

**SCTS ESTATES, HEALTH & SAFETY, FIRE AND SECURITY COMMITTEE
MEETING: Monday 8 August 2022 – via WebEx**

Members Present:

Sheriff Jillian Martin-Brown, Non-Executive Member SCTS Board (Chair)
Morna Rae, Non-Executive Member SCTS Board
Tom Gorman, Non-Executive Member

Attended:

Kate Leer, Director Property & Services (PSU), SCTS
Yvonne Taylor, Director Operations Delivery, SCTS
Daragh Stewart, Head of Service Delivery, PSU
Craig Robertson, Financial Strategy Manager, PSU
Vince Guz, Programme Manager - EJSPP – SCTS (Item 8 only)
Tim Barraclough, Executive Director Tribunals & OPG, SCTS (Item 8 only)
Steven D'Arcy, Interim Corporate Secretary, SCTS
Karen Lawrie, Head of Secretariat, SCTS
Sarah Imery, Executive Support Officer, SCTS (Minutes)

Apologies:

Donald Wooley, Non-Executive Member
Aileen Gomes, Non-Executive Member
May Dunsmuir, President of the Health and Education Chamber, First-tier Tribunal
for Scotland, Non-Executive Member
Alice Wallace, Chief Finance Officer, SCTS

1. Declaration of Interests

1.1 There were no declarations of interest from Members.

2. Minutes of the Meeting

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2022 were approved.

3. Matters Arising (including feedback from SCTS Board)

3.1 There were no outstanding action points from the previous meeting.

3.2 The Chair provided an overview of the June 2022 meeting of the SCTS Board, which had a bearing on matters relating to the Estates Committee.

4. SCTS Estates Finance Report 2022-23

4.1 The Committee received an update on the Quarterly PSU Finance Report. Forecast spend was forecast to be within the available 2022-23 budget, despite some cost challenges during the first quarter.

4.2 The Executive advised that maintenance and discretionary projects had been prioritised, with the majority due to be completed by Q3. This would provide PSU with the flexibility to utilise additional funding should it become available. A detailed project report and costings would be shared at the next meeting.

4.3 Members commented on the underspend in the pay budget. The Executive advised of the current vacancies in the PSU team and the recruitment action being taken. A good number of applications had been received for the posts advertised to date, which was encouraging given the challenging recruitment market at this time. It was anticipated that all vacant posts would be filled by the end of the year.

4.4 The Committee welcomed the assurance provided by the update, and acknowledged the ongoing financial pressures and constraints faced by the organisation in the coming year.

5. Sustainability Report

5.1 The Executive provided an update on the activity across the organisation to work towards the ambitious target of achieving net zero target by 2045 as set by the Scottish Government. A number of good practices had been adopted in relation to sustainability. However, taking a sustainable approach to business operations to effect positive environmental outcomes will require consideration, not only of building fabric, water and waste management but also the occupational patterns within premises, staff behaviours, working practices and travel arrangements.

5.2 The Committee acknowledged that SCTS were considering measurement frameworks which would be used to capture the “whole of business” activities and allow analysis to be carried out to inform and improve the organisational sustainability performance. SCTS were engaged with the Scottish Government to develop an appropriate refreshed set of measurable indicators covering the wider performance areas. Discussions were also taking place with other organisations and key stakeholders which had a similar estate to identify opportunities for future impactful Net Zero activity

5.3 The Executive confirmed that SCTS had sought funding from the Scottish Central Government Energy Efficiency Grant Scheme, which if successful would enable physical improvements to be made across the estate. A further update would be provided at the October meeting if the bids were successful.

5.4 Recruitment for a Sustainability manager with oversight of the whole estate and responsibility for the sustainability policies and procedures would commence shortly.

5.5 The Committee thanked the Executive for the informative update.

6. Health, Safety and Security Works

6.1 The Committee reviewed the Annual Report 2021-22 from the Health and Safety/Security Works Committee. The report provided a comprehensive update on the work of the committee during the last year, including Health & Safety activities, Fire Safety, reports on incidents and operations that have been managed over the course of the year.

