

Scottish Courts
and Tribunals Service



Business Plan 2022-23

Supporting Justice



Contents

3 Chief Executive's Foreword	4 Who we are	5-16 Setting the Scene	5-6 Operating Environment	
7-11 Key Reform Areas	12-13 Financial Environment	14 Business Volumes	15-23 Business Outcomes for 2021-22	17 A Well Supported Judiciary
18 Satisfied Service Users	19 Skilled and Motivated People	20 Sustainable Buildings and Business	21 Digital Services	22 Efficiency and Best Value
23 Purposeful Collaboration	24-38 Annexes	24 Annex A Strategy for Justice—Vision & Priorities	25-26 Annex B Summary Financial Plan	27-30 Annex C Key Business Volumes & Planning Assumptions
31 Annex D Key Strategic Risk Categories	32-34 Annex E Our Strategic Priorities and Objectives 2020-23	35 Annex F Summary of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	36 Annex G Scottish Courts & Tribunals Service Locations	

Foreword

Eric McQueen
Chief Executive

It is my privilege to introduce the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service (SCTS) annual business plan. This plan sets out our key business outcomes and the environment in which the SCTS will operate in 2022-23.

Whilst the pandemic has transformed the landscape in which we now operate, the purpose and strategic priorities set out in our three-year corporate plan, published in 2020, remain just as relevant. Over the course of this year the business delivered by our courts, devolved tribunals and the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) will continue to evolve. Many of the changes that we have introduced at pace over the past two years have actually accelerated us towards the vision set out in our corporate plan.

Over the coming year, we will focus on our key areas of reform: criminal justice, civil justice and tribunals and OPG. We will also take forward a number of corporate initiatives to support our people, premises and systems — ensuring we fully embed new ways of doing business and keep developing the skills to succeed — while at all times ensuring we have a sustainable business model.

As we progress through and, hopefully, beyond the pandemic we must remain alive to the lessons it has taught us. The need to look after all those who use our services, adhering to public health advice. The real progress and development that can be achieved when working in partnership will remain crucial, as we strive to recover case backlogs. We also need to hold onto the innovation and flexibility that has been unlocked in response to COVID-19, which has allowed us to deliver services in new ways, often through the use of new technology. We will continue to develop and deliver new services, focusing on agility and resilience—in order to achieve our strategic priorities:

- A Well Supported Judiciary
- Satisfied Service Users
- Skilled and Motivated People
- Sustainable Buildings and Business
- Digital Services
- Efficiency and Best Value
- Purposeful Collaboration

Courts and tribunals are the place where all parts of Scotland's justice system come together. We rely upon, and appreciate everyone's ongoing co-operation, to enable us to continue to support justice despite the challenging circumstances that have prevailed. Over the coming year we will continue to keep our approach under regular review in line with public health guidance. At the same time we will bring forward new ways of working to support justice, enhancing the services we provide to victims and witnesses while continuing to uphold a fair trial process for the accused. We can only achieve this through the skills and efforts of our highly committed staff. We will continue to invest in our people—so they have the skills and support needed to operate in new ways.

In September 2021 we introduced an ambitious criminal court recovery programme to address the backlog of cases that has arisen during the pandemic, providing, on a daily basis:

- four additional High Courts;
- two additional Sheriff Solemn Courts;
- 10 additional Sheriff Summary Courts.

Over the next few years we have two key goals in mind. Firstly, we must work with our partners to make a success of the recovery programme—to address the backlogs that have developed, as delay causes harm to all involved. Secondly, as that recovery takes place, we must continue on the journey to reform our justice system—embedding new approaches that yield benefit and support wider system reforms. Courts and tribunals should be regarded as a service, not a building—efficient, accessible and, above all, fair. With these challenges and opportunities in mind I commend the outcomes set out in this plan, which will keep us focused on our purpose—Supporting Justice.



Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service

Who we are

The Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service (SCTS) is a non-ministerial office established by the Judiciary and Courts (Scotland) Act 2008. Its statutory function is to provide administrative support to Scotland’s courts, devolved tribunals and the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG). SCTS has a presence in many of Scotland’s communities where court and tribunal business is conducted daily. In total the estate comprises 71 buildings made up of courts, vulnerable witness suites, tribunals and offices. We operate from 51 distinct locations across Scotland’s six sheriffdoms, together with 13 remote video witness sites. Tribunals also make use of some 70 further venues across Scotland for hearings.

In addition to administering Scotland’s courts and tribunals, the SCTS supports the OPG and Accountant of Court (AOC). The OPG provides guidance and undertakes investigations to protect vulnerable people under the terms of the Adults with Incapacity Act 2000. The Public Guardian is also the Accountant of Court. The SCTS also provides the staff and administrative support to the:

- Scottish Civil Justice Council—which drafts rules of procedure for the civil courts, and advises the Lord President on the development of the civil justice system; and
- Scottish Sentencing Council— which is responsible for preparing sentencing guidelines, and for publishing guideline judgments and information about sentences imposed by the courts in Scotland.

The purpose of the SCTS is **supporting justice**. We fulfil that purpose by providing the people, buildings and services needed to support the judiciary, courts, devolved tribunals and the OPG. This Business Plan covers the 2022-23 financial year. It aligns with our [Corporate Plan 2020-23](#), which sets out our strategic priorities and objectives for that three year period. For each year of the corporate plan, SCTS prepares a business plan. This plan explains the environment within which the SCTS will be operating for the year ahead and sets the outcomes we aim to deliver. We report on performance against key performance indicators in our [Board Scorecard](#). We also prepare and publish an Annual Report and Accounts, a Business Plan Delivery Report and publish a range of Official Statistics on our work.

We provide access to justice and are focused on maximising the benefits of technology and improving the service we offer to all users. Underpinning the outcomes set out in this plan, each business unit within the SCTS produces its own annual plan, setting out more detailed priorities and activities on which they will focus. All our work is underpinned by our core values of **respect, service and excellence**:

Our Strategic Priorities



Our Values and Behaviours

Respect	Service	Excellence
Be courteous Be open & fair Work as one team	Deliver a professional service Learn in all we do Set an example	Innovate Collaborate Be accountable



Our Operating Environment

Scotland's courts, tribunals and the OPG have continued to experience unprecedented change over the past year, as a result of COVID-19. However our purpose has remained the same—supporting justice. We continue to pursue that purpose by improving our services, to create a more just, resilient and efficient system. Throughout the pandemic we have been guided by three key priorities:

- Support the public health response — protecting the life and safety of all staff, court and tribunal users;
- Maintain all essential business so far as possible — ensuring cases are not lost;
- Minimise accumulation of case backlogs so far as possible — to facilitate the most effective recovery.

In meeting these priorities, we have provided the safest possible environment for our staff and service users to work in and have developed a range of significant innovations and new approaches including:

- Commencing in September 2021, a multi-year criminal court recovery programme established to reduce backlogs that have unavoidably developed during the pandemic (increasing our daily capacity by four additional High Courts, two additional sheriff solemn courts and 10 additional sheriff summary courts).
- Hearing over 1,400 solemn trials with jurors based in our jury centres, providing more than 40 remote jury rooms in key locations across Scotland so that the most serious criminal cases could continue to be heard in a safe, physically distanced environment, using leading edge technology.
- Operating a flexible business model in the Court of Session and in sheriff court civil business, using secure video solutions and in-person hearings where appropriate, allowing business to be maintained at pre-COVID-19 levels.
- Developing and improving the way in which Tribunal cases can be heard and managed—using a combination of remote, hybrid and in-person operating models to sustain case throughput at pre-COVID-19 levels.
- Successfully holding over 2,000 custody hearings using an entirely virtual model—based on secure, state-of-the-art video conferencing. Following a pilot in Tayside, Central and Fife the approach was used during COP26 and expanded to North Strathclyde in early 2022.
- Successfully piloting fully virtual summary trials for domestic abuse cases in the sheriffdom of Grampian, Highland and Islands, which led to the Virtual National Trials Project Board [recommending specialist online courts be set up](#) to tackle domestic abuse cases.
- Introducing new technology and processes that allow both police and professional witnesses to give their evidence remotely in High Court trials — minimising inconvenience and reducing the need for physical appearance in court.
- Creating two additional remote vulnerable witness suites to support vulnerable witnesses—ensuring they can give their best evidence in a safe, high-quality environment.
- Expansion of the Social Security Chamber following the introduction of Child Disability Payments and the launch of a new digital case management solution.
- Supporting the Scottish Civil Justice Council and parties to simple procedure cases, as new court rules were approved which made online submission for simple procedure cases mandatory.
- Continuing to support up to 500 staff working from home daily by providing the right equipment, remote technologies and wellbeing support — and continuing to provide a safe on-site working environment for those that were required to attend our buildings.
- Generating savings in excess of £1.8m through improved procurement practices.
- Managing in excess of 100,000 court cases and over 9,000 tribunal cases registered during 2021-22.

This is the final year in our three year corporate planning period. Over the course of this year we will continue our efforts in progressing the vision set out in our corporate plan.



Our Operating Environment (cont.)

To be successful in this continually uncertain time, the SCTS maintains a clear strategy and is committed to partnership working. Our strategy map below illustrates how our purpose of supporting justice is translated into seven strategic priorities — and how these priorities support the wider outcomes set in Scotland’s [National Performance Framework](#):

SCTS Strategy Map



In order to deliver successfully on these priorities the way in which we approach our business is critical. Whilst independent, we work collaboratively with the Scottish Government, the Justice Board for Scotland, and a broad range of justice partners. The [Justice in Scotland – Vision and Priorities](#) document provides a common focus for all agencies involved in the delivery of criminal and civil justice, and our work supports the delivery of its outcomes and goals (which are summarised at [Annex A](#)).



Key Reform Areas 2022-23

Scotland's justice system continually develops in response to wider changes in society. Policy developments, environmental changes and new legislation influence our operating environment. Strong partnerships across the justice system are essential if new policies are to be effective.

