

SCTS PEOPLE COMMITTEE

MEETING: Wednesday 9 February 2022 - Via WebEx

Present:

Sophie Flemig, Non-Executive Member, SCTS Board (Chair)
Anne Scott, Non-Executive Member, SCTS Board
Billy Harkness, Non-Executive Member
Sheriff Wendy Sheehan, Non-Executive Member

Also Attended:

Steven D'Arcy, Interim Corporate Secretary, SCTS
Lisa Sellars, Director HR, SCTS
Jessica MacDonald, Director, Education & Learning, SCTS
Clare Ugunlu, Senior HR Manager, HR Operations, SCTS
Lorna Gilbert, Senior HR Manager, People Strategy, Policy and Support, SCTS
Charles Welsh, Head of Programmes, Education and Learning, SCTS (item 5 only)
Rosemarie Smith, PCS Union (SCTS Branch Chair)
Brian Carroll, PCS Union (SCTS Branch Secretary)
Karen Lawrie, Head of Secretariat, SCTS
Sarah Imery, Executive Support Officer, SCTS (Minutes)

Apologies:

Professor Alan Boyter, Non-Executive Member
David Fraser, Executive Director Court Operations, SCTS

1. Declarations of Interest

1.1 There were no new declarations of interest from Members.

2. Minutes of the Meeting

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2021 were approved.

3. Action Points and Matters Arising

3.1 There were no outstanding action points from the last meeting.

3.2 The Chair welcomed Sheriff Sheehan to her first meeting. Sheriff Sheehan had recently been appointed to the People Committee and had succeeded Sheriff Craig.

Update from the SCTS Board

3.3 The Chair provided an overview of discussions from the November 2021 and February 2022 meetings of the SCTS Board which had a bearing on matters relating to the People Committee.

4. Hybrid Working and Wellbeing

4.1 The committee were presented with a draft hybrid working policy. The policy had been developed over the past few months and had received feedback from senior colleagues in Business Units and taking account of developments in respect of hybrid working in other organisations. Discussion were on going with Business Units on how the policy could assist them and would be discussed with the PCS in the coming weeks. The policy would be dependent on the nature of an employee's role, the work to be undertaken and the employees' personal circumstances and as a result would not be suitable for all roles within the organisation.

4.2 It was reported that throughout the Coronavirus pandemic the SCTS had recognised the need for a flexible approach to working arrangements. Due to improvements in digital technology the ability to work from home had been embraced by a number of individuals/business units. It was recognised that home working had supported wellbeing, assisted in achieving a work-life balance, increased motivation, engagement and performance. The Human Resources Unit (HRU) would be working closely with the Education and Learning Unit (ELU) to consider the development of a training programme for managers prior to assisting in the implementation of the policy which would be contain a FAQs section and flowchart to assist with requests for hybrid working.

4.3 The Committee were supportive of the Hybrid working policy. They recognised the importance of partnership working with PCS and other justice organisations in the development of the policy. Members discussed fairness and equality of application of the policy as it would not be available to all staff, however accepted there were positives such as no geographical barriers for recruitment where hybrid working could be accommodated.

4.4 The implementation of the policy would be discussed at the next meeting.

5. Talent and Potential

5.1 The 2018 Education Strategy, the 2018-23 People Strategy and the 2020 Learning and Development audit all shared a common objective to develop a talent and potential programme, as part of the wider succession planning strategy within the SCTS. The Committee considered a six stage process that would nurture and grow identified people with talent and potential at different grades across the organisation.

5.2 The Committee supported the initial review but highlighted the importance of ensuring equal opportunities for all grades within SCTS, and alignment to a strategic workforce plan. It was clarified that due to the changing nature of how SCTS now delivers its services, which is now more digitally driven, development of a strategic workforce plan had been put on hold. It was though agreed that development of such a plan was required to underpin and support any talent and potential programmes that may subsequently be implemented.

