



MINUTES

SCOTTISH COURT SERVICE PEOPLE COMMITTEE MEETING: 15 April 2013, 1A PARLIAMENT SQUARE, EDINBURGH

Present:

Mark Higgins, Non-Executive Member, SCS Board, (Chair)
Johan Findlay, Non-Executive Member, SCS Board (Deputy Chair)
Elaine Noad, Non-Executive Member (external)
Julie Ward, Non-Executive Member (external)
Cliff Binning, Interim Executive Director Field Services, SCS
Alan Swift, Director HR, SCS

Also Attended:

Eddie Burrows, TUS
Karen Lawrie, Executive Support, Secretariat, SCS, (Minutes)

Apologies:

Sheriff Nikola Stewart, Non-Executive Member (external)
Jean Lindsay, Non-Executive Member (external)

1. Welcome

1.1 The Chair thanked those present for attending and noted that Jean Lindsay and Sheriff Stewart had given apologies.

2. Minutes of the Meeting of 7 February 2013

2.1 The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

3. Action Points and Matters Arising

3.1 There were no matters arising which would not be discussed elsewhere on the Agenda.

3.2 Outstanding action points were cleared or updated.

- ***Eddie Burrows to advise the Committee, of the findings of the working group investigating annual leave issues in Glasgow Sheriff Court:*** It was agreed that this action would be removed from the minutes. The matter will be taken forward by the Glasgow Partnership Group and escalated to the People Committee should the need arise.

3.3 The potential car leasing scheme was discussed and it was noted that following approval in principle of a business case by the Executive Team a proposed small pilot scheme was planned. The Committee asked to see further detail when it became available. It was agreed that if the pilot is launched appropriate briefing information will be circulated to members.

4. Equality Advisory Group (EAG) – (SCS/PC/Apr13/14)

4.1 The Committee reviewed the Mainstreaming Equality Report which was produced jointly by SCS and the Equality Advisory Group to fulfil SCS's statutory requirement under the

Equality Act 2010. Work is currently underway to develop the document into a more attractive and engaging magazine style format for staff.

4.2 It was noted that the report acknowledged the achievements SCS had made so far, for example the E-learning package and a new Dignity at Work policy statement. It was noted changes were also being made to allow members of the Sikh community to wear the Kirpan in court buildings.

4.3 Concern was raised regarding areas that require development, such as the way that SCS has refers to particular disabilities. The issue of access to information for court users requires SCS to reassess the facilities available to bring it into line with Scottish Governments use of digital inclusion.

5. Training and Development Investment - (SCS/PC/Apr13/15)

5.1 The Committee noted the increase in the number of training days undertaken by staff in 2012-13. This is due in part to the Leadership through Coaching training that all senior and middle managers have participated in.

5.2 The Committee noted that approximately 3000 training days per annum for 1500 staff was not high and queried if this was sufficient. The Executive indicated that in addition to the formal recorded training days there was significant volume of informal training days. This was primarily peer level training, desk training and other support from line managers. Efforts have been made in the past to record this but it is difficult to achieve consistently across the organisation without incurring costs.

5.3 A new system called Skills Online (SOL) was introduced in March 2013. This will assist staff/managers to identify learning needs as part of the annual Individual Performance Review (IPR) process creating a training culture with more focus on individual development. It will also improve the way in which SCS can evaluate training and development investment.

5.4 The Committee concluded that the increase in training days was a positive step for SCS and were keen to receive an update following the introduction of the Skills Online facility to staff.

Action: The Executive to provide the Committee with an update to the Training and Development undertaken by staff following the introduction of the Skills Online package at the meeting in October.

6. HR Policy Update – (SCS/PC/Apr13/16)

6.1 The Committee were content with the HR Policy update.

7. HR Measures presented to December 2012 & March 2013 SCS Board – (SCS/PC/Apr13/17)

7.1 Following analysis of the HR Measures the Committee agreed that the correct indicators were bring highlighted to the SCS Board. It was pleased to note the improving figures, especially that 67% of those staff who have left would recommend SCS as an employer of choice to others.

7.2 It was noted that there was a drop in the proportion of Appraisals completed on time – (sealed interim IPRs at 30 November 2012). The Committee requested the Executive supply the figures showing the numbers of final appraisals completed on-time for comparison.

Action: The Executive, for the August meeting, to supply the Committee with a paper detailing the number of final appraisals completed on-time to allow comparison with the interim IPRs completed.

8. Investors in People Report – (SCS/PC/Apr13/18)

8.1 The Executive advised that SCS had received Investor in People (IIP) Accreditation for the next 3 years. The report and recommendations submitted by the IIP assessors was discussed.