Our high-level priorities are set out in the [Corporate Plan 2020-23](#). We also have key corporate strategies covering people, estates and digital development, setting our priorities in these core supporting areas. Some of the key policy and legislative developments that will have a bearing on our work in 2022-23 are outlined below.

Scotland's courts and tribunals provide the forum in which citizens can assert their rights — supporting the delivery of the outcomes and priorities set in the Justice Strategy for Scotland. By implementing reform, sharing information and building on advances in technology we help to shape and improve the performance of the system

Click [here](#) for a summary of the Scottish Government's Strategy for Justice.

COVID-19 – Recovering, Reforming and Transforming

The pandemic continued to impact across all sectors, including the justice system in 2021-22. Over the past year, two new variants of COVID-19 impacted heavily on society (Delta and Omicron) with an associated impact on our return to normality. By the middle of May 2021, the easing of restrictions enabled us to increase the number of criminal trials we could safely accommodate. In response to changing Government guidance and public health advice, all SCTS premises moved to a one-metre physical distancing regime from August – in line with the wider public sector.

These relaxations allowed us to commence work on our criminal court recovery programme. Four additional High Courts, two additional sheriff and jury courts and 10 additional sheriff summary courts launched as scheduled in September 2021, coinciding with increased witness accommodation and the facility to recommence multi-accused trials in a wider range of locations. The easing of restrictions in our buildings was carefully conducted to ensure everyone felt safe as we managed increasing business levels.

From December 2021, case numbers increased dramatically due to the spread of the Omicron variant. On 20 December, two metre physical distancing was re-instated across all SCTS buildings. Other measures were adopted to reduce footfall, and the associated risk of transmission, including reduced physical attendance at a range of procedural hearings, reduced summary criminal trial loadings and reverting to a virtual model for the vast majority of civil and tribunal business. By mid-January, it became clear that Scotland was “turning the corner” on the Omicron wave and the measures introduced in December were removed.

At the time of writing, COVID-19 is still very much with us, but we appear to be entering a new phase of living with the virus. We will continue to prioritise the health and safety of all those who use and work in our buildings — observing a range of sensible baseline safety measures including enhanced ventilation and cleaning, appropriate use of face coverings and a continuation of remote business and remote working where this proves to be of benefit. While uncertainties remain, and the risk of future variants (and associated measures) cannot be ruled out, there is growing confidence that 2022-23 will see a return to more normal working arrangements—albeit bolstered by the new approaches that have been developed over the past few years.

Throughout the course of the pandemic we have utilised technology to support civil and tribunal business. The electronic submission of case papers and the use of virtual hearings, via the WebEx platform, are now common features in our system. The All Scotland Sheriff Personal Injury Court and Sheriff Appeal Court, as well as appellate business in the Court of Session and High Court, continued to operate remotely at pre-lockdown levels throughout the pandemic. Tribunals have also operated successfully using a range of remote and virtual hearings. These innovations have ensured that, across our civil, tribunal and appellate business, backlogs have not arisen. However this is not the case in relation to criminal business, where physical attendance at court is often still required.



Key Reform Areas 2022-23 (cont.)

Criminal Justice Reform

While the use of Remote Jury Centres, introduced in September 2020 has increased trial capacity to a level higher than before the pandemic, the backlog of criminal cases that had arisen due to the pandemic has been significant. As at the end of January 2022 the level of scheduled trials forecast (in comparison with the position pre-pandemic) had:

- risen from 390-780 in the High Court
- more than doubled in the sheriff summary court (14,000-32,759); and
- increased over 6-fold in the sheriff solemn court (500-3,530)

In order to address this, from September 2021, the Criminal Court Recovery Programme introduced increased capacity into the criminal courts, with the aim of returning summary case backlogs to pre-COVID-19 levels by March 2024 and solemn by March 2026. We now publish monthly Management Information showing business volumes and trends for first instance criminal cases. The data on [criminal case levels](#) demonstrates the positive impact of the recovery programme, comparing case throughput and backlogs with pre-COVID-19 levels. With the impact of COVID-19 now easing, the recovery programme will begin to address backlogs during 2022-23, supported by the excellent collaboration across the judiciary, justice organisations, the legal profession and the third sector which has helped get court business back on track.

An efficient, digitally enabled system that meets the needs of those involved in it is central to our criminal justice reform agenda. Innovative approaches allowed us to maintain essential business during the pandemic and must now be built upon to meet the range and volume of business — whilst improving the experience of victims and witnesses. We have made a strong case for the retention of legislative measures that were introduced in response to COVID-19 which allow:

- Case papers to be handled electronically
- Evidence to be presented digitally
- A broad range of hearings to be held remotely and
- An increasing use of “hybrid” business, where some parties are present in court, others appear remotely—and others still may have had their contribution captured fully in advance.

A number of these aspirations were set out several years ago through the work of the Evidence and Procedure Review—and are increasingly becoming a reality. Key reforms which we will focus on during 2022-23 are:

Virtual custodies

Accused persons appearing from custody virtually greatly reduces the need for large numbers of people to attend court for short hearings. Fully virtual custodies were first piloted in Falkirk and have been successfully deployed in Dumfries, Kilmarnock and Greenock. The Sheriff Principal for North Strathclyde is carrying out a wider review and his report will inform the basis for future expansion across Scotland.

Virtual criminal trials (domestic abuse cases)

The Virtual Trials National Project Board issued its report [on the piloting of virtual summary trials](#) on 22 January. It recommended that specialist online courts be set up to hear domestic abuse cases. The Board examined whether virtual trials can ensure that an accused receives a fair trial. Feedback from victims groups was overwhelmingly positive. We believe that virtual trials should have a place as part of a responsible, modern justice system, particularly given the benefits they offer victims. Our ambition is for each sheriffdom to have a dedicated virtual domestic abuse trial court, using trauma informed practices and procedures, in line with the recommendations in the Sexual Offences Review. This would enable support services to be effectively focused and also has the potential to address case backlogs, as around a quarter of outstanding summary trials involve domestic abuse.

Remote submission of evidence by Police and Expert witnesses

Since January 2022, Police and Expert witnesses giving evidence in the High Court have been able to do so remotely. Giving evidence by video link significantly reduces the time these witnesses need to spend at court, freeing them up to conduct their day-to-day roles and reducing costs associated with attendance. This has significant benefits for the police and expert witnesses, such as medical experts employed by the NHS. The approach has proven to be successful during a 12-week trial. Work is ongoing to explore making this approach permanent, whilst assessing whether it could be used in other courts.



Key Reform Areas 2022-23 (cont.)

Improving the management of sexual offence cases

A review group, led by the Lord Justice Clerk (Lady Dorrian) was established in 2019 to examine how sexual offences cases are managed and whether there are ways to improve the experience for all participants. The review published its Final Report in March 2021 and made a number of recommendations, including the presumption of the pre-recording of evidence; the creation of a specialist sexual offences court; improving the experiences of complainers; taking steps to enhance juries' involvement; and considering a time limited pilot of rape cases being presided over by a single judge with no jury. Over the course of this year we will continue to work with partners across the justice system to develop those proposals requiring legislation—but there are steps that we can take now, such as rolling-out training and support so that all those working with victims of sexual offending can adopt a trauma-informed approach.

In addition to supporting the judiciary in their implementation of the Review, we will work with the Scottish Government-led national Governance group overseeing roll-out and implementation. During 2022-23 we will focus on a number of key areas where real change can be made, including:

- Reviewing our estate to enhance facilities for the pre-recording of evidence and remote evidence provision, making improvements and expanding our provision, based on experience from facilities developed in Glasgow and Inverness.
- Working with experts in the field of trauma informed practice and awareness to develop a training strategy that will equip our staff with the skills and knowledge to respond in a trauma informed way.
- Undertaking a review of our designated waiting facilities and entrances/exits for witnesses, making improvements to these wherever possible.

New laws and procedures

The **Vulnerable Witnesses (Criminal Evidence) (Scotland) Act 2019** introduced a presumption that child witnesses in the most serious criminal cases (in the High Court initially) should have their evidence pre-recorded, to minimise the potential trauma of court appearances. Work to develop purpose-built facilities for the taking of evidence in advance of trial has continued during the pandemic. We will continue to support the phased commencement of the Act, which will see an increase in the range and number of cases in which evidence is captured in this way.

We expect the remaining provisions of the **Management of Offenders (Scotland) Act 2019** to be implemented during 2022-23. The Act introduces a number of significant changes to the electronic monitoring of offenders regime. This includes extending the use of such monitoring to form part of other court orders, and to monitor accused who are released on bail. It also enables new forms of monitoring to be introduced in the future, e.g. GPS technology and alcohol/drug monitoring.

Whilst the provisions will not lead to increases in case volumes they may lead to an increase in the number of orders made, and their complexity, which will impact on case processing time. The extension of the presumption against short-term sentences, has also increased the potential range of cases to which provisions of this nature may apply. The extension of electronic monitoring to bail may impact significantly on the length of time it takes to handle cases, including new breach proceedings. We will continue to work closely with justice partners on its implementation.

In November 2021 the Scottish Government published a **consultation on the use of bail and remand**. The proposals within it are aimed at reducing the undue disruption caused by short periods of imprisonment on remand. The SCTS will work with the Scottish Government as these proposals develop.

The **Hate Crime and Public Order (Scotland) Act 2021**, aims to modernise existing laws that protect certain groups from hate crime; pulling them into a single Act and building on the current groups specifically protected. We will work with the Scottish Government and justice partners to ensure that the Act is implemented effectively.

The **Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill** will extend provisions within the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988 to Scotland, providing a more flexible, efficient and effective method for dealing with minor road traffic offending. One of the key impacts will be removing the requirement for individuals to produce their driving licence in court proceedings and for payment of endorsable fixed penalties. This change will remove the legislative barrier for online payment of endorsable fixed penalties. We will work with justice partners to ensure that the legislative changes are implemented effectively and to develop digital processes to enable online payment of these fixed penalties.

