

**Scottish Court Service
People Strategy
2012 – 2015**

Why have a People Strategy?

This people strategy for the Scottish Court Service for the period 2012-2015 is designed to provide a direction and framework for the development and implementation of people management policies, practices and activities to ensure that the organisation is able to deliver its Corporate Plan through the effective engagement of its people.
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Who is it designed for?

The strategy is primarily designed for leaders, managers and staff in the SCS to help them be fully aware of the strategic context of people management and how it relates to the policies and practices which are made available to them to frame their day to day activity of managing people in the SCS.

What are the key messages?

The strategy is aligned to, and designed to support, the SCS Corporate Plan and related Delivery Programme
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The strategy builds on the People Strategy 2008-2011 but reprioritises aspects of the way in which we currently manage people in the SCS. It continues to give authority to managers to take responsibility for day to day management activity assisted by the professional advice and support of the Human Resources Unit (HRU).

The strategy confirms that the framework of existing policies and practices for managing people is sound but that we need to become better at applying those policies and practices more effectively and more consistently across the SCS.
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Foreword from the Chief Executive.

(subject to revision and updating prior to launch)

The people who work in the Scottish Court Service are at the heart of delivering an effective court service to the people of Scotland. How we manage people is critical to having high quality front line services that satisfy the needs of the judiciary and court users.

The Service like all parts of the public sector is facing significant challenges over the next few years. The SCS Board and Executive Team have developed a Corporate Plan and associated Delivery Programme to give the SCS direction and to provide the vehicles to help make appropriate change to how we deliver services to the people of Scotland.

However, delivering change can only be done through people and consequently the SCS must have an effective approach to managing people and ensuring that we have a skilled, engaged and motivated workforce.

This strategy highlights that for the SCS to be the organisation it aspires to be as set out in the Corporate Plan we need to put more emphasis on addressing 4 strategic people management priorities, as follows:

1. Developing our **leadership and management capability**;
2. Ensuring we create **a flexible and adaptive workforce**;
3. Having mechanisms that give us **assurance about staff skill levels**;
and
4. Developing **effective reward and recognition systems** within the current public sector constraints.

In the best working traditions of the SCS this strategy has been developed through consultation with a wide range of leaders, operational managers and our trade union partners so that we capture and understand the perspective of people who are critical to creating the type of workforce we need.

We are fortunate that we are building our new people strategy on a solid foundation and from a position of strength. We have hard working, enthusiastic and engaged staff throughout Scotland who are committed to making courts and offices places where the judiciary, public and our partners in the justice system can expect excellent service. In this document we set out some of the things we will do to be even better in the future.

This strategy document provides the framework for making the very most of our people.

Eleanor Emberson
Chief Executive

People Management in the SCS: Where are we now?

1. This strategy is one which is designed to help the SCS meet the organisational challenges of the next few years through engaging the energies, capabilities and commitment of staff at all levels. It represents a key strand of work under the Skilled, Engaged and Motivated Staff theme of the 2011-2014 Corporate Plan.
2. In line with the People Strategy 2008-2011 the SCS reaffirms two key principles that underpin the people management approach in the Service.

To create a working environment in which the Service, as an employer of choice, can retain experienced staff and recruit high quality individuals from the marketplace

To develop the capability and skill profile of the workforce at all levels to cope with change and to deliver ever improving services to the judiciary and all our customers

3. Independent reports from the Investors in People organisation, results from annual staff surveys and other reviews of people management, including initial scrutiny by the People Committee set up by the SCS Board, indicate that a solid people management framework is in place but there remains room for improvement in the application of the framework.
4. As at November 2011 the SCS workforce profile is as follows:

