



SCTS PEOPLE COMMITTEE

MEETING: Wednesday 30 April 2025– Parliament House, Edinburgh:

Attended:

Dr Sophie Flemig, SCTS Board (Chair)
Helen Meldrum, Non-Executive Member
James Saville, Non-Executive Member
Anne Scott, SCTS Board
Sheriff Wendy Sheehan, Non-Executive Member

Also Attended:

Malcolm Graham, Chief Executive, SCTS
David Fraser, Executive Director Court Operations, SCTS
Lisa Sellars, Director HR, SCTS
Steven D'Arcy, Corporate Secretary, SCTS
Katie Leighton, PCS (SCTS Branch Chair)
Alastair Young, PCS (SCTS Branch Secretary)
Sarah Imery, Executive Support Officer, SCTS (Minutes)

Apologies:

Ruth Innes KC, SCTS Board
Robin Holmes, Interim Director Education & Learning, SCTS

1. Declarations of Interest

1.1 There were no declarations of interest from Members.

2. Minutes of the Meeting

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 5 February were approved.

3. Action Points and Matters Arising

3.1 The Chair provided an overview of discussions from the March 2025 meeting.

3.2 The Executive Director, Court Operations provided members with an update on the recent recruitment exercise conducted to appoint a permanent Director Education and Learning. Bhavna Nair had been successful and would start in post on the 1 May 2025. Members welcomed the update and passed on their thanks to Robin Holmes for all the insights and hard work he had put into the Committee as Interim Director.

4. Cross Committee Update

4.1 An oral update had been provided to members on matters arising from the Board and the other SCTS Committees. The Executive provided further information on the following topics:

Radon Gas (Estates Committee) - the Committee were updated on the ongoing work to reduce elevated levels of Radon Gas that had been identified within the Inverness Justice Centre (IJC). Radon gas is a naturally occurring gas that was present throughout the country. The gas had been identified through routine testing and measures had been put in place to ensure that all staff and building users continued to operate in a safe working environment. Radon monitoring takes time to be completed, as levels can fluctuate depending on environmental factors. Monitoring of other SCTS premises where an elevated risk of Radon may be present had commenced, to ensure the organisation was providing the safest possible working environment.

Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) (Estates Committee) – following the detection of RAAC within Airdrie Sheriff Court. The first-floor area where the staff offices, canteen and ancillary accommodation were located had been closed. Staff had been temporarily relocated in Modular Accommodation directly in front of the Court. It was confirmed that the aim was to have the first floor remediated to enable the staff to utilise this area from the autumn.

Oracle Fusion (Audit and Risk) - the Executive reported on key developments following the launch of the Oracle Fusion Cloud Accounting system on 1 October. A number of workstreams were working well with good progress and a business as usual state emerging. However, it was highlighted that business continuity arrangements and workarounds remained in place for two major areas: 'Purchase to Pay / end to end accounting' and, Role Based Access (RBACS) data which had not been updated in spite of a number of specific requests.

The Executive confirmed that they had been in contact with the Scottish Government Director General and Chief Finance Officer to recognise the success of the implementation of elements of the system but also to highlight the ongoing issues being faced in relation to both the persistence of manual workarounds and the ongoing effort required to address shortcomings in the system relating to accounting functions.

Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) (Audit and Risk) – In January 2025 OPG had implemented a new case management system to process Power of Attorney applications. The project had been delivered to time and budget. Phases two and three of the project would be delivered this year.

5. Employment Policy Developments and EDi

5.1 The Executive presented a paper that provided an overview of both the employment policy developments and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDi) activities.

5.2 The Executive confirmed there was well-established governance process in place, which included a policy review process, a policy audit tracker, and an annual road map that detailed employment policies which would be required in order to keep up to date with changes. The policy development team continue to work closely and in partnership with PCS.

5.3 The EDi Team had made good progress in raising the awareness of the team and their work across the organisation. This had been achieved through awareness campaigns and engagement with other business areas. Over the next few months, the team would focus on a campaign to promote sharing personal data on iTrent, preparing for the potential impact of the Employment Rights Bill.

5.4 Members discussed the recent Supreme Court Judgement Ruling which clarifies language in the Equality Act regarding the definition of 'sex' as biological sex at birth. Discussion took place on the interim EHRC guidance and the Executive confirmed legal

advice was being sought from our external legal advisers. It was acknowledged that legislation may be forthcoming and the EHRC plans to issue full guidance on the ruling after the public consultation. There was agreement that careful consideration would need to be given on the approach taken given SCTS' EDI commitments as an inclusive employer.