Civil Justice Reform

Our civil **Integrated Case Management System (ICMS)** continues to develop, increasingly enabling online case management and administration through the Civil Online portal. Full digital case management and processing can take place in simple procedure cases and an increasingly broad range of business can now be conducted online—with the submission of bulky paper case files largely now a thing of the past. This significant progress has been accelerated in response to COVID and many of the innovations introduced will remain in place, as we adapt to a model where civil business is processed using the optimal balance of virtual and traditional processes — supported by effective digital case management platforms and high quality online hearing options.

The Children (Scotland) Act 2020, along with the **Scottish Government’s Family Law Modernisation Strategy**, will make substantial changes to how family proceedings operate in Scotland’s courts. The Act aims to ensure that: the views of the child are heard in contact and residence cases; that provisions are in place to further protect victims of domestic abuse and their children; and that the best interests of the child are at the centre of contact and residence cases and Children’s Hearings. We will work in partnership to ensure these proposals can be implemented effectively.

The Domestic Abuse (Protection) (Scotland) Act 2021 introduces new domestic abuse protection notices and orders. It also creates a new ground on which a social landlord can apply for recovery of a house from a perpetrator of domestic abuse with a view to transferring it to the victim or, where the perpetrator and victim are joint tenants, to end the perpetrator’s interest in the tenancy and enable the victim to remain in the family home. The SCTS will continue to work with the Scottish Government and other justice partners to ensure these provisions, which have the potential to require a number of new court processes, can be implemented effectively.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill will incorporate the UNCRC into Scots law. It will impact on courts, tribunals and the SCTS as a public authority. The Bill provides that public authorities must not act in a way incompatible with the UNCRC and enables any person to bring proceedings against a public authority in a civil court or tribunal for acting, or proposing to act, in an incompatible manner. It also gives courts the power to strike down or declare as incompatible with the UNCRC requirements any legislation that cannot be interpreted consistently with the UNCRC. The Bill requires amendment following the Supreme Court decision that certain parts of it fell outwith the competence of the Scottish Parliament. We will monitor the Bill as it progresses through Parliament, and will work with the Scottish Government to fully understand the implications of the revised Bill and ensure that it can be implemented as effectively as possible.

A number of changes to **court rules** are also under consideration by the Scottish Civil Justice Council (SCJC) over the coming year. The family law committee are working on proposals to further develop active judicial case management in family actions. The Council recently consulted on **modes of attendance at civil court hearings**. It proposed a general presumption as to the types of hearings generally considered suitable for an in-person hearing and for attendance by electronic means. Responses were analysed by the Council’s secretariat and discussed by the Council on 31 January 2022. New rules are to be developed, accompanied by practice notes and guidance. A forum will also be established to monitor the changes made and to initiate more regular improvements in court practice.

The Council is also reviewing the **Simple Procedure Rules 2016**, before recommencing work on Simple Procedure Special Claims Rules. We will work with the SCJC over the coming year to ensure that these and any other rule changes can be implemented successfully.

Mediation and Alternative Dispute Resolution will feature in the reform of all areas of civil law. SCTS is supportive of measures designed to make most effective and efficient use of judicial resources; and which improve access to justice for those seeking to resolve disputes in Scotland.



Key Reform Areas 2022-23 (cont.)

Tribunals Reform

Tribunals reform will continue during 2022-23, with further migrations into the First-Tier Tribunal for Scotland Chamber structure, supporting the vision of providing judicially-led tribunals that are modern, efficient and user-focused.

During the pandemic, **telephone and video hearings** were quickly developed and implemented. Their use has continued, with systems being improved and processes refined — ensuring that efficient, high-quality digital services are available for service users. These developments provide a strong platform for future operations. We are working with the tribunals judiciary to develop and refine a hearings model to provide service users with flexible hearing approaches. We will continue to improve and, where possible, unify methods for gathering and evaluating user feedback across jurisdictions.

The majority of Scotland's devolved tribunals have now transferred into the **First-tier Tribunal for Scotland** Chamber structure, including jurisdictions covering Housing and Property, Health and Education, Tax, the General Regulatory Chamber and the Social Security Chamber. The Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland is scheduled to transfer into the Mental Health Chamber of the First-tier Tribunal during the course of this plan. In addition, a new Local Taxation Chamber of the First-tier Tribunal will be established to take on responsibility for the work of the Valuation Appeal Committees, which currently hear appeals against local authority decisions on non-domestic rates, and of the Council Tax Reduction Review Panel. This new Chamber will hear these cases from January 2023. The General Regulatory Chamber will expand over 2022-23 to include jurisdictions covering Police appeals and low emission zones, workplace parking licencing and parking contraventions.

Ensuring that the judiciary, staff, systems and resources are in place to **manage increasing case volumes** remains a key priority. While volumes in some jurisdictions dropped due to the ongoing impact of the pandemic, there has been sustained growth in the Mental Health Tribunal caseload over recent years. The Local Taxation Chamber will require the recruitment of judiciary and staff and the development of new systems to support what will be a brand new service, from January 2023.

As **new welfare benefits** are devolved to Scotland, the work of the Social Security Chamber will increase significantly. We are working closely with the Scottish Government to ensure that the systems needed to manage this level of business are in place, and that sufficient resources — both staff and judicial — are available to support the expansion. During 2022, we will facilitate the transfer of staff from Her Majesty's Court and Tribunals' Service to the SCTS. This will result in a rise in anticipated appeal volumes, to potentially over 9,000 during 2022/23 — covering Best Start Grant, Funeral Support payment, Scottish Child payment, Child Disability Payment and the new Adult Disability Payment that will be introduced in the autumn of 2022. Case volumes are expected to increase significantly in future years.

Proposals for the **devolution of the administration of reserved Tribunals** to SCTS remain on hold, pending agreement of any transfer between the UK and Scottish Government. In spite of this the tribunals' landscape continues to develop and expand, under the leadership of the President of Scottish Tribunals and the Lord President.

Office of the Public Guardian (OPG)

The current **Review of Mental Health and Incapacity Legislation** in Scotland (The Scott Review) will consider changes to the Adults with Incapacity (Scotland) Act 2000 and the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007, which will have a significant impact on the work of the Office of the Public Guardian. The Review's findings are expected to be published in Autumn 2022, followed by further consultation, with legislative reform expected thereafter.

The Children (Scotland) Act 2020 will make changes in respect of the **management of funds** owed to or belonging to children in Scotland, currently supervised and/or managed by the Accountant of Court's Office within OPG.

The responses to the consultation on the Judicial Factors Bill were published in August 2020. Work in this area was paused due to COVID-19, but may resume in the coming year, with a direct impact on the work of the Accountant of Court's Office.

Work to **transform the services provided by OPG** is under way. A new, forward-looking business model based on delivering responsive, efficient and easily accessible services has been developed. Our plan is that this transformation will be supported by a new, **case management system** and online public register that will allow faster processing of cases and user-friendly access to services via a secure and efficient digital system. We will seek additional funding during the year to support this work, which has the potential to significantly improve services and deliver efficiencies in the longer-term.

Our Financial Environment

The Scottish Government’s budget for SCTS has been set at £133.5m for 2022-23 (inclusive of £8m capital and £25.6m of depreciation charges). The £4.5m uplift in funding from the previous year reflects pay and inflationary pressures together with increased digital spend.

Further detail on the 2022-23 financial plan is provided at [Annex B \(p25-26\)](#)

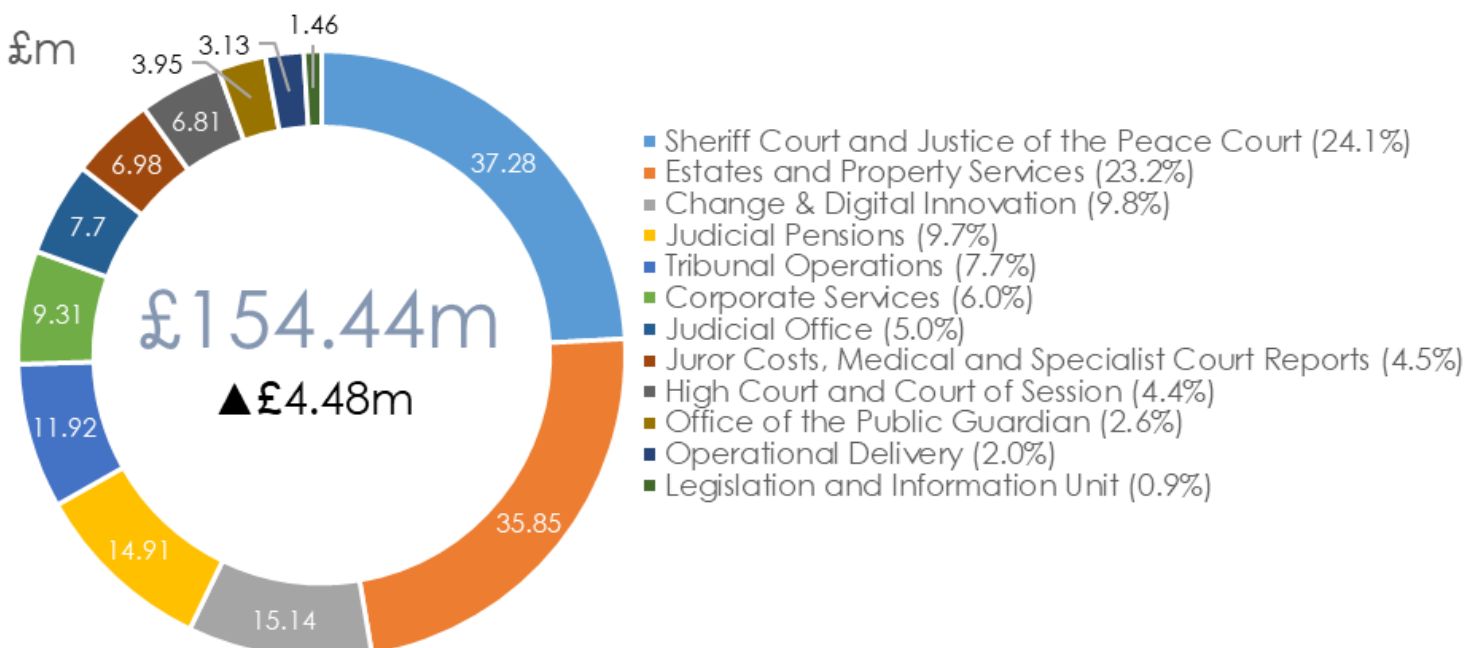
SCTS remains committed to delivering high quality services and promoting reform to ensure that Scotland’s courts and tribunals continue to meet the expectations of the public within the challenging financial environment and resources available. In addition to this, baseline allocation in-year funding is estimated to be £46.6m (detailed at Annex B) giving a total net budget (inclusive of depreciation) of £180.2m. Most of the in-year funding will support ongoing reforms within the Tribunals service and maintaining the criminal court recovery programme. In-year funding of up to £2m in respect of civil fees and fines has been committed by the Scottish Government to offset against COVID-19 related shortfalls. An additional £2m of COVID-19 funding has also been provided to maintain a safe environment for our service users.