Grade	Headcount	FTE*	Percentage of FTE
CEO/Executive Directors	4	4	0.3
Directors	10	9.66	0.7
Senior Managers	24	24	1.8
Sheriffdom Legal Advisers	6	6	0.4
Legal Advisers	36	31.79	2.4
SEO	81	80.12	6
HEO	133	127.82	9.5
EO	369	349.62	26
AO/Clerk Typist	485	445.41	33.2
Typists	8	6.47	0.4
AA and Support Grades	302	257.2	19
Total	1458	1342.09	100 (rounded)

Work Location	Headcount	FTE*	Percentage of FTE
Supreme Court	156	152.87	11.4
Sheriff and JP Courts	1065	964.19	71.8
Judicial Office	21	20.54	1.5
OPG	72	66.48	4.6
HQ	143	137.01	10.2
Secondment	1	1	0.07
Total	1458	1342.09	100 (rounded)

* FTE = Full Time Equivalent

5. At £41.5m staff costs represent nearly 50% of the total SCS budget for 2011/12 and therefore the effective and efficient management of this resource is fundamental to the future of the Service.
6. A review of key indicators suggests that the way in which people management is structured and delivered in the SCS has created a workforce which is in relative terms skilled, engaged and motivated, as follows:

Indicator	Position as at 31 March 2011 (2010/11 data)
Voluntary Turnover	3.3%
Short Term Absence	6.1 calendar days (equivalent to 3.7 working days – overall total absence loss in 2010/11 was 3% of working time which compares with a CIPD UK average of 3.3% reported in October 2011.
Staff Survey Engagement Score	In the 2010 civil service survey SCS recorded an engagement score of 57% against a civil service average of 56%. SCS ranked 45 out of a total 103 participating organisations.
Percentage of staff appraised as having high potential	In appraisals for 31 March 2011 5% of staff were assessed as having high potential.
Percentage of staff with potential to move to a higher grade now or with development	In appraisals for 31 March 2011 a further 40% of staff were assessed as having potential to work at a higher grade either now or with development.
Number of formal disciplinary penalties awarded in	12
Number of dismissals	2
Number of staff managed under poor performance arrangements	12
Number of formal grievances recorded	0

7. In the 2010 report for the Investors in People organisation it was reported that:

“We found that your staff are fully committed to ensuring that members of the public receive an equal and fair service and see themselves as

‘public servants’ in the truest sense of the word. We met many staff who were proud to work for SCS and who spoke with compassion and understanding of the different needs of the people who use your services.” and

“It is clear that there is much good practice across the organisation in relation to management effectiveness. Many people spoke of managers who were open, approachable and responsive to their support and development needs.” and

“People indicated that there are a number of extremely effective People (HR) policies in place.”

8. The SCS People Committee in its first year of operation has reviewed the current range of people policies and the main systems and processes used to manage people and capture workforce data. It has indicated that it is satisfied there are no significant gaps and has put in place a policy monitoring process.
9. The work which was mapped out in the People Strategy 2008 -2011 has largely been carried out but it is clear that key theme about improving staff engagement through more effective and consistent management across the SCS continues to be central to improving the effectiveness of the workforce. This strongly indicates that the direction of travel for people management is a focus on better implementation of the current policies and procedures.

The Future Challenges

10. The SCS Corporate Plan 2011- 2014 sets out the purpose of the Scottish Court Service (SCS) in “Supporting Justice”. This is achieved by providing the people, buildings and services needed for the work of Scotland’s courts, members of the judiciary, and the Office of the Public Guardian and Accountant of Court (OPG). Over the period of the Corporate Plan the SCS will see its budget reducing in real terms by 20%.
11. The Corporate Plan identified the following key requirements for a strong and efficient SCS in the years ahead. These are:
 - skilled, engaged and motivated **staff** in our courts, OPG and corporate headquarters;
 - a well managed **estate** that makes the best possible use of our buildings and meets our environmental responsibilities;
 - clear and efficient business **processes** that respond to the needs of the judiciary, court users and the wider public;
 - effective **technology** that supports our key processes and communications; and
 - appropriate **collaboration** with other justice organisations, to help drive improvement across the justice system as a whole.