8.2 Staff Engagement was of particular interest to the Committee. The Executive reported on staff engagement events which are now held annually in each Sheriffdom. The focus of the events has changed over recent years to give a more open forum allowing staff the opportunity to present their views.

8.3 The Civil Service wide staff survey, which SCS participates in, was considered by the Committee. The recommendation in the report relating to the influencing of how the questions are presented was noted. It was agreed that due to the wording of the questions relating to bullying and harassment it may impact on responses from staff.

Action: The Executive, before the next meeting, to discuss with the Cabinet Office the possibility of changing the wording of the question relating to bullying and harassment in the Annual Staff Survey to clarify the question for staff.

8.4 The recommendation relating to job rotation in courts was a concern for the Committee. It was agreed that a more structured approach should be adopted allowing staff to be advised of the length of the rotation, a review period established and specific links to training and development. It was accepted that a local policy would be in staffs' best interests as the resources available in different sized courts varied.

Action: The Executive to review the policy and communications to staff regarding job rotation, especially in larger courts. A paper updating the Committee on the position to be submitted at the October meeting.

9. Report in the scheduling of performance appraisals in Tayside, Central and Fife – (SCS/PC/Apr13/19)

9.1 The Committee were encouraged by the improvement to the figures from the 2012 staff survey in Tayside, Central and Fife (TC&F) following the introduction of a development programme in November 2011. The development programme had 3 main aims:

- Involve all grades of staff and managers
- Increase the number of one to one conversations taking place between line managers and team members
- Place emphasis on learning and development.

9.2 Of specific note was the reduction in staff who had personally experienced discrimination at work.

9.3 The Executive advised that due to the positive impact on staff in TC&F the development programme was being shared with other Sheriffdoms.

10. HR Risk Register – (SCS/PC/Apr13/20)

10.1 Following the updates to the Risk Register requested by the Committee at the last meeting, the register was revisited. It was agreed that further work was required on the wording of risks and also a reassessment of the risks to establish if some should be removed or incorporate in others. The Committee would like the register to be augmented with information on risks being treated, tolerated or terminated.

Action: The Executive to further review the wording of the risks on the Risk Register, and also to assess if the risks should all be included on the register. The matter will be reviewed at the next meeting.

Action: The Executive to submit feedback to SCS Risk Manager to establish if the 4-Risk Register could be augmented to show risks as being treated, tolerated or terminated.

10.2 The Committee advised the Executive that at each meeting they would like to discuss one or two risks in more detail. The Executive to select which risks would be reviewed at the next meeting. A short paper detailing any risks that have been added or removed from the register was also requested.

11. HRU Business Plan 2012-13: Development Project Update – (SCS/PC/Apr13/21)

11.1 Committee members agreed good progress had been made by HRU during the year to ensure that the majority of the 31 planned projects had been completed. One project was still requiring action, Promotion arrangements to HEO, however it was acknowledged that this would be concluded in the near future.

12. Employment Law – (SCS/PC/Apr13/22)

12.1 No comments were made on the paper detailing the updates to Employment Law as it was clear any changes were being addressed by SCS as they arose.

13. Implementation of People Strategy – (SCS/PC/Apr13/23)

13.1 The Committee concurred that the People Strategy was an excellent document and were pleased that it had been published on the SCS Intranet to make it accessible to all staff. A suggestion for future versions of the strategy was that reference be made to leadership as well as people management, due to all the training being carried out in regard to Leadership Through Coaching.

14. HRU Business Plan 2013-14 – (SCS/PC/Apr13/24)

14.1 The HRU Business plan for 2013-14 was appraised. The Committee noted the 25 specific initiatives proposed for the forthcoming year. A tracker detailing the progress of the initiatives will be a standing agenda item.

15. Any Other Business

Court Visits

15.1 Julie Ward and Elaine Noad reported on their recent court visits which was part of their induction to the People Committee. They deemed the visits and meeting staff in a medium court sized court, Falkirk, and the large court in Glasgow an essential part of their understanding of SCS as an organisation.

Photographic Identification

15.2 During the court visits Elaine Noad had questioned why photographic ID was not requested by SCS from those attending court.

Action: Alan Swift to raise the matter of photographic identification being supplied by those attending court with the Health and Safety/Security Works Committee. The response will be shared with the People Committee at a future meeting.

Succession Planning

15.3 Mark Higgins announced that his appointment to the SCS Board will expire in December 2013. It has been agreed with the Lord President that Johan Findlay will succeed Mark as Chair of the People Committee commencing at the meeting in August. Mark will continue to attend the meetings until the end of the year.

15.4 On behalf of the Committee Johan Findlay thanked Mark for his work as Chair of the Committee over the last four years.

15.5 The next meeting will be on 8 August 2013 in 1A Parliament Square, Edinburgh.

Scottish Court Service
April 2013