



MINUTES

SCOTTISH COURT SERVICE PEOPLE COMMITTEE MEETING: 8 AUGUST 2013, PARLIAMENT HOUSE, EDINBURGH

Present:

Johan Findlay, Non-Executive Member, SCS Board (Chair)
Sheriff Nikola Stewart, Non-Executive Member (external)
Elaine Noad, Non-Executive Member (external)
Julie Ward, Non-Executive Member (external)

Cliff Binning, Chief Operations Officer, SCS
Alan Swift, Director HR, SCS

Also Attended:

Eddie Burrows, TUS
Lisa Sellars, Head of HR Business Partnering, SCS
Karen Lawrie, Executive Support, Secretariat, SCS, (Minutes)

Apologies:

Mark Higgins, Non-Executive Member, SCS Board
Jean Lindsay, Non-Executive Member (external)

1. Welcome

1.1 The Chair welcomed those present, including Lisa Sellars who attended to introduce the papers relating to Dignity at Work and Zero Hours Contracts.

2. Minutes of the Meeting of 15 April 2013

2.1 The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

3. Action Points and Matters Arising

3.1 There were no matters arising which would not be discussed elsewhere on the Agenda.

3.2 Outstanding action points were cleared or updated.

- The matter of photographic identification being supplied by those attending court was discussed by the Health Safety and Security Works Committee. It was agreed that this matter would stay on their agenda to allow an impact assessment to be fully investigated.

4. Dignity at Work Update – (SCS/PC/Aug13/25)

4.1 The Committee welcomed the positive update on progress being made in Scottish Court Service with regard to Dignity at Work (DAW), noting with interest that the re-launch of the policy in October would be publicised using a poster campaign, DVD featuring both DAW Contact Team members and staff, and an intranet article.

4.2 It was agreed that three additional questions to be included in the 2013 Staff Survey would allow valuable information on Dignity at Work matters to be obtained. The responses to the additional questions will be analysed closely. The Committee asked to receive a full report on the findings from the staff survey in due course.

4.3 A tracker had been developed to record contact made by staff to the DAW Contact Team. Only general information would be captured to ensure the anonymity of staff. The information recorded will be used to identify areas for future development.

4.4 Reassurance was given to the Committee that new staff joining the SCS would receive information about the DAW policy as part of their induction.

5. Car Leasing Scheme - (SCS/PC/Aug13/26)

5.1 A Car Leasing Scheme was to be piloted by SCS. Twenty five individuals, who met the high business use criteria, had expressed an interest in participating in the pilot.

5.2 The pilot, serviced by NHS Fleet Solutions, will run for a period of three years. Eligible staff will be encouraged to lease low carbon emission vehicles, although it will be a personal choice.

5.3 Anticipated benefits of using the scheme were a reduction in the pool car fleet, reduced environmental impact as well as relevant staff gaining access to a leased vehicle at low cost.

5.4 The Committee was generally content with pilot scheme and made some helpful suggestions about pitfalls which should be avoided. It was agreed that an update detailing the number of participants enrolled in the scheme, initial lessons learned, supported by feedback from a staff perspective, would also be useful for a future meeting.

Action: Executive to update the Committee on the progress of the pilot Car Leasing Scheme at the meeting in February 2014.

6. Zero Hours Contracts – (SCS/PC/Aug13/27)

6.1 The use of zero hours contracts in SCS was discussed. Currently SCS employed 48 people in this way. This allowed a pool of skilled staff to be called on as and when required, which was especially useful in remote areas. It was acknowledged by HR that in some areas individuals with zero hours contracts are being called upon on a regular basis due to the location of the court or long term sick leave. Senior Managers and HR Business Partners will undertake a review to identify if part-time contracts would be more beneficial for some staff that currently have a zero hours contract as they would be entitled to benefits such as sick pay and an annual leave entitlement.

6.2 The Committee concurred that a review of the policy for using zero hours contracts was essential alongside the identification of staff on zero hours contracts who may get more benefit from a part-time contract. A robust approval process for future zero hours contracts would be put in place.

7. HR Risk Register - (SCS/PC/Aug13/28)

7.1 A summary of the HRU Risk Register was evaluated.

7.2 Risk 777 regarding staff seeking careers elsewhere as career opportunities in SCS are not understood had been removed from the register. This was due, in part, to the new Career Development Pathways (CDP) system which allows staff to access the qualifications, behaviours and development required to progress their career. The CDP links in to the Skills on Line tool allowing staff to look at the role they currently have, and after answering some questions, identify development opportunities required to assist with development in their current role or future career.

Action: Executive to provide a report detailing the first output of the Skills on Line system for the meeting in October.

7.3 Concern was raised in regard to the risk for staff in courts that are directly affected by the closure of Courts following the approval of the Future Court Structures proposals. It was agreed after discussion that the status of this risk should be amber.

Action: Executive to update the HR Risk Register to show Risk 770 relating to Future Court Structure as amber.

Action: Executive to discuss with Chief Executive the escalation of Risk 770 to the Corporate Risk Register.

8. Future Court Structures: People Issues – (SCS/PC/Aug13/29)

8.1 The Committee assessed the sequence of events and actions that related to staff dialogue and communications for court closures. It was noted that 50-60 staff would be directly affected by the closure of Courts throughout the estate, with the majority moving with the business. Compromises have been agreed to take account of personal circumstances.

8.2 The Executive explained the Chief Executive had visited all courts involved in the Future Court Structure project in the last 3 weeks to speak directly with staff. This was part of a wider Summer Tour where every court and business unit received a face to face meeting with a member of the Executive Team. Discussion focussed on future projects that will impact on staff but also local issues that are important to them.

8.3 Members agreed that the anxieties of staff who would be moving to a new court or those in a court who are receiving business and staff should be fully considered. The introduction of a 'buddy' system and pre-meetings to discuss local practice were recommended to the Executive.

Action: Executive to remind Senior Managers of the importance of a good induction programme for staff who are moving courts and also resident staff to ensure a smooth transition for all.

Action: Executive to highlight the training courses available to Managers and Staff to assist with coping with change.

9. Annual Report and Self-Appraisal – Oral

9.1 The annual self-appraisal questionnaire was felt to be a worthwhile exercise which members were happy to complete. A proposal to issue the questionnaires in September 2014 was welcomed.

10. Any other business

HR Scorecard

10.1 After reviewing the HR Annual Scorecard for 2012-13 the Committee requested a report for the next meeting showing analysis of all absence in SCS during 2012-13.

IPR Completion Rates

10.2 In reviewing the IPR (appraisal) analysis of SCS staff in 2012-13 the Committee noted the 75% completion rate of final reports by end May 2013 had been rated as "green". Members felt that this was not a satisfactory result and that only a 90% (and ideally 95%) return by that date would qualify as green. It was recommended that the Executive adjust the tolerance rating appropriately.

10.3 The next meeting will be on 7 October 2013 in 1A Parliament Square, Edinburgh.