6.2 Members discussed the recommendations approved by the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service (SFRS) Board to implement a new operational model for responding to automatic fire alarms. From 1 April 2023 all fire alarm activations as a result of a single point of activation of a smoke detector would be challenged by the control room operative resulting in the SFRS not mobilising to a court/building if it was confirmed that there is no fire, or signs of fire. The Executive confirmed the SCTS had responded to a consultation regarding the proposed recommendations and voiced concerns. Work was underway to develop an internal process, which once developed will be trialled with staff.

6.3 The Committee welcomed the update and were assured that adequate plans were in place.

7. Edinburgh Justice Sector Property Rationalisation

7.1 The Committee received an update on progress in mobilising the Edinburgh Justice Sector Property Rationalisation Project (EJSPR). Phase one of the project received all necessary approvals and work had now commenced in Parliament House. The Scottish Law Commission (SLC) were fully engaged in the planning requirements to assist their move to Parliament House with the marketing of their current building about to commence.

7.2 The Executive confirmed that the plans for phase two of the programme had been based on pre-COVID assumptions on operational requirements. Therefore re-scoping work was underway to adjust to the new ways of working following the pandemic which may reduce the overall costs of phase 2. Scottish Government funding would not be available for major capital expenditure in the near future, however the various elements of phase two would be fully analysed and split into long, medium and short term goals for the organisation which would be reflected in a revised outline business case in due course.

7.3 The Committee acknowledged the progress made with the EJSSPR to date. A tour of works underway in Parliament House would be undertaken by the Committee at a future meeting.

8. Major Capital Projects

8.1 The Committee received an update on the Major Capital projects currently underway, with a breakdown on the progress of each of the main projects that had progressed since the last meeting.

Aberdeen Sheriff Court

The committee received an update on recent discussions with Aberdeen City Council (ACC), regarding their plans to regenerate the Queen Street area of the city. SCTS were in regular discussions with ACC regarding their programme of works and the significant impact that may be encountered by SCTS

Members welcomed the progress of the introduction of an Evidence by Commission suite which would be located within the Aberdeen Civil Annexe. Final designs and associated costs were being developed with a full electrical survey instructed to inform detailed design works taking account of the imminent demolition of the adjoining former Police Headquarters building. The Executive outlined the potential operational impact posed by the proposed demolition of the adjoining building in Spring 2023. SCTS would not be able to decant from the annexe and would be significantly impacted by the works. Discussions with ACC were ongoing to minimise the disruption to civil court business.

Kirkcaldy Sheriff Court

The Executive updated the committee on the condition of the facilities at Kirkcaldy Sheriff Court Building. Plans to optimise office space, provide new furniture where required, and a general building refresh would be undertaken. A building condition survey would be completed to inform a business case for investment. Positive engagement from staff has been received regarding this. A detailed update on progress and development plans would be given at the next meeting.

9. Draft Annual Report to the SCTS Board

9.1 Members reviewed and approved the outline of their draft annual report to the SCTS Board. A final draft version would be submitted to the next meeting for formal approval. The report would be submitted to the November meeting of the SCTS Board.

10. Any Other Business (AOB)

10.1 The Chair consulted members on the location of the next meeting. The Committee agreed that an in-person meeting in October would be beneficial. The next meeting would take place in Edinburgh.

11. Papers for Scrutiny/Exception Reporting Only

11.1 The following paper had been circulated for scrutiny:

- **Review of Risk – Project RAG Report**

11.2 No matters were raised by exception.

12. Date of Next Meeting

12.1 The next meeting would be held on 24 October 2022 in Parliament House, Edinburgh.

13. SCTS Estates Committee – Appraisal Exercise 2022

13.1 A summary of members' responses to the appraisal questionnaire was discussed in a members' only session following the formal meeting. Members were content with the operation of the Committee. It was agreed that a mix of virtual and in-person meetings in the coming year would be beneficial. One member had suggested that the Committee be provided with information on the utilisation of SCTS buildings following the pandemic and it was agreed that this would be useful for future discussions.

SCTS Estates, Health & Safety, Fire and Security Committee
August 2022