12. The SCS Board sees the development of a skilled, engaged and motivated staff as critical to meeting the challenges that will be faced over the coming years. An extensive portfolio of reform projects are being undertaken looking at every aspect of SCS performance and activity. There are plans for legislation that will also significantly affect parts of the justice system, particularly the civil justice system. These will have implications for how the SCS workforce is structured and managed and the People Strategy must provide a framework in order that the organisation can ensure that an engaged and skilled workforce is available to deliver effective services in new ways.

Development of the Strategy: Methodology

13. The Strategy was developed through the setting up 3 work groups that met during the period April to October 2011. These were:

- CEO, Executive Directors and Directors Group
- Operational Manager Group
- TUS and HR staff Group

In total 34 individuals have attended 18 consultation workshops culminating in a workshop for all participants on 6 October 2011 when a draft version of the Strategy was approved.

Analysis and consultation was structured around detailed management information on 4 keys aspects of people management, namely:

Employee Resourcing
Employee Reward
Employee Learning
Employee Relations

14. Workshops examined a range of data about all of the key aspects and looked at the connections and overlaps between them as well as reviewing information about the workforce profile, the effectiveness of processes, the Investors in People report 2010 and the outputs from the Staff Survey 2010.

15. The main content of the Strategy was reviewed by the People Committee at its meeting on 27 October and a draft has been circulated and approved by the Committee.

Strategic Priorities

16. Within the context of providing the organisation with “skilled, engaged and motivated staff”, participants reviewed the current people management position against the likely future requirements of an SCS working in the wider Scottish justice sector. In doing so they identified 4 strategic priorities, as follows

- Developing our ***leadership and management capability***;

- Ensuring we create **a flexible and adaptive workforce**;
- Having mechanisms that give us **assurance about staff skill levels**; and
- Developing **effective reward and recognition systems** within the current public sector constraints.

17. For each of the 4 strategic priorities this document will **outline the background**, describe the **high level interventions** that have been identified and set out how these will translate into **actions and solutions** within a prioritised timeline over the next 3 years. Activities will be actioned through operational and HRU Business Plans for the years in question.

18. It is reassuring that the work to identify strategic issues has not unearthed any major surprises or gaps. There is a clear thread running between the previous strategy and this document and some solutions and activities proposed are already underway their relevance having been underlined in the consultative workshops. A one page graphic setting out the strategic actions is provided at Appendix A.

Leadership and Management Capability

19. **Background:** At times of change and challenge good leadership and managers who engage with staff are essential. While the Investors in People Report 2010 made positive comments about good practice in management in the SCS it also highlighted inconsistency of approach across the Service with pockets of good practice and groups of leaders and managers that were not using policies or processes, such as performance appraisal, attendance management, recruitment, staff briefings or mainstreaming equality in a way that motivates staff to give of their very best.

20. This was also evidenced in the outcome of a number of staff surveys including the 2010 survey. Where managers have avoided, or have lacked constancy, in supporting, nurturing and developing staff through the people management tools which are available. The result can be sub standard performance and staff whose motivation is affected. This can have a direct impact on SCS performance and its ability to make the changes which will be necessary in the years ahead. In future senior managers should ensure that there should be consequences for those managers not taking full responsibility for people management. Such an approach will be welcomed by staff and will benefit everyone.

21. It is recognised that some issues result because managers lack confidence in engaging with staff around difficult conversations. As a result of this the SCS has already launched a "Leadership through Coaching Programme". This will be cascaded to SEO and HEO managers during 2012 and will, subject to a positive first phase evaluation, be rolled out in subsequent years to supervisory grades.

