

SCTS PEOPLE COMMITTEE

MEETING: Wednesday 11 February 2026 – Parliament House, Edinburgh (Hybrid)

Members Present:

Dr Sophie Flemig, SCTS Board (Chair)
Ruth Innes KC, SCTS Board
Helen Meldrum, Non-Executive Member
James Saville, Non-Executive Member
Anne Scott, SCTS Board
Sheriff Wendy Sheehan, Non-Executive Member

Attended:

Christina Bardsley, Senior HR Manager, SCTS
Karen Lawrie, Head of Secretariat, SCTS
Katie Leighton, PCS (SCTS Branch Chair)
Bhavna Nair, Director ELU, SCTS
Paul McKinlay, Executive Director Court Operations, SCTS
Victor Vickers, Senior HR Manager, SCTS
Thomas Robinson, Executive Support Officer, SCTS (Minutes)

Apologies:

Steven D'Arcy, Corporate Secretary, SCTS
Malcolm Graham, Chief Executive, SCTS
Lisa Sellars, Director HR, SCTS
Alastair Young, PCS (SCTS Branch Secretary)

1. Welcome and Apologies

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed those present and noted the apologies.
- 1.2 Members noted the reappointment of Sheriff Sheehan for a second term of four years and welcomed Paul McKinlay to his first People Committee meeting as Executive Director Court Operations, having succeeded David Fraser in that role.

2. Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 There were no declarations of interest from Members.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2025 were approved.

4. Matters Arising

- 4.1 There were no matters arising.

5. Cross-Committee Update

5.1 The Committee received an update on the matters discussed at the Board meetings in November and February.

6. HRU and ELU's Key Objectives for 2026-27

6.1 The Executive gave an update on the development of key objectives for the Human Resources Unit (HRU) and the Education and Learning Unit (ELU). The objectives had been strategically aligned to delivery themes set out in the draft SCTS Corporate Plan 2026-29 and the goals of the SCTS People Strategy 2024-28. The Executive advised that further work to align the two units, which together made up SCTS's people function, was planned for the 2026-27 financial year.

6.2 Members welcomed the Executive's work and plans for further collaboration between the HRU and ELU teams. Members acknowledged the ambitious number of objectives for the year ahead for both teams. They recommended focusing on a manageable number of objectives, focussing on strategic outcomes, as opposed to capturing business-as-usual processes.

6.3 The Executive thanked the Committee for their useful insights and offers of support.

7. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Update

7.1 Members received an update on the Executive's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) successes and priorities for the 2026-27 financial year, which included an ambition to strengthen leadership and accountability for EDI initiatives across the organisation.

7.2 Members acknowledged the progress that had been made and the level of ambition represented by the People Strategy 2024-28's Equality Outcomes. Members noted that the Strategy was a live document that should be updated as required and offered alternative wording for Outcome 2 that would be considered by the Executive outwith the meeting.

7.3 The Committee supported the Executive's plans to deliver more measurable and specific metrics for EDI objectives and advised that, given the pace of change of EDI metrics in any organisation, half yearly rather than quarterly reporting would be adequate. Members also expressed a desire that the Executive consider consolidating EDI and other People-related objectives.

8. Engagement Session: People Survey 2025 and Employee Engagement

8.1 Members scrutinised the results of the People Survey 2025. The Executive reported that scores had been relatively stable relative to the previous year. Analysis had suggested the following priority areas for development: leadership and managing change, support for managers and creating a more people-centred culture. Work in this area would build on the last action plan and help to embed previous action taken within the organisation.

8.2 Members welcomed the actions the Executive had taken to tackle bullying and harassment. They noted that there had been a one percentage point increase to this score but recognised that a change of that scale was likely to be within normal statistical variation. Members were reassured by the ongoing actions being taken in this area.

8.3 The Committee emphasised the benefits of having a holistic basket of indicators that, together, could be used to measure and drive the Executive's efforts to improve behaviour

and culture in the workplace. The Executive noted its goal of bringing together its already-existing indicators to provide such an overarching view.

8.4 The Committee discussed possible ways of increasing employee engagement, including: giving local managers accountability for culture change in their teams; communicating decisions and successes effectively (sometimes over a longer period of time than a single release), and setting clear expectations about which issues SCTS, as a public body, does and does not have agency over.

8.5 The Executive informed the Committee of the introduction of an annual SCTS employee recognition event, which the Committee commended. The event would allow staff and managers to nominate colleagues in six categories, with finalists invited to an awards ceremony in Parliament House in June.

9. Review/Discussion of Other Papers

9.1 The following papers had been circulated for scrutiny/exception reporting only:

- HR Risk Register
- ELU Risk Register
- HRU Business Delivery Report
- ELU Business Plan Delivery Report
- Employment Tribunals
- HR Measures
- 35hr Working Week Evaluation
- SCTS Board Staff Briefing – November 2025
- Core Work Plan 2026
- People Committee Action Tracker

9.2 Members advised that, at their next meeting, they would wish to review the People-related risks on the SCTS Corporate Risk Register ('Workforce, Wellbeing and Skills' and 'Sustainable Services'). They also recommended HRU and ELU share a single risk register for alignment purposes.

9.3 Members commended the Executive on its successful introduction of a 35hr working week within existing workforce capacity and with little impact on business. The Executive advised that some changes to the customer service model introduced during COVID-19 that had remained in place, some automated processes for the payments of fines and the pilot of the wellbeing hour had assisted operational areas in accommodating the reduction in working hours. Members expressed an interest in exploring how these efficiencies could be taken forward in light of future challenges.

10. Any Other Business

10.1 There was no other business.

11. Date of Next Meeting

11.1 The Committee's next meeting was scheduled for 6 May 2026.

SCTS Secretariat
February 2026