Where do we invest our resources?

Figure 1 shows where SCTS allocates its baseline spend by business area. Over 83% of the total expenditure is invested directly in supporting front line operations, including the cost of maintaining a diverse and historical estate which accounts for 23% of total funding (excluding depreciation). In line with our strategic objectives, SCTS continues to innovate and digitise its service with 9.8% of core funds targeted on strengthening digital infrastructure and innovation to improve front line services.

The financial plan detailed at Annex B (pages 26-27) illustrates that total revenue expenditure for 2022-23 is budgeted at £185.2m, which includes £22.5m for the criminal court recovery programme. With respect to the baseline budget, staff costs represent 50% of gross revenue spend. Capital funding for 2022-23 is projected at £13.9m which includes £2.6m of anticipated in year funding in respect of tribunal digitisation within the Social Security Chamber and Local Taxation Chamber. The capital budget also assumes £3.3m of additional funding transfers to support the Glasgow Atrium and Dundee Campus projects.

Figure 1 SCTS Baseline Gross Revenue & Capital Expenditure 2022-23 by business area: £154.4m

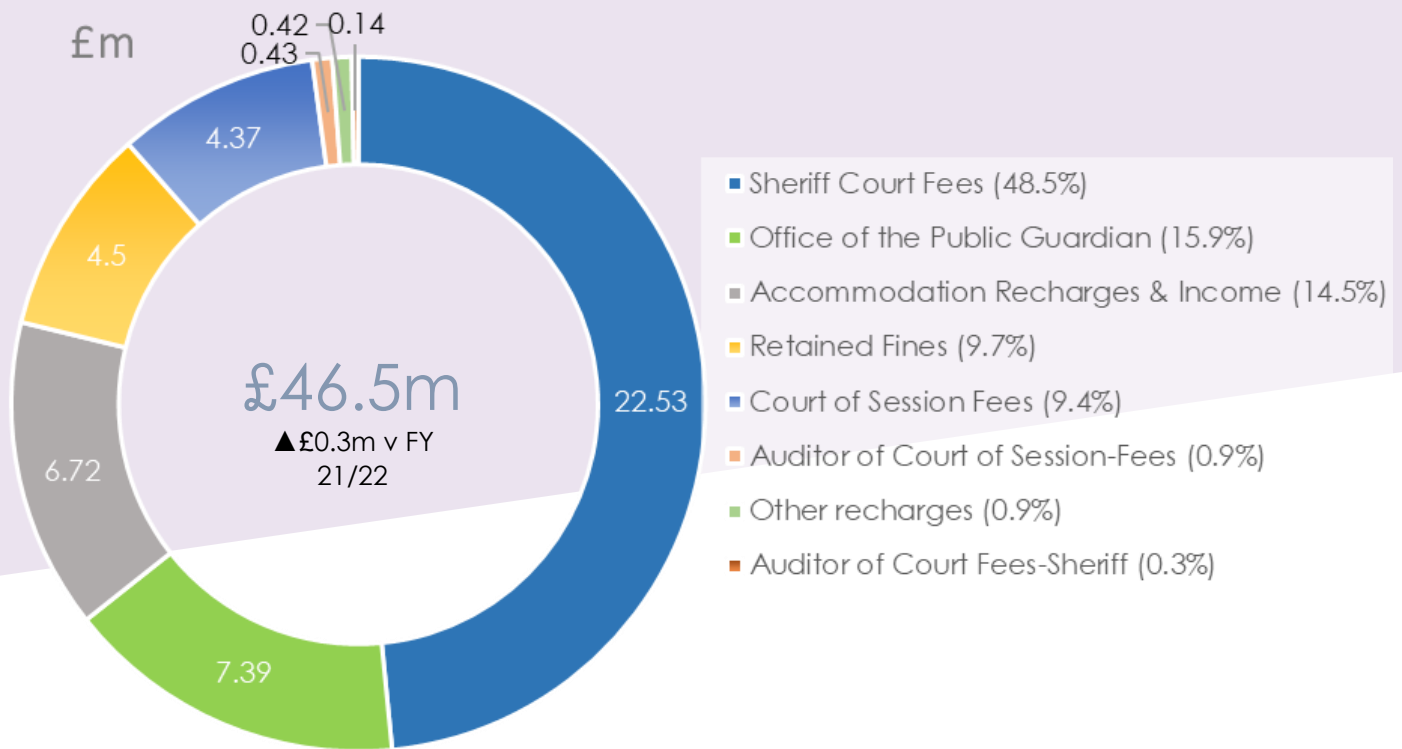


Our Financial Environment (cont.)

Income

Total gross income for 2022-23 is projected to be £46.5m of which 75% relates to civil fees. Figure 2 shows the breakdown of this income by category. A COVID-19 consequential of £2m has been committed by the Scottish Government to underwrite the risk of a fees and fines shortfall; this has been offset within the £180.2m total budget presented in Annex B. SCTS also provides accommodation and associated services which are recharged to a number of other public bodies, notably the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS) and HM Courts & Tribunals Service (HMCTS).

Figure 2 — SCTS budgeted gross income 2022-2023: £46.5m



Tables summarising the financial allocation for 2022-23, broken down by both service area and cost category, can be found at [Annex B](#) (pages 25-26).

While COVID-19 continued to present a major challenge in 2021-22, the figures detailed at **Annex C** illustrate the innovative approaches used to ensure business could continue. While the continued need to prioritise safety and maintain physical distancing reduced our capability to return to full business as usual processing levels in our summary criminal courts at times last year, we were able to introduce additional court capacity in September 2021, in order to increase case throughput and begin addressing the backlogs that have developed.

[Annex C](#) provides summaries of key business volumes for 2019/20 and 2020/21.

It also provides a forecast of 2021-22 volumes and a projection of anticipated business volumes in 2022-23 (p27-29)

Our innovative approach to managing solemn business, which saw the introduction of jury centres in September 2020 and a return to pre-COVID-19 trial court capacity in the High Court and Sheriff Court by February 2021, coupled with the our criminal court recovery programme introduced in September 2021, has had a significant and positive impact on case processing levels. In the High Court, the number of evidence led trials in 2021-22 increased by approximately 18% when compared to pre-pandemic (2019-20) and we project a further 6% increase in 2022-23 compared to 2021-22 performance.

In the Sheriff solemn courts, the number of evidence led trials is approximately 80% of the levels pre-pandemic. However, business in the Sheriff solemn courts was impacted by COP26 and our limitations on multi-accused trials for part of 2021 due to physical distancing restrictions, factors that did not impact on High Court business (the High Court was able to accommodate up to nine accused in a court specifically configured to manage multi-accused trials with physical distancing in place). In 2022-23, we project an increase in the number of evidence led trials in our Sheriff solemn courts of around 20% compared to pre-pandemic levels.

Summary criminal business continues to represent the highest volume of our work and we expect case volumes to increase when compared with the past two years, as the additional capacity introduced through the recovery programme makes inroads into the outstanding case backlogs. In order to increase transparency and support recovery planning we are now publishing [monthly statistics](#) on criminal case throughput and outstanding case levels, which will provide the most up to date position on case volumes, throughput and backlogs throughout the year.

Civil court business has experienced less of an impact as a result of the pandemic, due to the ability to conduct the majority of business online via WebEx. In the Court of Session, there was a small increase in case registrations in 2021-22 in comparison to 2019-20, but a marked increase in the number of proofs proceeding. We are projecting business in the Court of Session to operate at largely the same levels in the coming year. In the Sheriff civil courts, case registrations are still significantly lower than pre-pandemic, but the number of proofs proceeding has recovered to close to the numbers held in 2019-20. While we project lower registration levels in 2022-23 compared to 2019-20, we expect the number of proofs to return to around the levels experienced pre-pandemic.

Office of the Public Guardian

Both the submission and processing levels of Powers of Attorney (POA) and Guardianship orders increased in 2021-22 to levels beyond those seen pre-pandemic. Backlogs have accrued in the processing of Guardianship orders and a programme to address these will be delivered during 2022-23. The Public Guardian continues to ensure that all urgent and expedited applications are given priority at this time, to ensure that the most essential cases are effectively actioned.

Tribunal Business

Whilst there have been some temporary impacts as a consequence of the pandemic, levels of business across Scotland's devolved tribunals generally remained at comparable levels to 2020-21. As new welfare benefits are devolved to Scotland, the work of the Social Security Chamber will increase significantly with case registrations expected to rise to over 9,000, which will make this the tribunal with the largest caseload. SCTS is working closely with the Scottish Government to ensure that the systems needed to manage this level of business are in place, and that sufficient resources — both staff and judicial — are available to support the expansion.



Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service

Business Outcomes for 2022-23

Our key business outcomes for 2022-23 are listed on the following pages, grouped under our seven strategic priorities:

A Well Supported Judiciary

Satisfied Service Users

Skilled and Motivated People

Sustainable Buildings and Business

Digital Services

Efficiency and Best Value

Purposeful Collaboration

The SCTS Board scrutinises progress against this plan quarterly, alongside consideration of the [Board Scorecard](#) which reports on operational performance against the key indicators listed at [Annex E](#). This plan is supported by more detailed unit plans produced by each business area of the SCTS, which are used by Directors to manage progress in their areas.