22. In relation to the increasing demand for change it was identified in analysis of key issues that a more consistent, skilled and on-going commitment to process refinement and application of systems thinking was important to deliver much of the corporate plan delivery programme

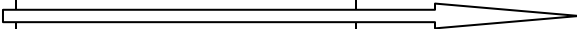
23. **High Level Interventions:** Five interventions were identified, four of these related to continuing investment in development activity :

- Developing a coaching culture to help managers engage with their teams and staff in a way that promotes effective and shared views about development, performance and other workplace issues;
- Reviewing current managerial development programmes to ensure they offer appropriate learning on communication skills, team building and system thinking;
- Developing a management development programme to prepare managers for senior manager posts; and
- Creating a more skilled pool of recruiting managers to ensure the quality of recruitment and selection decisions and that equality of access to SCS jobs is guaranteed.

24. In addition to these interventions it was also agreed that insufficient investment was being made in discussions at senior management level, and through cascade to more junior managers, about setting performance standards. This is required to ensure fair and consistent appraisal which can be translated into “what good looks like” in a range of front line jobs.

25. **Actions and Solutions:** The table below sets out the proposed activity over the next 3 years.

Short Term 2011/12 & 2012/13	Medium Term 2013/14	Long Term 2014/15
Roll out Phase 1 of Leadership Through Coaching Programme		
Develop and roll out Recruitment Training to ensure each Sheriffdom/Unit has a group of skilled recruiters.		
	Review First Line Manager and Middle Manager Development Programme incorporating learning on communications and systems thinking	
	Design and Scope Senior Manager Development Programme incorporating learning on systems	

	thinking	
Introduce formal standard setting process for senior managers prior to launch of annual staff appraisal activity		

A Flexible and Adaptive Workforce

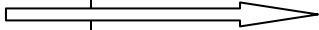
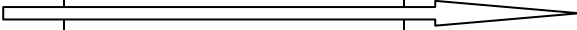
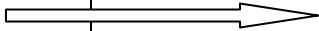
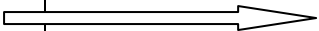
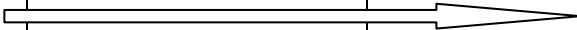
26. **Background:** Over the next few years it will be important for the SCS to have a workforce that is agile and responds positively to changing structures, new ways of working, technology and customer demands.
27. Corporate services, in particular HR, will be required to provide senior managers with accurate and easily accessible data about the workforce to help the organisation plan for, and anticipate the impact of, changes arising from the corporate plan delivery programme and other requirements that might be driven by external partners. There will be a need to monitor the workforce profile to ensure the workforce is diverse and mirrors the social make up of Scotland. Succession planning needs to be given higher priority within the SCS and this requires good data to be available to senior managers. The Voluntary Redundancy Programme 2011 highlighted the strengths of current capability but also pointed to areas where improvements could be made.
28. It was identified that a number of factors may be adversely impacting on our potential workforce flexibility. One is a widespread lack of understanding about staff mobility both in relation to grades that are regarded as “mobile” and those more junior grades classed as “non mobile”. The current lack of clarity means that there is much unnecessary anxiety about being transferred across the country which is fuelled more by myths than by facts. Setting out clear expectations of managers and staff needs to be addressed.
29. Workshops suggested that there is uncertainty about the future of arrangements for the selection and promotion of staff at HEO (middle manager) level and that this may impact on the mobility and flexibility of some staff members.
30. A critical issue in relation to the ability of some EO (supervisor level) managers to engage with their staff is the tension and time demands between their dual role as a clerk of court or technical expert and their managerial role. This conflict can impact on both in-court effectiveness and time given to day to day managerial processes. Resolving this tension could be highly beneficial.
31. Work on future court structures and how in- court support is delivered may have implications for grading and job design at more junior levels and a key component of reviews will be to ensure that new

arrangements fit with good management structures and key principles of reward and recognition.

