

**SCTS PEOPLE COMMITTEE**

**MEETING: Wednesday 17 February 2021 - Via WebEx**

**Present:**

Dr Kirsty Hood QC, Non-Executive Member, SCTS Board (Chair)  
Anne Scott, Non-Executive Member, SCTS Board  
Billy Harkness, Non-Executive Member  
Professor Alan Boyter, Non-Executive Member

**Also Attended:**

David Fraser, Chief Operations Officer, SCTS  
Lisa Sellars, Director HR, SCTS  
Jessica MacDonald, Director Education & Learning, Education & Learning Unit, SCTS  
Sabiha Vorajee, HR Strategic Partner – Reward & Recognition, SCTS (Item 7)  
Brian Carroll, PCS Union (SCTS Branch Secretary)  
Rosemarie Smith, PCS Union (SCTS Branch Chair)  
Tara McNamara, Executive Support Officer, SCTS (Minutes)

**Apologies:**

Sheriff Susan Craig, Non-Executive Member

**1. Declarations of Interest**

1.1 There were no new declarations of interest from Members.

**2. Welcome and Apologies**

2.1 The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

2.2 Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the meeting was held via WebEx.

**3. Minutes of the Meeting**

3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2020 were approved.

**4 Action Points and Matters Arising**

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

4.2 The Chair highlighted discussion from the November 2020 and February 2021 meetings of the SCTS Board which had a bearing on matters relating to the People Committee. This included delegation of analysis of the Staff Survey results to the Committee.

**5. COVID-19 Update (SCTS/PC/Feb21/01)**

5.1 The Executive updated the Committee on the latest position concerning the impact of COVID-19 on the SCTS, covering current workloads and recent changes.

5.2 The Committee had received comprehensive overviews of the co-ordination and response arrangements put in place to manage the “lockdown” period and beyond that had been prepared for the most recent meetings of the SCTS Board. Oversight of the response continued to be provided by the Strategic Incident Management (SIM) Team. This ensured that the situation was kept under review with key information shared and sound decisions made.

5.3 Members were advised that as a result of the emergence of the new variant and subsequent announcement from Scottish Government, on the re-introduction of lockdown restrictions in January 2021, SCTS had to respond and consolidate business operations in support of the Public Health response. Restrictions in place, at present, for Courts and Tribunals had been further extended to the end of March 2021.

5.4 The Executive outlined the focus for SCTS moving forward through the pandemic. The High Court, Sheriff and Jury, and virtual Summary Trial business would remain a priority, with a view to additional Courts being introduced to address backlogs. Planning remained at an early stage, with capacity increases later in the year. Members were also advised of preparations underway to re-introduce Domestic Abuse Trials. Discussions to facilitate two trials daily, by late March, within the Sheriffdom of Grampian, Highland and Islands.

5.5 The Committee welcomed the comprehensive update provided by SCTS and the continued action during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

## **6. People Management – COVID-19 (SCTS/PC/Feb21/02)**

6.1 The Executive provided an update on the changes made to SCTS guidance and the support in place for SCTS staff, as a result of the pandemic. From the outset of the pandemic, the Human Resources Unit (HRU), in partnership with PCS, had developed policies and guidance to support staff. The guidance, provides staff with access to an extensive range of support. It is regularly reviewed and updated in accordance with updates and changes announced by the Scottish Government, NHS 24 and Public Health Scotland.

6.2 As a result of the pandemic SCTS had adopted a number of new practices and digital solutions, with staff working remotely from home where possible, whilst continuing to deliver essential business. As COVID-19 continues to present significant challenges to the organisation HRU would continue to work in partnership with PCS to review the support and guidance available to staff.

## **7. Review of Reward – Progress Update (SCTS/PC/Feb21/03)**

7.1 The Committee welcomed Sabiha Vorajee, HR Strategic Partner – Reward & Recognition, who provided an update on developments of the review process, as part of the priorities set out in the People Strategy 2018-23 and HR Business Plan 2020-21, of the Reward, Benefits & Recognition Framework.

7.2 Sabiha outlined the key findings from the review process, to date, of the SCTS reward, benefits and recognition offer. Members were advised that the review had been conducted on a three phase approach, which had looked at how SCTS compared to the broader market, including other organisations in other sectors; analysing feedback and views from relevant stakeholders; and deeper analysis to better understand current and future needs of the organisation. The conclusion from the review process had identified that SCTS had an overwhelmingly strong offering to the market, but required to be better articulated. The Committee were informed the analysis and findings of the review would be discussed with the Executive Team in April 2021. It was highlighted that pay and grading was not included in the scope of this review process, however a separate review would take place.

7.3 Members welcomed the updates and developments of the review process provided. It was agreed that further updates on the review of Reward, Benefits & Recognition Framework would be provided at the Committees next meeting.

## **8. Strategic Workforce Plan - Update**

8.1 The Executive informed members of the progress of the Strategic Workforce Plan. As a result of the pandemic and the significant changes and impact on the organisation the drafting of the plan had been delayed. The Director, HR had facilitated a workforce planning workshop with Operational Directors in December and the outcomes of this was being used to develop the strategic workforce plan which would cover the next 3 years. HRU and Education and Learning Unit (ELU), would work together to prepare a draft.

## **9. HRU Structure Update**

9.1 The Committee were informed of recent changes to the HRU structure. Members were advised at their last meeting that, following the departure of Nicola Anderson at the end of October 2020, Jillian Bain had taken on the role of Acting Head of HR & Organisational Development and would remain in post until the end of March 2021. Recruitment for a Senior HR Manager: People Strategy, Policy and Support was currently being carried out. Claire Ugunlu, had also returned to her previous role as Acting Head of HR Operations. The Executive advised that given the volume and types of work that the HR Unit were involved with, an additional senior manager role would be recruited focusing on Organisational Development and Design. Further updates on the HR Structure would be provided to members in due course.

9.2 Members acknowledged and commended the volume of work undertaken by the HR Director and HR Unit team over the last 10 months, and welcomed future updates as further progress was made.

## **10. Review/Discussion of Other Papers (SCTS/PC/Feb21/04-08)**

10.1 The following papers were provided for scrutiny/exception reporting only:

- HR Policy Update
- HR Risk Register
- HR Measures for SCTS Board
- HR Project Tracker
- Employment Tribunals

10.2 The content of these papers was noted and no matters of concern were raised.

## **11. Any Other Business**

11.1 None.

## **12. Date of Next Meeting**

12.1 The date of the next meeting would be held on 5 May 2021.

## **13. Deep Dive Session – Staff Survey 2020**

13.1 The Executive provided the committee with an overview on the analysis of the high level results of the Staff Survey 2020. It was highlighted that the past year had been very different to previous years, recognising that the workplace environment had been significantly impacted, as a result of the pandemic. Members acknowledged that, as a result of the pandemic and significant impacts, using previous year's results as a comparator would be difficult.

13.2 Members were advised that work was underway to develop a staff survey action plan, following analysis of the results. The action plan was being developed with a focus on the

three key corporate areas outlined, including safety and wellbeing; our connections and communications and managing changes to our work.

13.3 The Committee welcomed the detailed analysis and update provided. Members acknowledged that it had been beneficial to review the breakdown of the results in regards to the three key themes, which would be areas of focus for the year ahead. Members discussed and agreed that a further update on the analysis of the staff survey 2020 results, and development of the action plan would be an item for discussion at the next meeting.

**ACTION: The Executive to review analysis and develop an action plan, working in partnership with PCS, on the three key themes identified from the Staff Survey 2020 results.**

Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service  
February 2021