



MINUTES

SCOTTISH COURT SERVICE PEOPLE COMMITTEE MEETING: 9 February 2015, Parliament House, Edinburgh

Present:

Johan Findlay, Non-Executive Member, SCS Board (Chair)
Dr Kirsty Hood, Non-Executive Member, SCS Board
Julie Ward, Non-Executive Member (external)
Billy Harkness, Non-Executive Member (external)

Also Attended:

Cliff Binning, Chief Operations Officer, SCS
Lisa Sellars, Head of HR Business Partnering, SCS
Eddie Burrows, TUS
Brian Carroll, TUS
Karen Lawrie, Executive Support, SCS, (Minutes)

Apologies:

Elaine Noad, Non-Executive Member (external)
Sheriff Susan Craig, Non-Executive Member (external)
Alan Swift, Director HR, SCS

1. Welcome & Introductions

1.1 The Chair welcomed Lisa Sellars to the meeting.

2. Minutes of the Meeting of 13 November 2014

2.1 The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

3. Action Points and Matters Arising

3.1 There were no outstanding actions from previous meetings.

4. HR Risk Register (SCS/PC/Feb15/01)

4.1 Members reviewed the Risk Register noting that all risks were rated as amber or green rating.

4.2 The Executive advised that the risk register would be scrutinised at the Executive's People Programme Board later in the month, when it would carry out a review of risk, existing controls and any actions required. It was suggested that an issues log be developed and Lisa Sellars would feed this back for consideration.

4.3 The final phase of the Court Structures Programme ended on 31 January 2015 with the closure of Haddington, Duns, Peebles and Dingwall Sheriff Courts and Justice of the Peace Courts. Although there were no problems identified regarding staff transferring to new courts from those that had closed, it was agreed that this risk should remain on the register until the next meeting when a further update would be provided by the Executive.

4.4 Following the discussion on the staff survey and culture of the organisation it was suggested that consideration be given to rewording the risk in relation to 'Change levels impact on people management' to focus on staff engagement

5. Staff Survey 2014 (SCS/PC/Feb15/02)

5.1 The results of the 2014 Staff Survey showed SCS had achieved an engagement score of 64%, 5% above the overall civil service engagement rating of 59%. The survey results, the highest achieved by SCS in the last 5 years, showed a continued improvement in all areas other than pay and benefits, where continued constraints on public sector pay was of concern to staff. It was recognised that there were recurring themes in the survey results which the Executive was addressing. The Committee acknowledged coaching and the re-launch of the Dignity at Work Policy would take time to embed itself in the culture of the organisation.

5.2. The Committee was delighted to note the SCS was now classified as being in the civil service high performer group, however, members were disappointed that the SCS staff participation rate was lower this year although it was now the same as the the overall response rate across the civil service (59%).

5.3 The Executive reported that local action plans, with a focus on the survey results had been developed across SCS and in turn incorporated into unit business plans for 2015-16. Issues that are common across the SCS would be reflected in future organisational planning.

6. Dignity at Work Update (SCS/PC/Feb15/03)

6.1 The Committee received an update on a range of Dignity at Work (DAW) activities and communications carried out in 2014.

6.2 The Committee was pleased to note that the staff survey showed an overall reduction in the number of staff who had experienced bullying and harassment and that there would be a focus on and development of action plans in those Sheriffdoms/Units where the staff survey results indicated a slight increase in bullying and harassment/discrimination.

6.3 Details of a new DAW E-Learning package launched on 9 February were provided. Members suggested the Executive consider if linking Dignity at Work to the SCS Equality work would be beneficial. The Executive agreed to update the Committee at a future meeting.

6.4 It was accepted that Dignity at Work was linked to the culture of the SCS although this would take some time before a change in behaviours is recognised. Benefits following the launch of the coaching programme are still being realised and it was hoped that this would be the case for DAW issues.

7. Tribunal Merger Update (SCS/PC/Feb15/04)

7.1 The Executive advised the Committee that during Autumn 2014, HR staff together with Scottish Tribunal Service (STS) senior staff held 5 road shows which were attended by almost all STS staff. Staff had the opportunity of 1 to 1 meetings with HR to clarify harmonisation of terms and conditions for their individual circumstances. Feedback received showed that STS staff felt positive in general about the merger and had welcomed the road show events.

7.2 Members were also informed that there was a delay in STS staff having access from their own PC to the SCS (SCTS) IT systems. Solutions would be in place at the time of the merger and a timeline for completion and full access had been set by the IT Director.

7.3 The Committee thanked the Executive for the helpful update. A review would be completed following the merger to identify lessons learned as part of the project closure process.

8. HRU Business Plan 2015-16 (SCS/PC/Feb15/05)

8.1 The draft HRU Business Plan was discussed. Members agreed the new layout which distinguished business as usual projects from development projects was helpful. It was suggested the Executive may wish to consider adding HR Systems & Communication as a further topic to the range of services they provide.

8.2 Members also suggested that the Executive consider listing the objectives in order of priority to ensure the essential projects are delivered.

9. Any Other Business

TUS Representation

9.1 Eddie Burrows advised that he would be standing down as Chair of the SCS Branch of the PCS Union in June due to his retirement. An election would be held to appoint a new Chair.

9.2 The Chair thanked Eddie for his contribution to People Committee meetings over the last 4 years and wished him well for his retirement.

Holistic Well-Being Programme

9.3 It was suggested that the Executive might consider the development of a holistic programme for staff well-being, including mental health issues. The possibility of this being linked to the Scottish Health at Work (SHAW) scheme was also mentioned.

10. Papers for Scrutiny/Exception Reporting Only

Papers for Exception Reporting only

10.1 The Committee received the HR Project Tracker and HR Policy Update. No matters were raised by exception.

HR Measures

10.2 Members raised concern over the number of short term absences, however were pleased to receive assurance from the Executive that steps had been taken to address this issue.

10.3 The basket of indicators provided to the Board and Committee, was reviewed. The possible inclusion of data relating to Dignity at Work issues was discussed, however, it was agreed that the information would be provided in a bi-annual paper to the Committee.

11. Date of the Next Meeting

11.1 The next meeting would be held on 6 May 2015.

Scottish Court Service