32. High level Interventions: Five interventions were identified:

- Delivering clarity about staff deployment and mobility;
- Reviewing supervisory structures at court level to ensure they meet the demands for in-court support and effective management of staff;
- Reviewing arrangements for selection of staff to HEO (middle manager level)
- Ensuring work on in court support and future court structures has positive impact on job design and that grading and reward impacts are appropriate; and
- Continuing to improve Workforce Planning capability to ensure senior managers have accurate and accessible staff data on numbers and capability.

33. Actions and Solutions: The table below sets out the proposed activity over the next 3 years.

Short Term 2011/12 & 2012/13	Medium Term 2013/14	Long Term 2014/15
Review and communicate Mobility and Staff Movement Policy		
Continue to improve Workforce Planning Capability		
Review the effectiveness of arrangements for promotion of staff to HEO level in particular the role of a national assessment process or more local selection processes.		
	Review Supervisory structures in Courts	
Incorporate reviews of job design, grading and reward principles within business change projects that review court structures and in-court support		

Skills Assurance

34. Background: The SCS requires staff with a wide range of technical, managerial and administrative skills within courts, the OPG and corporate services. The core skill for many SCS staff will be based

around being competent in court procedures, understanding the related legislation (or in OPG the work of the Public Guardian) and associated in-court craft.

35. To deliver highly skilled staff who can deal with the variety of criminal, civil and other court work requires a well organised learning and development function that dovetails effectively with court operations. There is evidence that the new structure of the technical training resource has been beneficial, especially in terms of quality and consistency of training delivery, but concerns still exist about equality of access to training and making it available at the right time, in the right place and through an appropriate training medium. Operational managers noted that output from the judicial survey will further assist in evaluating the quality and impact of technical training and this feedback will be welcomed. It is recognized that more integrated planning between operational and support colleagues, particularly around the introduction of new legislation is required. In addition to this concern was expressed about the extent to which staff were confident in using IT applications such as Excel, which are becoming ever more important in the workplace.
36. The SCS Board has said that it wishes to have assurance around skill levels in a high level index that can be monitored and which would highlight skill gaps. The previous Skills Assessment Tool was designed for this purpose but never achieved adequate levels of user acceptance to make it a worthwhile tool. Lessons need to be learned from this to develop a new mechanism which will meet the needs of staff, managers, and the SCS Board.
37. A key issue raised in workshops was the lack of progress made by the organisation in developing information for staff about career and learning pathways within the SCS and indeed within the wider justice sector. While it is recognised that good managers can help staff with seeing their career path operational managers have stressed the need for an accessible resource to allow staff to plan their careers and to understand how working in different courts and functions is beneficial to them as well as to the SCS. There are separate, but equally important, issues for the SCS in developing career pathways for staff working in specialist or administrative posts out with front line courts.
38. Related to the question of career pathways was concern that the SCS is not doing enough to identify and develop those individuals who are regarded as having high potential. The new appraisal process can now identify those staff but it is recommended that the Service puts in place a talent management programme which would underline our commitment to offering staff a vehicle for reaching senior positions as quickly as possible.

39. High level Interventions: Five interventions were identified:

- Establish a National Training Committee to improve planning of Learning and Development;
- Introduce an effective Skills Index Tool;
- Introduce a resource for making staff aware of career and learning pathways;
- Introduce a Talent Management Programme: and
- Conduct a training need analysis on IT skills held by staff.

40. Actions and Solutions: The table below sets out the proposed activity over the next 3 years.

Short Term 2011/12 & 2012/13	Medium Term 2013/14	Long Term 2014/15
Establish a National Training Committee	→	
Introduce an effective Skills Index Tool	→	
Introduce a Career Pathways resource.	→	
	Introduce a Talent Management Programme	→
	Conduct a Training Needs Analysis on IT Skills	→

Effective Reward and Recognition

41. Background: The SCS must work within the Scottish Public Sector Pay Policy. The current nature of this policy, together with public spending reductions, has to a large extent restricted the organisation’s ability to adjust base pay. Concerns were expressed at workshops about the impact of proposed pension changes on take home pay in the future.

