



MINUTES

SCTS ESTATES, HEALTH & SAFETY, FIRE AND SECURITY COMMITTEE MEETING: Monday 26 July 2021 – via WebEx

Members Present:

Colonel David McIlroy, Non-Executive Member SCTS Board (Chair)
Morna Rae, Non-Executive Member SCTS Board
Donald Wooley, Non-Executive Member
Tom Gorman, Non-Executive Member
Aileen Gomes, Non-Executive Member
May Dunsmuir, President of the Health and Education Chamber, First-tier Tribunal for Scotland, Non-Executive Member

Attended:

David Currie, Director Property & Services, SCTS
Noel Rehfisch, Deputy Chief Executive, SCTS (Item 5 only)
John McMillan, Security Manager Property & Services, SCTS (Item 6 only)
Kyle Williamson, Estates Surveyor Property & Services, SCTS
Tara McNamara, Executive Support Officer, SCTS (Minutes)

Apologies:

Sheriff Jillian Martin-Brown, Non-Executive Member SCTS Board
Richard Maconachie, Chief Finance Officer, SCTS
Yvonne Taylor, Director Operations Delivery, SCTS
Steven D'Arcy, Interim Corporate Secretary, SCTS

1. Welcome & Apologies

1.1 Members were welcomed to the meeting and apologies were noted.

2. Declaration of Interests

2.1 There were no declarations of interest from Members.

3. Minutes of the Meeting (SCTS/EST/May21/Mins)

3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2021 were approved.

4. Matters Arising (including feedback from SCTS Board)

4.1 Outstanding action points were addressed under substantive agenda items during the meeting.

4.2 The Chair provided an overview of the June 2021 meeting of the SCTS Board, which had a bearing on matters relating to the Estates Committee.

5. COVID-19 Update (SCTS/EST/Jul21/14)

5.1 The Committee had received a comprehensive overview of the co-ordination and response arrangements to COVID-19 that had been prepared for the most recent meeting of the SCTS Board in June.

5.2 Members received a further update on key developments, and plans being put in place following the Scottish Governments (SG) recent announcement on 13 July and the potential move beyond level 0 from 9 August.

5.3 It was highlighted that for the short interim period between 19 July, when Scotland moved to level 0, and 9 August, being the proposed date Scotland was set to move beyond level 0, that existing measures in place for Courts and Tribunals would remain. The existing measures in place had been designed to operate at all levels from 0-4, and therefore no immediate changes would take place, with 2 metre physical distancing remaining in place. From 9 August onwards, SCTS recognise the continued need for physical distancing in particular settings, and therefore would continue to encourage everyone to respect personal space by introducing 1 metre physical distancing in all SCTS buildings in line with SG. General public access would remain restricted and public counters would also remain closed. Mandatory wearing of face coverings would also continue in line with current guidance as well as other baseline measures. Property Service Unit (PSU) and operations colleagues would ensure that signage and capacity limits were updated to reflect the change in physical distancing from 9 August.

5.4 The Committee discussed the comprehensive update provided and welcomed the cautious approach being taken in respect of the further relaxation of restrictions set to take place. It was noted that there may be a small element of risk in relation to the distinct difference in approaches between the private and public sector. Members were assured that decisions were made following consultation with the Scottish Government Clinical Advisers, with further review points set to take place in September and October.

6. Health, Safety and Security Works Report (SCTS/EST/Jul21/15)

6.1 John McMillan, Corporate Security Manager, presented the annual report from the Health, Safety and Security Works Committee. The report provided a comprehensive update on the work of the committee during the last year, including Health & Safety activities, Fire Safety, reports on incidents and operations that have been managed over the course of the year.

6.2 Members received a summary of key points from the report relating to Health & Safety, Security, and Fire Safety, including key pieces of work the Health, Safety and Security Team were currently engaged with across SCTS and COPFS shared services. The SG Directorate for Internal Audit and Assurance had issued a report on their findings following a review of SCTS' response to COVID-19, which was extremely positive and provided a 'substantial' assurance with no improvements or recommendations.

6.3 It was noted that the latest statistical information available for general security had identified that reported incidents of violence and aggression within SCTS had reached the lowest figure since 2009. However, the figures for 2020 and 2021 was considered to be influenced by the COVID-19 restrictions and a ban on public access to all buildings within the estate. The Committee were advised of work underway through the Judicial Welfare Committee and discussions taking place between the Corporate Security Manager and Executive Director Judicial Office to ensure appropriate procedures and protocols were in place for staff and Judiciary. Guidance and protocols would be made available to members of the judiciary via the judicial hub.