The identification and effective management of risk is necessary to ensure that the risks to achieving our priorities are identified, assessed, addressed and reviewed. The key corporate risks identified by the SCTS Board are summarised at [Annex D](#). These were reviewed by the Board in February 2022 and are kept under regular review. Actions to control and mitigate corporate risks are monitored by both the SCTS Executive Team and the SCTS Board's Audit and Risk Committee.

2022

2022-23 Overview of Outcomes

2023

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
A WELL SUPPORTED JUDICIARY	Quarterly performance monitoring using SCTS Board key performance metrics														
SATISFIED SERVICE USERS	Extend case management capability in our civil courts, enabling new case types to be uploaded and managed via Civil Online														
	Implement the first phase of recommendations from the management sexual offences review														
SKILLED & MOTIVATED PEOPLE	Deliver the next phase of the Tribunals Reform programme & manage the expansion of Scottish Tribunals business														
	Expand use of virtual domestic abuse trials adopting trauma informed practices														
SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS & BUSINESS	Review Standards of Service victims & witnesses														
	Develop an online public register for Adults with Incapacity cases														
DIGITAL SERVICES	Deliver equality outcomes promoting equality, diversity & inclusion														
	Develop and implement a trauma informed training strategy, to support people exhibiting symptoms of trauma														
EFFICIENCY & BEST VALUE	Implement recruitment & performance management module for People Systems upgrade														
	Develop a new staff performance review approach based on coaching, support and development														
PURPOSEFUL COLLABORATION	Commence Edinburgh estate rationalisation works														
	Maintain estate-wide enhanced and base-line safety measures as long as public health guidance requires														
Install solar panel and electric vehicle charging points to support carbon reduction targets															
Conduct carbon reduction pilot in Falkirk Sheriff Court to inform future approach to decarbonisation															
Expand virtual custody solution & increase provision of remote evidence for police & professional witnesses															
Expand range of purpose build facilities for pre-recording evidence and remote evidence provision															
Develop solution facilitating public viewing of virtual hearings in the Court of Session and Sheriff courts															
Support the implementation of a new finance system including roll-out of Purchase to Pay															
Develop Office of the Public Guardian case management solution and online public register															
Scope and develop web strategy consolidating existing multi-supplier solution															
Realise savings through improved procurement, cost and contract management															
Support the Justice Board for Scotland working collaboratively on the Recover, Renew, Transform Programme															
Work with the judiciary and justice organisations to reduce criminal case backlogs															
Support the activities of the Scottish Civil Justice Council & Scottish Sentencing Council															
Work with the Scottish Government as the COVID Recovery Bill progresses through parliament															

Further information on these outcomes can be found on pages 17-23



A Well Supported Judiciary

Strategic Priority 1

Scotland's judiciary are equipped with the right people, systems, technology and processes to ensure they can dispense justice effectively

Key focus areas

Delivering effective support to the courts and tribunals judiciary as they manage business.

Implement reforms that improve the experience of the court system for all involved—especially victims and witnesses.

Developing digital case management systems which enhance our ability to manage business and gain insight from the data it generates.

Supporting the tribunals judiciary as further reforms to both systems and structures are implemented.

Outcome

Timescale

We will support justice by delivering the administration of Scotland's courts, devolved tribunals and Office of the Public Guardian— developing the business model that makes best use of in-person, virtual and remote ways of working.

Performance reported quarterly using SCTS Board Scorecard

We will support the judiciary as we extend the use of digital case management in our Civil Courts, enabling new case types to be uploaded and managed via the Civil Online portal.

December 2022

We will support the work of the judiciary in implementing the first phase of recommendations of the Lord Justice Clerk's review of the management of sexual offence cases—to improve the experience of complainers and witnesses, without compromising the rights of the accused.

Ongoing throughout 2022-23

We will deliver the next phase of the Tribunals Reform Programme, working with tribunals' judiciary to manage the expansion of the First-tier and Upper Tribunal business, including the transfer of the Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland, and the creation of the new Local Taxation Chamber, into the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland.

March 2023





Satisfied Service Users Strategic Priority 2

We inspire confidence through the delivery of a high-quality customer service

Key focus areas:

Building our understanding of the needs and views of courts, tribunals and OPG users to inform improvements in service quality.

Advancing our equalities agenda, to ensure that the experience of all those using Scotland’s courts and tribunals is both fair and positive.

Transforming the business of OPG to improve service delivery and enhance customer experience via improved online facilities.

Maintaining our focus on services provided to victims and witnesses—building improvements that enhance their experience.

Outcome

Timescale

We will develop an online public register for Adults with Incapacity cases to improve customer experience and interactions for the Office of the Public Guardian.

Ongoing throughout
2022-23

We will expand the use of virtual domestic abuse trial courts, building on the lessons learned in Grampian, Highland and Islands by adopting trauma informed practices in line with the recommendations in the Sexual Offences Review.

December 2022

We will promote equality, diversity and inclusion through the delivery of our Equality Outcomes, promoting awareness and understanding of equality and diversity, to improve services.

Ongoing throughout
2022-23

We will review our current Standards of Service for victims and witnesses in collaboration with justice partners, and ensure that the arrangements in place across our buildings are designed to improve our services and enhance the experience of victims and witnesses attending to give evidence.

February 2023





Skilled and Motivated People Strategic Priority 3

We support our people to provide excellent customer service — focusing on their performance, learning, resilience and well-being

Key focus areas:

Building a pool of trained staff who are ready to fill key roles, ensuring the organisation has the talent and potential to continue to succeed.

Ensuring that our learning and development provision helps us deliver a trauma responsive service.

Continuing to develop the capability of our managers and people at both strategic and operational levels.

Building on our People Strategy by developing systems, policies and analytics that allow us to make decisions in the most efficient way.

Outcome

Timescale

We will develop and implement a training strategy that will equip our staff with the skills and knowledge to respond in a trauma informed way to people suffering the effects of traumatic experience.

Ongoing throughout
2022-23

We will implement the next phase of our People Systems upgrade, delivering a new recruitment and performance management module and review implementation of the first phase (salaries and expenses) to ensure that improvements and efficiencies are achieved.

January 2023

We will implement our new succession planning process and talent management programme to identify key skillsets and ensure that we develop the skills and capabilities of our future managers and leaders.

Ongoing throughout
2022-23

We will develop and deploy a new approach to performance review, focussing on coaching, support and development to enable everyone to give their best.

November 2022



Sustainable Buildings and Business

Strategic Priority 4

We provide a high-quality, safe and secure environment for Scotland's Courts and Tribunals, and take further action to reduce our environmental impact without compromising our core services

Key focus areas:

Implementing our Estates Strategy and Carbon Management Plan to deliver facilities that are optimal for the 21st century

Maintaining a safe operating environment for all our business—during the pandemic and beyond.

Reflecting on the configuration of our estate following the pandemic — so that benefits of new ways of working can be maintained

Delivering improved facilities for service users across the country, as resources allow

Outcome

Timescale

We will commence work to rationalise our Edinburgh estate, repurposing available space in Parliament House, and developing plans to improve the facilities available for tribunals based in Edinburgh.

October 2022

We will maintain enhanced and baseline safety measures across our estate for as long as public health guidance dictates —to ensure that all premises operate in a COVID-19 safe manner.

Ongoing until measures are no longer required

We will deliver a range of sustainability projects, including solar panel installations, electric vehicle charging points and LED light installations to support carbon reduction targets, whilst retaining our Carbon Trust Triple standard accreditation.

December 2022

We will conduct a pilot at Falkirk Sheriff Court—installing a range of carbon reduction measures (insulation, triple glazing etc.) to inform our approach towards meeting the target for decarbonising public sector buildings by 2038.

Ongoing throughout 2022-23





Digital Services Strategic Priority 5

We maximise the opportunities provided by technology to improve processes, access to information and to support quicker and better outcomes

Key focus areas:

Building on the innovations introduced during the pandemic, to provide a modern, flexible and digitally enabled justice system.

Improving the management of cases through digital processes—enhancing our ability to analyse and track case information and reducing risk of data loss.

Ensuring our digital systems are secure and resilient to accommodate both current and future needs.

Embedding agile approaches to deliver change across the organisation, realising value at pace.

Outcome

Timescale

We will conclude our three-year Cyber Security Improvement programme and enhance our cyber security operations team—improving our incident management capability and protecting our digital assets.

February 2023

We will improve user experience by upgrading our technology and infrastructure to support hybrid, virtual and in-person hearings—expanding the range of purpose-built facilities for the pre-recording of evidence and remote evidence provision.

Ongoing throughout
2022-23

We will minimise inconvenience and reduce the need for physical appearance at court by increasing the provision of remote evidence for police and professional witnesses and by expanding virtual custody hearings across Scotland.

December 2022

As more business is carried out online we will develop a solution that allows members of the public to view virtual civil hearings in the Court of Session and Sheriff Courts.

March 2023



Efficiency & Best Value

Strategic Priority 6

We have financial stability that enables us to improve our services in an effective, economical and sustainable manner

Key Focus Areas:

Ensuring that clear and efficient business processes are in place, meeting the needs of all service users.

Improving systems and services so that we can work more effectively with the public — and with each other.

Maintaining facilities, systems and processes that are reliable, efficient and valued by those who use them.

Sharing a wider range of information on our work proactively to build insight and public confidence.

Outcome

Timescale

We will continue development of a new case management system, and an online public register, for the Office of the Public Guardian, which will provide a secure and efficient digital system for the processing of cases, and deliver a better service to users.

Ongoing throughout
2022-23

We will support the implementation of a new finance system, including the roll out of our Purchase to Pay system across the organisation, reducing the risk of fraud and improving controls on spend and budget management.

February 2023

We will scope and develop a web strategy—consolidating the existing multi-supplier SCTS web presence to enhance user experience and provide a long-term sustainable solution.

December 2022

We will identify and drive savings through our approach to purchasing and contract management, delivering a further £0.5m of savings through better procurement, cost and contract management.