42. On a wider reward basis it was noted more positively that the SCS has embraced fringe benefits such as child care vouchers, long service awards and is seeking to introduce non pay flexible benefits where possible.

43. An examination of the SCS low level of voluntary turnover suggests that there are no significant reward issues as such but looking beyond impact on retention (except in localized areas such as Edinburgh and Aberdeen) there is some indication that salary levels at some grades, particularly SEO and AO are below both public sector and wider employment market norms. This may be affecting the engagement levels of some staff.

44. Workshop participants noted the high level of staff who have achieved their pay range target rate (maxima). They observed that should there be a lessening of control in future pay policy the SCS, unlike some other public sector pay comparators, would be required to invest less in pay progression (the movement of staff up pay ranges) allowing available funds to be invested in dealing with pay comparability issues. It was recommended that this be a priority within our Reward strategy.

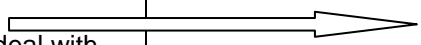
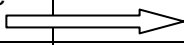
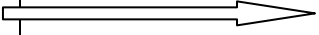
45. Arising from the last People Strategy the SCS no longer pays performance related bonuses to staff. Recognition of good performance on particular tasks, including examples of excellent front line service, is made available through the Instant Reward Scheme which can allow voucher rewards of on average £30-£50 to be made to staff. The system is perceived to be a good one which has the potential to be an effective way of motivating staff but it was noted that there is a significant level of inconsistency in how the system is used by managers across the country. It was agreed this needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

46. In looking at the use of allowances in the organisation, particularly, Recruitment and Retentions Allowances (RRAs), workshop participants suggested a need for more consistency and transparency in how arrangements were put in place for individuals. It was also recommended that such allowances should more frequently be time limited to minimise the impact on the overall pay bill.

47. **High level Interventions:** Three interventions were identified:

- Give priority in future pay offers to dealing with pay comparability issues;
- Review and Re-launch the Instant Rewards Scheme; and
- Review the use of Allowances to supplement base pay.

48. **Actions and Solutions:** The table below sets out the proposed activity over the next 3 years.

Short Term 2011/12 & 2012/13	Medium Term 2013/14	Long Term 2014/15
	Use future pay settlements to deal with pay comparability issues	
Review and Re-launch the Instant Rewards Scheme		
	Review use of allowances to supplement base pay.	

Implementation and Measuring Impact

49. Under the four strategic priorities there are a total of 18 actions and solutions proposed. It is suggested that this will be a challenging agenda but one which is achievable over the period of the strategy.
50. Implementation of actions and solutions will be progressed through the annual business plans of both operational and support teams across the service. People management activity in the plans and in day to day operations should be consistent with the key themes of the strategy and the strategic principles set out at the beginning of the document.
51. Specific measures will be established within the project management disciplines for the projects and actions set out in the strategy. In addition to this the overall impact of the strategy will be measured and evaluated by the high level indicators set out at paragraph 6 with the addition of an additional indicator related to skills capability derived from the new skills index. These measures, together with data on organisational performance will allow the SCS Board to review the impact of the Strategy.
52. The delivery of the strategy will rely heavily on clarity of responsibility between operational managers and the Human Resource Unit (HRU) as to their specific responsibilities for People Management. This is currently set out in the document "People Management in the SCS" (Version 3 dated December 2010) which explains that operational managers have day to day responsibility for most people management functions. HRU provides payroll and learning and development, services, a policy and systems framework, employment advice, organisational development support and appropriate workforce management information.
53. The pay bill cost of the HRU support function is just under £1.7m (includes costs associated with Health & Safety and trade union facility time) and Corporate Service Benchmarking suggests this is below average for the range of services provides for a comparable public sector body. To ensure that HRU can fully support implementation of the strategy a restructuring of HRU will be undertaken over the next few months. This will take place in consultation with operational colleagues.