5.5 The Executive highlighted that in recent months the Executive Team meetings had been changed to incorporate a monthly People, Finance and Performance (PFP) dedicated meeting, this would help share the responsibility of the ongoing HR projects with the wider teams. Members welcomed the update and offered any assistance where possible.

6. Draft HR and ELU Business Plan Reports

6.1 The Committee reviewed the revised format of the HRU and ELU Business plans for 2025-26. Each Business Plan contained key objectives and outcomes covering developmental and core service delivery activities for the coming year.

6.2 Members welcomed the clear layout of both the reports and acknowledged that the format had been much easier to follow, with progress easier to track. Members emphasised that the HR Report still appeared ambitious; they suggested that the Executive highlight/focus on key priority activity based on (expected) outcome.

7. Pay Award Update

7.1 The Executive provided an update to members on the implementation of the reforms that had been agreed as part of the two-year pay settlement covering 2023-25. Progress had been made regarding the Public and Privilege Holiday Flexibility following a comprehensive impact assessment since the February meeting. It had not been possible to implement the flexibility agreed as part of the pay award.

7.2 The Executive informed members that in order to compensate for being unable to deliver an agreed element of the pay award, SCTS had made an offer to PCS to grant all employees (pro rata for part-time employees) one additional day of leave for 2025-26 plus one further additional day of leave in 2026-27. Whilst the offer of compensation had not been accepted by PCS, it had been agreed that SCTS would implement the compensation in order to resolve the matter and, to be able to progress with Pay Negotiations for this year (2025-26). PCS had submitted a pay claim for 2025-26 and an initial Pay Award meeting would take place in May.

7.3 Members thanked the Executive for the update.

8. SCTS People Strategy

8.1 Following the publication of the SCTS People Strategy 2024-28 in November 2024, the Executive presented the People Strategy Progress Tracker and Measures documents to members, these would be used to monitor the progress of the People Strategy going forward.

8.2 Members agreed that the format of both the trackers was clear, easy to read with good progress having been made so far. Members felt that the team would benefit from clearer targets and the inclusion of benchmarking metrics, in order to monitor progress accurately. Members offered assistance where required in developing the report further.

8.3 The Executive thanked members for the feedback and would look to seek the Executive Teams input on the required targets. It had been hoped that setting clear goals would support the organisation in achieving its strategic aims. A further update would be provided at the November meeting.

9. Deep Dive

9.1 The Executive gave an update to members on the Employment Rights Bill 2024 which was published on the 10 October 2024, the Bill outlined 28 employment law changes and had been referred to by the UK Government as “the biggest upgrade to rights at work for a generation”. It was aimed at updating and enhancing various employment rights for employees.

9.2 Initial analysis on the key points of the Bill had been carried out which confirmed that SCTS was well prepared for the legislative changes due to the generous and supportive employment policies and practices that we currently had in place. Legislation is likely to be passed in the summer of 2025 but it is anticipated that most of the changes were unlikely to be implemented until 2026. SCTS would continue to work in partnership when revisions to employment policies and practices are required.

9.3 Members thanked the Executive for the thorough and informative paper, and expressed that they felt SCTS had carried out a full initial analysis in preparation for the potential impact of the Bill. Members felt it would be hard to do much more until the legislation has been passed as changes compared to the current Bill are likely. Following the update, members felt that SCTS were currently in a good position for the potential upcoming changes.

10. General Discussion

10.1 The Executive highlighted to members that with the recent changes across HR and ELU the Core Work Programme may be subject to change in between meetings.

11. Review/Discussion of Other Papers

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

- HR Risk Register
- ELU Risk register
- Learning Council Minutes
- Employment Tribunals
- HR Measures
- Core Work Plan 2025
- People Committee Action Tracker

12. Any Other Business

12.1 Members asked the Executive for an update on the revised Exit Interview Survey that had been launched in February 2025. Members were advised that following feedback from the People Committee exit interview survey had been relaunched in February 2025. The Committee would be updated on completion rates at a future meeting.

13. Date of Next Meeting

13.1 The next meeting is on 13 August 2025

SCTS Secretariat
April 2025