



MINUTES

SCTS ESTATES, HEALTH & SAFETY, FIRE AND SECURITY COMMITTEE MEETING: Monday 17 May 2021 – via WebEx

Members Present:

Colonel David McIlroy, Non-Executive Member SCTS Board (Chair)
Morna Rae, Non-Executive Member SCTS Board
Sheriff Jillian Martin-Brown, Non-Executive Member SCTS Board
Donald Wooley, Non-Executive Member
Tom Gorman, 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

Attended:

Richard Maconachie, Chief Finance Officer, SCTS
David Currie, Director Property & Services, SCTS
Yvonne Taylor, Director Operations Delivery, SCTS
Steven D'Arcy, Interim Corporate Secretary, SCTS
Kyle Williamson, Estates Surveyor Property & Services, SCTS
Tara McNamara, Executive Support Officer, SCTS (Minutes)

1. Welcome & Apologies

1.1 The Committee welcomed Sheriff Jillian Martin-Brown as a new member to the Committee. Steven D'Arcy, Interim Corporate Secretary, and Kyle Williamson, Estates Surveyor Property & Services Unit, were in attendance.

2. Declaration of Interests

2.1 There were no declarations of interest from Members.

3. Minutes of the Meeting (SCTS/EST/Feb21/Mins)

3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2021 were approved.

4. Matters Arising (including feedback from SCTS Board)

4.1 The Chair provided an overview of the March 2021 meeting of the SCTS Board, which had a bearing on matters relating to the Estates Committee.

5. COVID-19 Update / Jury Trial Project Update (SCTS/EST/May21/08)

5.1 The Committee had received a comprehensive overview of the co-ordination and response arrangements to COVID-19 that had been prepared for the most recent meeting of the SCTS Board. The Committee noted the tremendous amount of work that had been carried out over the last year and welcomed the update on the latest position in respect of the Jury Trials project.

5.2 The Executive provided a further update on key developments, highlighting that all public facing Court and Tribunals buildings continued to remain open, although access to the general public remained restricted. Less than 50% of staff worked within SCTS premises at any one time, with home working in place where possible. Health and safety remained a top priority in order to create a working environment that was as safe as

possible. Members were also advised on the progress and developments made in terms of operational recovery. The implementation and use of new innovative approaches had allowed civil and tribunal business to be dealt with via electronic submission of case papers and the use of virtual hearings. The SCTS virtual hearing platforms were enabling the business to operate at close to pre-pandemic levels.

5.3 Members received an overview of the current position, progress and developments made in respect of the jury trials project. Members were advised that both the High Court and Sheriff Courts now had in place the same trial court capacity as was available pre-COVID. Work was underway to provide facilities, within the current court estate, to hold multi-accused trials involving more than three accused. Following the announcement of additional funding from Scottish Government to support the justice sector, the SCTS had produced and published a court modelling report which would see the introduction of additional trial courts from September 2021 (4 High Courts and 2 Sheriff Solemn Courts). Agreement had also been reached in respect of extending the use of remote Jury Centres, with an extension of contracts to utilise remote facilities now in place until March 2022. The agreement included an increase in the number of auditoriums leased in Jury Centre premises to accommodate the expansion of the planned additional courts.

5.4 The Committee discussed the comprehensive update provided and welcomed the ongoing programme of work underway in order to maintain court operations and address case backlogs which had arisen as a result of the pandemic.

6. SCTS Estates Budget – End of Year Report 2020-21 (SCTS/EST/May21/09)

6.1 The Estates Budget report for 2021-21 was presented to the Committee. Members were advised that Property and Service Unit (PSU) had benefitted from additional funding as a result of underspends identified elsewhere within the organisation. As in previous years, projects had been carefully planned and managed to draw on the capital and revenue funding available. Careful cost monitoring over the past financial year had enabled PSU to move at pace and match expenditure to funds that were available as the position emerged.

6.2 It was highlighted that as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic response, increased expense and costs had occurred in relation to works that were not planned or anticipated across the estate. In order to maintain and mitigate exposure to COVID-19 transmission across the estates it was anticipated that these additional costs would likely continue through to the current financial.