March 2023





PURPOSEFUL COLLABORATION

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 7

We work with justice bodies to deliver significant change and improvement to Scotland's justice system — through collaboration, communication and reform

Key focus areas:

Working together across the justice system to respond, recover and renew following the COVID-19 pandemic.

Supporting collaborative reform and improvement of courts and tribunals through our change programmes.

Providing support to the range of councils and other bodies that work in collaboration with SCTs.

Outcome

Timescale

We will support the Justice Board for Scotland and local criminal justice boards—working collaboratively on the “Recover, Renew, Transform Programme” to build a more resilient and responsive system.

Ongoing throughout
2022-23

We will work with the judiciary and justice organisations, through the courts recovery programme, to reduce the criminal case backlogs that have accumulated as a result of the pandemic.

Performance
monitored/
published monthly

We will support the Scottish Civil Justice Council, Scottish Sentencing Council and the Criminal Courts Rules Council so they can deliver their work programmes to a high standard.

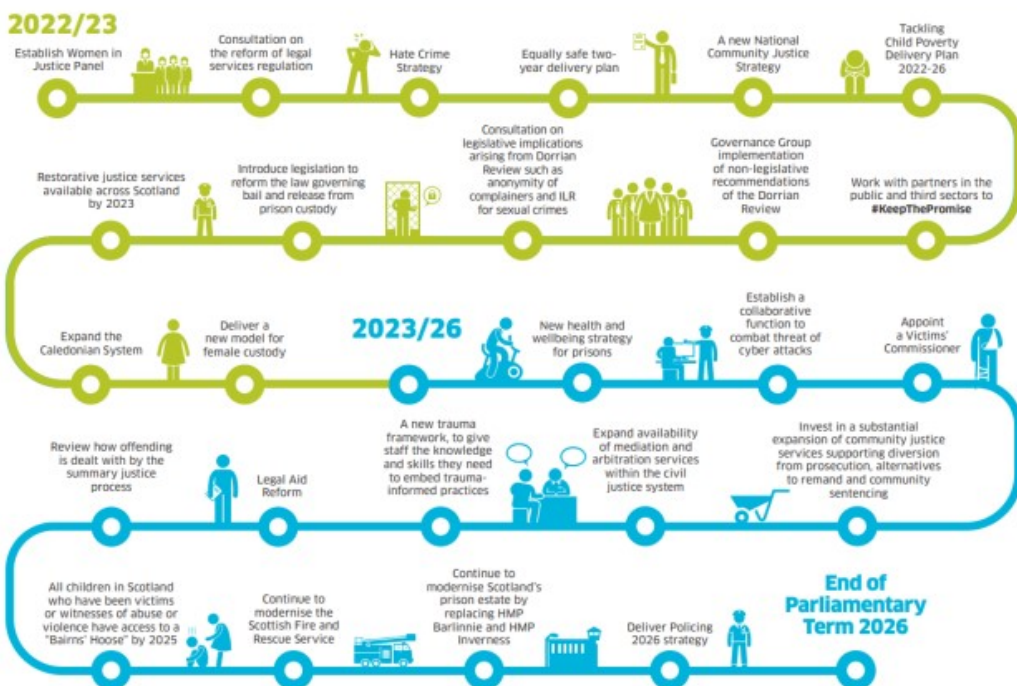
Ongoing throughout
2022-23

We will work with the Scottish Government as the COVID Recovery Bill progresses through parliament, making the case for long term retention of provisions that have supported innovation and resilience during the pandemic, such as virtual hearings and electronic submission.

September 2022



Annex A—Strategy For Justice in Scotland



2022-23 - Financial Summary by Cost Category

Cost Category (£000's)	2022/23 Budget Bill	In Year Funding	2022/23 Total Budget
Pay	72,100	7,962	80,062
Other Staff Costs	446	1	447
Rent and Rates	12,963	-	12,963
Accommodation	11,809	464	12,273
Building Maintenance	6,493	-	6,493
Judicial Costs	1,769	739	2,508
Judicial Pensions	14,906	615	15,521
Tribunal Members fees	6,894	3,312	10,206
Office and Other	9,013	480	9,492
Supplies and Services	2,107	215	2,322
Training	365	28	393
Travel	596	43	639
Court Recovery Programme	-	22,500	22,500
COVID Pressures (Revenue)	-	1,970	1,970
Business Costs	139,461	38,329	177,790
Total Operational Costs	6,982	400	7,382
Total Revenue Expenditure	146,443	38,729	185,172
Fees for Civil Cases	(34,854)	-	(34,854)
Rents Receivable	(6,729)	-	(6,729)
Recharges	(417)	-	(417)
Retained Fines	(4,500)	-	(4,500)
Total Receipts	(46,500)	-	(46,500)
COVID-19 Consequential Income	-	2,000	2,000
Net Revenue Expenditure	99,943	40,729	140,672
Capital			
Buildings	3,000	3,250	6,250
Furniture and Fittings	-	-	-
Digital Infrastructure	5,000	2,631	7,631
COVID Pressures (Capital)	-	30	30
Total Capital Expenditure	8,000	5,911	13,911
Non-Cash Ring Fenced DEL Depreciation	25,600	-	25,600
Total Net Expenditure	133,543	46,640	180,183

A commentary on the financial environment and budget can be found at pages 12-13 of this plan

Annex B—Summary Financial Plan (cont.)

2022-23 – Financial Summary by Service Area

Budget 2022/23 - Financial Summary by Service Area			
Service Area (£000's)	Revenue	Capital	Total
Change and Digital Innovation	11,185	4,860	16,045
Corporate Services	12,376	145	12,521
Estates and Property Services	34,429	6,250	40,679
High Court and Court of Session	6,812	-	6,812
Judicial Office	8,509	-	8,509
Judicial Pensions	15,521	-	15,521
Juror Costs, Medical and Specialist Court Reports	7,382	-	7,382
Legislation and Information Unit	1,462	-	1,462
Office of the Public Guardian	4,328	-	4,328
Operational Delivery	3,109	25	3,134
Recover, Renew and Transform	22,500	-	22,500
Sheriff Court and Justice of the Peace Court	37,644	-	37,644
Tribunal Operations	19,915	2,631	22,546
Total Direct & Operational Costs	185,172	13,911	199,083
Receipts			
	(46,500)	-	(46,500)
COVID-19 Consequentials Income			
	2,000	-	2,000
Total Net Expenditure before depreciation			
	140,672	13,911	154,583
Non-Cash Ring Fenced DEL Depreciation			
	25,600	-	25,600
Total Net Expenditure			
	166,272	13,911	180,183

A commentary on the financial environment and budget can be found at pages 12-13 of this plan

Supreme Courts, Sheriff and Justice of the Peace Courts, Office of the Public Guardian

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22 (Forecast)	2022/23 (Projection)
High Court				
High Court judge days	3,486	2,227	4,158	4,840
Indictments registered	1,118	851	732	1,300
Trials with evidence Led	498	278	569	687
High Court: criminal appeals lodged	630	281	464	662
Court of Session				
Court of Session judge days	1,328	1,240	1,400	1,400
Cases registered	975	882	981	980
Proofs proceeding	58	63	99	90
Court of Session: civil appeals/reclaiming motions	229	188	146	150
All-Scotland Courts				
Sheriff Appeal Court: criminal appeals lodged	701	308	404	600
Sheriff Appeal Court: civil appeals lodged	294	132	191	220
Personal Injury Court: registrations	3,220	2,944	3,260	3,200
Sheriff Courts				
Sheriff Court sitting days	26,981	18,391	27,358	29,000
Sheriff Courts: Summary				
Complaints registered	65,490	54,110	55,130	66,000
Trials with evidence led	6,946	2,721	5,344	9,000
Sheriff Courts: Solemn				
Indictments registered	5,452	4,851	5,794	6,000
Trials with evidence led	1,134	197	886	1,500
Sheriff Courts: Civil				
Ordinary Cause registered	23,089	18,091	21,621	22,000
OC Proofs and Debates proceeding	543	216	450	500
Summary Cause/Small Claims/Simple Proc reg'd	45,953	20,502	24,774	30,000
SC Proofs Proceeding	368	85	299	350
JP Courts				
Complaints registered	33,582	16,932	23,958	30,000
Trials with evidence led	1,543	349	486	1,500
Office of the Public Guardian				
Powers of Attorney registered	64,166	37,999	72,695	62,000
Guardianship Orders registered	2,778	1,912	2,847	2,800
Access to funds orders registered	221	182	185	230
Intervention orders registered	476	379	524	450



Annex C—Key Business Volumes & Planning Assumptions (cont.)

Upper Tribunal, First-tier Tribunals and other Tribunals administered by the SCTS

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22 (Forecast)	2022/23 (Projection)
Upper Tribunal for Scotland				
Receipts	53	30	41	260
Disposals	51	38	30	274
Hearing Days	22	18	37	112
First-tier Tribunal for Scotland (Housing and Property Chamber)				
Property Factor				
Receipts	187	218	197	202
Disposals	208	196	205	232
Hearing Days	74	116	141.5	100
Rent & Repairs				
Receipts	151	129	159	140
Disposals	178	96	159	168
Hearing Days	157.5	89.5	252.5	160
Third Party				
Receipts	49	13	26	40
Disposals	25	18	28	52
Hearing Days	96	38.5	60.5	50
Right of Entry (Cases are disposed of by decision rather than hearing)				
Receipts	79	81	156	100
Disposals	75	51	144	85
Decisions	45	26	78	60
Letting Agents				
Receipts	151	66	50	60
Disposals	135	78	56	72
Hearing Days	43	59	43.5	54
Private Rented Sector				
Receipts	3,507	1,960	2,762	2,700
Disposals	3,551	2,304	2,500	2,430
Hearing Days	230	323	328.5	431
Case Management Discussion Days	1,195	1,225	1,343	1,363





Annex C—Key Business Volumes & Planning Assumptions (cont.)

Upper Tribunal, First-tier Tribunals and other Tribunals administered by the SCTS (cont.)

