/or public resistance to SCS business change activity.	Eleanor Emberson, Chief Executive
– Organisational performance falls due to inadequate implementation of change programme and budget constraint.	Eleanor Emberson, Chief Executive
– Breakdown in SCS relationship with judiciary.	Steve Humphreys, Judicial Office
<b>Positive Collaboration with Justice Bodies</b>	
– Breakdown in relationship with justice bodies/in-balance in operation of Justice System.	Eric McQueen, Field Services
<b>Skilled and Motivated People</b>	
– Significant failure of staff morale and engagement/ industrial action.	Alan Swift, HR
– SCS staff skills base and capacity not adequate to meet continuing business needs.	Eric McQueen, Field Services
<b>Efficient Processes</b>	
– Significant business resilience/delivery failure.	Eric McQueen, Field Services
<b>Well Managed Estate</b>	
– Significant building failure/health and safety or security breach causes danger or harm.	Neil Rennick, Strategy & Infrastructure
<b>Effective Technology</b>	
– Major ICT system failure impacting on business delivery.	David Morris, ICT
– Data protection failure resulting in loss of sensitive or personal data.	Neil Rennick, Strategy & Infrastructure
<b>Finance</b>	
– Reducing income from court fees impacts on SCS budget planning.	Nicola Bennett, Finance