7. SCTS Budget Report and Forecast 2021-22 (SCTS/EST/May21/10)

7.1 The Committee discussed the Estate budget proposals for 2021-22. The Executive provided an overview of the proposed high level budget allocation, based on the initial budget announced for 2021-22. It was highlighted that the discretionary budget available to fund backlog maintenance and other works was less than the previous year, and acknowledged the ongoing commitment in order to identify opportunities to supplement the allocation. It was also highlighted that PSU would take stock of improvement works and projects in order to identify opportunities and bring works forward to ensure the most effective utilisation of available funds.

7.2 Members approved the budget allocation proposals, recognising this would be a demanding time for PSU. They commissioned PSU to prepare a list of 'shovel ready' projects to enable SCTS to utilise available funding.

8. Sustainability Report (SCTS/EST/May21/11)

8.1 The Executive presented a report to the Committee outlining the work carried out during 2020-21 to ensure SCTS achieved the targets set for carbon reduction across the estate. It was highlighted to members that carbon dioxide emissions, resulting from the use of gas and electricity within the estate, had increased over the past year, which was largely due to the significant challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, due to the requirement to have mechanical ventilation operating 24/7 within buildings. Emissions were still 11% lower than the 2016-17 baseline.

8.2 The Committee reviewed key areas of work which had ensured that progress continued in order to deliver on the sustainability targets, in line with the Climate Change (Emissions Reduction Targets) (Scotland) Act 2019. An update on energy management projects completed during 2020-21, including completion of lighting upgrades and a summary of ongoing projects were presented. A large number of sustainability projects were ongoing, providing further opportunities to continue to improve the efficiency of buildings within the SCTS estate. Members were also informed that SCTS had recently volunteered to join the Scottish Government sponsored Scottish Public Sector Estate Energy Benchmarking initiative. The first initial briefing session was scheduled to take place in June.

8.3 Members welcomed the detailed report and overview on progress provided.

9. PSU Business Plan 2021-22 (SCTS/EST/May21/12)

9.1 Members reviewed the draft PSU Business Plan 2021-22. It was agreed that consideration of the PSU Business Plan would be postponed to the next meeting of the Committee, to allow for minor amendment and inclusion of the current list of active estates projects for 2021-22 to be annexed to the Business Plan.

ACTION: The Executive to incorporate a list of all active estates projects with the PSU Business Plan 2021-22.

10. Review of Risk – Project RAG Report (SCTS/EST/May21/13)

10.1 The Executive presented the Estates projects RAG report and provided members with an update on the overall position of current Estates projects. Projects marked 'amber' were discussed, and assurances provided that the projects were being managed effectively.

10.2 Members reviewed the report. It was agreed that due to the change in priorities and pressures within the estate, as a result of COVID-19, it would be beneficial to review the current RAG status of projects listed in order to accurately reflect each projects in order of its priority. It was also agreed that consideration would be given to the inclusion of a separate item to report on COVID-19 matters, in order to track progress going forward, pending a decision on the future target operating model.

ACTION: The Executive to review and update the Review of Risk – Project RAG Report.

10.3 The Committee acknowledged the summary provided and commended the PSU Director and his team on the continued and efficient management of all active estates projects.

11. Inverness Justice Centre (IJC) Closure Report & Update

11.1 ***The record of this discussion was considered confidential and exempt from publication.***

12. Edinburgh Justice Sector Property Rationalisation

12.1 *The record of this discussion was considered confidential and exempt from publication.*

13. Major Capital Projects Update

13.1 *The record of this discussion was considered confidential and exempt from publication.*

14. Other Large Capital Projects Update

14.1 The Executive provided a status update on the following ongoing large capital estates projects:

- Hamilton and Airdrie Sheriff Court –as a result of late release of funding progress had been made in respect of remedial works and upgrades to shrieval accommodation within Hamilton Sheriff Court. Works had not yet progressed within Airdrie Sheriff Court, with associated costs being set against minor works budget allocation.
- Dundee Annexe – development options for Dundee continued to be explored.

15. Any Other Business (AOB)

15.1 None.

16. Date of Next Meeting

16.1 The next meeting would be held on 26 July 2021 via WebEx.

SCTS Estates, Health & Safety, Fire and Security Committee
May 2021