	2019/29	2020/21	2021/22 (Forecast)	2022/23 (Projection)
First-tier Tribunal for Scotland (Health and Education Chamber)				
Additional Support Needs				
Receipts	146	83	129	109
Disposals	132	125	123	98
Hearing Days	47	58	47	60
First-tier Tribunal for Scotland (Tax Chamber)				
Tax				
Receipts	24	2	11	24
Disposals	18	7	9	20
Hearing Days	25	4	13	36
First-tier Tribunal for Scotland (Social Security Chamber)				
Social Security				
Receipts	67	46	63	9,510
Disposals	60	42	56	4,053
Hearing Days	17	9	12	1,013
First-tier Tribunal for Scotland (General Regulatory Chamber)				
Charity Appeals				
Receipts	1	0	1	1
Disposals	1	0	0	1
Hearing Days	2	0	1	1
Parking and Bus Lane Appeals (SCTS assumed responsibility during 2021-22)				
Receipts	-	819	726	1,200
Disposals	-	909	667	1,200
Hearing Days	-	41	34	72
Police Appeals (SCTS assumes responsibility late 2022)				
Receipts	-	-	-	TBC
Disposals	-	-	-	TBC
Hearing Days	-	-	-	TBC



Annex C—Key Business Volumes & Planning Assumptions (cont.)

First-tier Tribunal for Scotland (Local Taxation Chamber)				
Valuation Appeals (<i>SCTS assumes responsibility in 2023</i>)				
Receipts	-	-	-	TBC
Disposals	-	-	-	TBC
Hearing Days	-	-	-	TBC

Other Tribunals administered by the SCTS

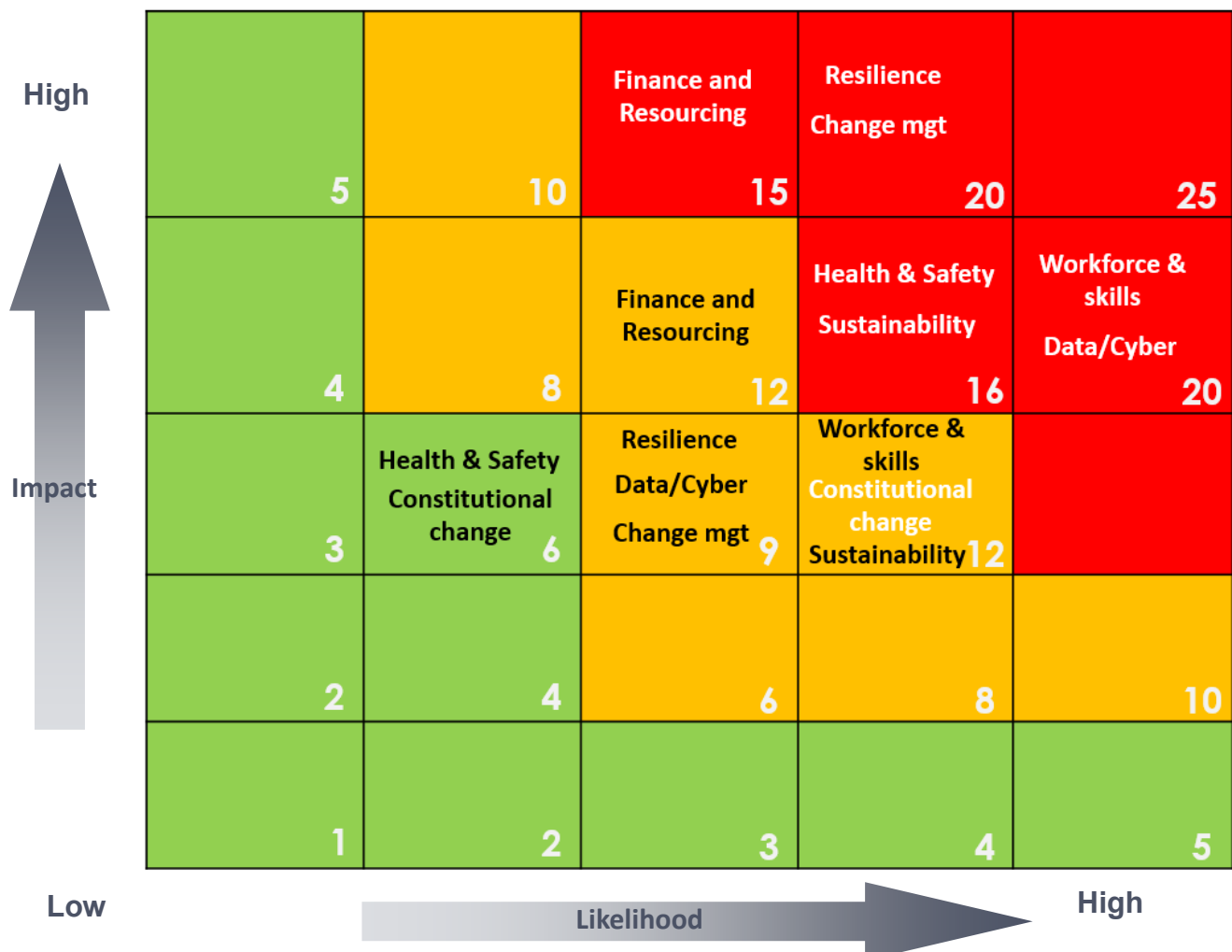
	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22 Forecast)	2022/23 (Projection)
Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland¹ (<i>Function scheduled to transfer to First-tier Tribunal (Mental Health Chamber) in 2022</i>)				
Receipts	4,600	5,057	5,071	5,106
Disposals	4,509	4,812	4,755	4,825
Hearing Days	3,407	3,227	3,512	3,756
Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland (Excessive Security)				
Receipts	31	34	31	30
Disposals	26	34	28	30
Hearing Days	22	30	27	30
Land Tribunal for Scotland (<i>Responsibility transferred to the Supreme Courts from 10 January 2022</i>)				
Receipts	335	2059	555	600
Disposals	331	214	215	315
Hearing Days	80	16	32	62
Pensions Appeals Tribunal For Scotland				
Receipts	280	191	180	270
Disposals	272	215	223	270
Hearing Days	64	43	51	60
Council Tax Reduction Review Panel (<i>Function scheduled to transfer to First-tier Tribunal (Local Taxation Chamber in 2023)</i>)				
Receipts	57	42	49	53
Disposals	60	47	46	63
Hearing Days	14	8	19	12

¹Case volumes under the s.26 Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2006 are included in this measurement



Strategic Risk Categories – Identified and Mapped by the SCTS Board

(White text = Untreated Risk, Black Text = Treated Risk)



Strategic Risk Category	Principal Corporate Risk monitored by SCTS Board and Audit and Risk Committee
Workforce wellbeing and Skills	Failure to maintain a skilled, motivated and adaptable workforce to meet current and future needs
Health, Safety and Security	Significant health & safety or security breach
Service Resilience	Essential business and services compromised due to critical incident(s)
Data and Cyber Security	Significant data/system loss caused by failure in information management controls or cyber-attack
Change Management	Ineffective planning and/or delivery of change impacts on delivery of core business or reform programme
Constitutional Change	Constitutional change impacts on ability to deliver core business or reform programme
Finance and Resourcing	Financial pressures impact on delivery of core business or reform programme
Sustainability	Failure to meet Scottish Government's ambitious Climate change targets (carbon zero by 2045)



Annex E – Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service

Our Strategic Priorities and Objectives 2020-23

By supporting justice and building a stronger service we maintain:

- A Well Supported Judiciary; and
- Satisfied Service Users

In order to deliver we need:

- Skilled and Motivated People;
- Sustainable Buildings and Business;
- Digital Services
- Efficiency and Best Value; and
- Purposeful Collaboration

Underpinning the delivery of this we need:

- Strong leadership, governance and planning;
- Stable and sustainable funding

For each of our seven strategic priorities the SCTS Board has set out the main objectives that the organisation aims to achieve over the 2020-23 Corporate Planning period.

Strategic Priority 1 – A Well Supported Judiciary

Scotland's judiciary are equipped with the right people, systems, technology and processes to ensure they can dispense justice effectively

In achieving this we will focus on the following strategic objectives:

- 1.1 Deliver the administration of Scotland's courts, devolved tribunals and the Office of the Public Guardian to a consistently high standard throughout the period of this plan.
- 1.2 Ensure that all of Scotland's devolved tribunals have the systems, processes and people they need to dispense justice as their caseloads and span of responsibility continues to grow.
- 1.3 Support Scotland's judiciary as the range and nature of cases they face continues to evolve—due to societal change, developments in systems and processes and broader policy changes.

Strategic Priority 2 – Satisfied Service Users

We inspire confidence through the delivery of a high-quality customer service

In achieving this we will focus on the following strategic objectives:

- 2.1 Improve our service by learning from those who use it—inviting feedback and conducting user surveys to assess how effective we are.
- 2.2 Use the Customer Service Excellence standard to independently review and improve the quality of service we deliver.
- 2.3 Transform the service we provide to child and vulnerable witnesses to minimise the trauma they experience and ensure that the best possible evidence is captured.



Strategic Priority 3 – Skilled and Motivated People

We support our people to provide excellent customer service—focusing on their performance, learning, resilience and wellbeing

In achieving this we will focus on the following strategic objectives:

3.1 Support our people to do their best—by introducing a new approach to performance management and development, and by reviewing our current reward framework.

3.2 Strengthen the wellbeing of our staff and those they support — through our wellbeing programme and the introduction of training on trauma awareness, that will improve both our understanding of trauma and our ability to support those experiencing it.

3.3 Build the confidence and competence of our people through the development of our professional training programmes — enabling all staff to develop their skills and careers in a structured and supported way.

Strategic Priority 4 – Sustainable Buildings and Business

We provide a high-quality, safe and secure environment for Scotland’s Courts and Tribunals, and take further action to reduce our environmental impact without compromising our core services

In achieving this we will focus on the following strategic objectives:

4.1 Further reduce our impact on the environment—focusing on the three key drivers of our estate, our systems and our people, as we assess how to reach the carbon zero goal.