6.4 The Committee discussed, and were reassured by the annual report and overview provided. Members thanked and commended the Corporate Security Manager on the excellent level of detail the report contained.

7. Draft Annual Report to the SCTS Board (SCTS/EST/Jul21/16)

7.1 The Committee considered their draft annual Report to the SCTS Board, summarising the work the Committee had carried out on behalf of the Board over the course of the past year.

7.2 The Executive sought input from members on matters to be included within the Committee's annual report. Members discussed and agreed that the report should include details on Health & Safety activities. This would provide an opportunity to link with the People Committee in relation to blended working and also health and safety related activities for those returning to buildings after a significant period of time working remotely. Succession Planning for PSU was also highlighted as a matter to be included, with members noting the significant period of change set to take place upon the retirement of the PSU Director.

7.3 Members were advised that the report would be updated to reflect the discussion and presented to the next meeting for approval by the Committee, before being shared with the SCTS Board at their November meeting.

8. Quarterly Budget Report (SCTS/EST/Jul21/17)

8.1 The Committee received an update on progress of the allocation and use of the Estates budget for 2021-22.

8.2 Members were advised that due to a savings challenge made following the last Committee meeting in May, the Capital element of the budget, which excludes costs for the Facilities Management contract, had been reduced from £3.2m to £2.9m. Members discussed and acknowledged the significant financial constraints that the organisation continued to operate within and voiced their concerns in relation to the reduction of the Capital budget. The Committee accepted that the Estates budget had benefitted from late release Capital funding last year, and hoped that during the year funding may become available to replace the £300k reduction.

8.3 The Executive suggested to members that it may be of benefit for the Estates Surveyor, Property & Services Unit, and the Finance Business Partner to attend at the October Committee meeting in order to provide assurance on the work that takes place to ensure that the Estates budget is managed effectively, allowing PSU to deliver successfully on budget. The Committee welcomed the proposal and looked forward to receiving a presentation with further details on the 2021-22 budget allocation at their next meeting.

9. PSU Business Plan 2021-22 (SCTS/EST/Jul21/18)

9.1 Members reviewed the PSU Business Plan 2021-22, noting the addition of unit specific objectives and projects which had been ranked in terms of prioritised risk.

9.2 The Committee discussed and suggested areas that the Executive may wish to consider for the Business Plan and key areas of focus proposed for 2021-22.

10. Review of Risk – Project RAG Report (SCTS/EST/Jul21/19)

10.1 The Executive presented the Estates Project RAG report and provided members with an update on the overall position of current Estates projects.

10.2 In addition to the current Estates Projects featured within the RAG report, the Committee were advised of contingency planning underway in preparation for the United Nations Conference of the Parties (COP26). Potential challenges as a result of the event were discussed, which highlighted pressures PSU faced in terms of identifying solutions to provide custodial interview facilities as well as logistical and operational pressures.

10.3 Members welcomed the update and agreed that due to the short time frame to prepare for the COP26 event, scheduled to take place in Glasgow this autumn between 31 October and 12 November, plans and preparations would require to be escalated in order to seek a strategic view and guidance.

11. Inverness Justice Centre (IJC) Closure Report & Update (SCTS/EST/Jul21/20)

11.1 *The record of this discussion was considered confidential and exempt from publication.*

12. Edinburgh Justice Sector Property Rationalisation (SCTS/EST/Jul21/21)

12.1 *The record of this discussion was considered confidential and exempt from publication.*

13. Major Capital Projects Update (Oral)

13.1 *The record of this discussion was considered confidential and exempt from publication.*

14. Other Large Capital Projects Update (SCTS/EST/Jul21/22)

14.1 The Executive provided a status update on the following ongoing large capital estates projects:

- Airdrie Sheriff Court – plans were progressing to utilise the JP Court room in Airdrie as part of the increase to High Court business along with improvements to shrieval accommodation, for which costs were being set against minor works budget allocation.
- Dundee Annexe – negotiations on a short term lease for a period of 3-5 years on the current civil annexe, located across from the main building, was being explored. A further update would be provided to members at the next meeting on progress.

15. Any Other Business (AOB)

15.1 None.

16. Date of Next Meeting

16.1 The next meeting would be held on 25 October 2021.

17. SCTS Estates Committee – Appraisal Exercise 2021 (SCTS/EST/Jul21/23)

17.1 A summary of members' responses to the appraisal questionnaire was discussed in a members' only session following the formal meeting. Members were largely content with the operation of the Committee and agreed that a return to in person meetings, when safe to do so, would be of benefit.

SCTS Estates, Health & Safety, Fire and Security Committee
July 2021