5.3 The Executive advised that they would be outlining progress of the talent and potential programme to the Executive in February and would provide the committee with an update at the next meeting.

6. People Survey Results 2021

6.1 The Committee received a short presentation on the People Survey Results 2021. The results showed a positive picture with the index level remaining the same as the previous year (64%). Participation levels were 59%. The results continued to place the SCTS among the top performers in Scotland for both completion rate and the engagement score. The Executive

highlighted that staff had faced a different working environment and fast paced change during 2021 as a result of the ongoing COVID pandemic. The Chair reported that the Board had discussed the results at their recent meeting. The views of the Board were shared with the Committee.

6.2 Following initial analysis of the results and discussions between the Executive and the PCS, three themes had been identified on which follow up activity would focus during 2022 and 2023; learning, leadership, managing change and reward. Local action plans would be developed to respond to local issues. Members noted that although the SCTS would participate in the Civil Service People Survey on an annual basis, action plans would be over two years with the Staff Survey result at the end of the first year used to bench mark progress.

6.3 The Committee welcomed the detailed analysis and update provided. They acknowledged that it had been beneficial to review the breakdown of the results in regards to the three key themes, which would be areas of focus for the year ahead. Members requested regular updates at future meetings to monitor activity.

7. Final Pay Award 2021

7.1 The Committee received an update on the final pay award for staff 2021. The interim Pay Award (basic elements of the Pay Policy) were awarded to staff in May 2021, backdated to April 2021. Since then the SCTS and PCS had met several times to discuss options to utilise the remaining funding. The final proposal was submitted to the Scottish Government for approval in November. After several constructive discussions with the PCS the final pay award was finalised on 17 January 2022 and would be implemented in February salaries and back dated to 1 April 2021. A staff communication was published on the SCTS intranet advising staff of the outcome of the final pay award. .

7.2 PCS confirmed they had positive local level engagement and acknowledged the constraints faced by the SCTS in adhering to the Public Sector Pay Policy.

7.3 SCTS and PCS would continue to work in partnership during 2022 to progress a number of other matters related to pay, reward and terms and conditions of employment.

7.4 The Committee welcomed the ongoing constructive discussions between the SCTS and the PCS and acknowledged the constraints being faced.

8. HRU/ELU Structure

8.1 Members were advised of the current staffing shortages in the HRU team. Recruitment will be undertaken to fill a number of vacancies, however it was acknowledged that the employment market was extremely challenging at present with low numbers of applications received for most roles advertised externally. Due to the staffing challenges being faced a tendering exercise was underway to identify consultancy support to assist with progressing the reward and recognition work that had already commenced; streamlining the job evaluation process and developing a new approach performance management approach including appraisal, supporting under performance and probation.

8.2 ELU had a number of staff currently on secondment to other areas of the business with the ELU posts being covered in the interim. The secondments were viewed as a positive step as the knowledge a secondee would develop would be beneficial to ELU's understanding of the business going forward.

8.3 Members commended the volume of work undertaken by the HR and ELU teams and acknowledged the ongoing business pressures facing the staff, specifically the Senior HR Team at present. The Committee offered support and assistance going forward and requested an update on the challenges being faced at the next meeting.

9. Review/Discussion of Other Papers

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

- HR Policy Update
- HR Risk Register
- HR Measures for SCTS Board
- HR + ELU Business Plan Tracker
- Employment Tribunal
- Learning Council Minutes
- COVID-19 Update – Operational matters
- ELU Risk register

9.2 The content of these papers was noted and no matters of concern were raised.

10. Any Other Business

10.1 The quantity of papers and breadth of topics covered at each meeting was discussed. The Committee Chair and the Corporate Secretary would review the Committee Remit and Delegated Authority, ahead of the next meeting, to ensure all committee responsibilities would continue to be met if the standing agenda items for meetings were amended. An update on the discussions would be given at the next meeting.

11. Date of Next Meeting

11.1 The next meeting would be held on 5 May 2022.

Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service
February 2022