4.2 Set out our future vision for the courts and tribunals estate across Scotland, drawing on the lessons from the development of Inverness Justice Centre and conducting a strategic review of our estate to assess its condition, investment needs and options for future development.

4.3 Transform the service we provide to child and vulnerable witnesses to minimise the trauma they experience and ensure that the best possible evidence is captured.

Strategic Priority 5 – Digital Services

We maximise the opportunities provided by technology to improve processes, access to information and to support quick and better outcomes

In achieving this we will focus on the following strategic objectives:

5.1 Reduce the need for physical attendance at proceedings where it adds little or no value by exploiting the technology introduced across Scotland’s courts and tribunals.

5.2 Improve access to justice by expanding and enhancing the range of digital services we provide.

5.3 Invest in the ongoing maintenance, security and usability of our digital network and systems — as it underpins an increasing proportion of what we do.

Strategic Priority 6 – Efficiency and Best Value

We have financial stability that enables us to improve our services in an effective, economical and sustainable manner

In achieving this we will focus on the following strategic objectives:

- 6.1 Develop and introduce a modern digital HR system (including a new e-recruitment system) that reduced manual input, supports real-time updates and informs the organisation with high-quality people data and analytics.
- 6.2 Improve our ability to interact digitally with as broad a range of users as possible — investing in our web presence to enhance the information we provide and rolling-out a new system to automate expense payments and reimbursement.
- 6.3 Enhance the range of information we make available, publishing data to improve transparency. As new case management systems are introduced we will explore the potential to improve our service and generate greater insights for the justice system through the use of artificial intelligence.

Strategic Priority 7 – Purposeful Collaboration

We work with justice bodies to deliver significant change and improvement to Scotland’s justice system— through collaboration, communication and reform

In achieving this we will focus on the following strategic objectives:

- 7.1 Propose reforms with the potential to radically improve the management of criminal business by co-ordinating and evaluating a range of pilot approaches to summary criminal case management and by taking forward the recommendations of the Lord Justice Clerk’s Review.
- 7.2 As members of Scotland’s Justice Board and its six local criminal justice boards, work in partnership with justice organisations, professional bodies and the third sector to maintain and improve system performance, share insights and support policy development leading to practical improvements.
- 7.3 Provide the staffing, systems and resources required to support the work of the Scottish Civil Justice Council and Scottish Sentencing Council as they develop court rules and sentencing guidelines to improve the operation of both the civil and criminal justice systems.



Annex F—Summary of Key Performance Indicators

Performance against the KPI measures is monitored quarterly by the SCTS Board, using its Performance Scorecard published on our website, assessing a range of measures relating to delivery of our seven Strategic Priorities. These are summarised below.

1. A Well Supported Judiciary

- 1a Judicial satisfaction levels (Assessment of most recent judicial attitudes survey plus qualitative assessment by SCTS Executive Team)

2. Satisfied Service Users

- 2a User satisfaction levels (based on quantitative survey and assessment data, including SCTS Court User Survey Data)
- 2b Percentage of summary criminal cases disposed of within twenty-six weeks (based on official justice system statistics)

3. Skilled and Motivated People

- 3a Employee engagement levels (based on staff turnover, absence levels, complaints and grievance monitoring and survey data)
- 3b Delivery of development activities (based on proportion of staff who have engaged in and completed key learning and development activities)

4. Sustainable Buildings and Business

- 4a Maintaining the estate (assessment of investment levels to ensure backlog maintenance is being managed effectively)
- 4b Sustainability and carbon reduction (assessment of the extent to which the organisation is meeting agreed carbon reduction targets)

5. Digital Services

- 5a Automated and online transactions (assessment of the proportion of online fines transactions and payments made via automated systems)
- 5b IT resilience and service (assessment of the resilience of core SCTS systems available for use when required)

6. Efficiency and Best Value

- 6a High Court business recovery (assessment of measures aligned to [COVID-19 Criminal Court Recovery Modelling](#))
- 6b Sheriff Court solemn business recovery (assessment of measures aligned to Sheriff solemn [COVID-19 Criminal Court Recovery Modelling](#))
- 6c Sheriff court summary business recovery (assessment of measures aligned to Sheriff summary [COVID-19 Criminal Court Recovery Modelling](#))
- 6d Justice of the Peace Court business recovery (assessment of three operational indicator aligned to business recovery)
- 6e Civil and miscellaneous business waiting times (assessment of 10 indicators measuring waiting times for civil and appellate business and guardianship orders administered by Office of the Public Guardian)
- 6f Effective Tribunals Operations (assessment of 21 key operational indicators measuring effective administration)
- 6g Delivering on our change programme (assessment of the delivery status on progress the SCTS is making towards meeting its outcomes)

7. Purposeful Collaboration

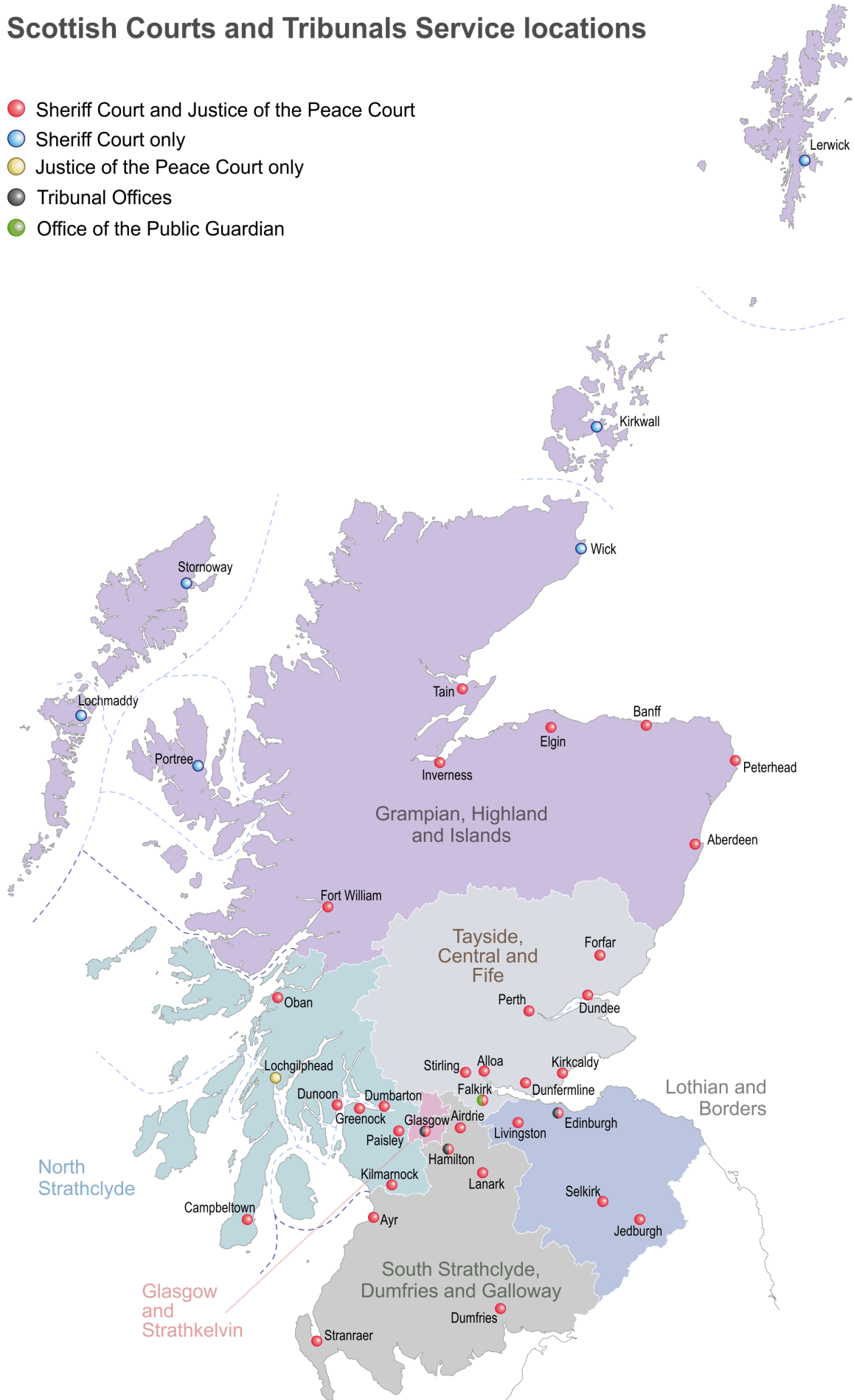
- 7a Sufficient and effective collaboration (analysis of the overall quality and quantity of collaboration between the SCTS and key partner agencies)

8. Financial Indicators

- 8a Expenditure profile (comparison of actual expenditure with profiled expenditure to the year end to ensure robust budgeting)
- 8b Fines and fees income (comparison of actual fines and fees income received with profiled income to the year end to ensure robust profiling)

Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service locations

- Sheriff Court and Justice of the Peace Court
- Sheriff Court only
- Justice of the Peace Court only
- Tribunal Offices
- Office of the Public Guardian



Further Information

SCTS website

<http://www.scotcourtribunals.gov.uk>

SCTS Reports and Data

www.scotcourts.gov.uk/about-the-scottish-court-service/reports-data

SCTS Board

www.scotcourts.gov.uk/about-the-scottish-court-service/the-scottish-court-service-board

Office of the Public Guardian

www.publicguardian-scotland.gov.uk

Scottish Tribunals

<http://www.scotcourts.gov.uk/the-courts/the-tribunals/about-scottish-tribunals>

Other Courts and Tribunals

<http://www.scotcourts.gov.uk/the-courts/the-tribunals/other-courts-and-tribunals>

Judicial Office for Scotland

www.scotcourts.gov.uk/about-the-scottish-court-service/judicial-office-for-scotland

Scottish Government

<http://www.gov.scot>

Scottish Civil Justice Council

www.scottishciviljusticecouncil.gov.uk

Scottish Sentencing Council

<https://www.scottishsentencingcouncil.org.uk>

Justice Strategy for Scotland

<http://www.gov.scot/Publications/2012/09/5924/0>

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