



SCOTTISH COURTS AND TRIBUNALS SERVICE BOARD

MEETING: Monday 3 February 2020, Parliament House, Edinburgh

Present: Rt Hon Lord Carloway, Lord President (Chair)
Joe Al-Gharabally
Simon Catto
Dr Kirsty Hood QC
Sheriff Grant McCulloch
Colonel David McIlroy
Eric McQueen
Morna Rae, JP
Anne Scott
Sheriff Principal Craig Turnbull

Attended: Noel Rehfisch, Corporate Secretary, SCTS
Karen Lawrie, Secretariat Business Manager, SCTS

Apologies: Sheriff Aisha Anwar
Rt Hon Lady Dorrian, Lord Justice Clerk
Rt Hon Lady Smith

1. Minutes of the SCTS Board Meeting on 25 November 2019

1.1 The Minutes of the last meeting were approved.

2. Declarations of Interest and Matters Arising

2.1 There were no declarations of interest.

2.2 There were no outstanding actions from the last meeting.

3. Financial Results (SCTS/Feb20/01)

3.1 The Board reviewed the report on financial performance to the end of December 2019. The total budget for 2019-20 was anticipated to be £140.8m, which included in-year transfers agreed with the Scottish Government. These were the outcome of representations made to the Scottish Government regarding a range of previously identified pressures.

3.2 The Board welcomed the funding transfers and acknowledged that they had reduced the previously projected overspend. The SCTS was now on track to deliver a balanced budget for 2019-20.

4. Spending Review (SCTS/Feb20/02)

4.1 The Board discussed the current position in relation to the Scottish Government's spending review. The process would set the revenue budget for the SCTS and other Scottish public sector bodies for 2020-21. The Scottish Government was expected to publish its draft budget on 6 February.

4.2 Representations had been made by the Lord President and the Executive in recent months to the Scottish Government Ministers. These had highlighted the significant pressures that the SCTS had absorbed and the need for additional funding in key areas to ensure that core business and development priorities could be maintained.

5. Staff Survey Results 2019 (SCTS/Feb20/03)

5.1 The results of the 2019 Staff Survey were reviewed. The SCTS' overall engagement score had improved by 1 percentage point since 2018 to 66%. Participation levels were 70%. The results placed SCTS as one of the top performers in Scotland for both completion rates and the engagement score.

5.2 The Board welcomed the results which, when coupled to the recent Customer Service Excellence assessment and Court Users' Satisfaction survey, provided positive feedback and insights for the organisation. The continued partnership approach with the PCS Union in responding to the survey at both a national level and through local action plans was recognised.

5.3 The Board agreed that detailed analysis of the results and consideration of follow-up activity should be conducted by the People Committee, with findings presented to a future Board meeting.

6. Inverness Justice Centre (SCTS/Feb20/04)

6.1 The Board were advised of the good progress that had been made in the construction of the Inverness Justice Centre. Internal fit out works were nearing completion and building elevation works were complete. The centre remained on track to open on 30 March.

6.2 The results of a recent independent review of the readiness for service of the Inverness Justice Centre were shared. The Board welcomed the excellent results which demonstrated the effective and professional approach taken by SCTS in delivering the new facility.

7. SCTS Corporate Plan and Business Plan Update (SCTS/Feb20/05)

7.1 The current SCTS Corporate Plan runs from April 2017 to March 2020. A new 3-year plan, which set out the purpose, values, priorities and high-level objectives for the coming 3 years, was under development. A sub-group of the Board had been involved in the development of the draft and would continue to oversee that development.

7.2 The Board reviewed the draft Corporate Plan and a developing draft of the 2020-21 SCTS Business Plan, which sets out activities and budgets for the coming year in more detail. The draft plans would be presented to the Board for consideration and approval for publication at the meeting on 23 March.

8. Oversight of Digital Strategy and Projects (SCTS/Feb20/06)

8.1 Following discussion at the last meeting, the Executive undertook to examine and report on the arrangements in place to provide oversight of the organisation's digital strategy and associated key projects. A range of options to enhance oversight were presented and considered.

8.2 The Board acknowledged that major digital projects were already scrutinised and approved by the Board alongside a range of appropriate external assessments and reviews. It was agreed that the current arrangements should continue. The Board would periodically focus on the delivery of the SCTS Digital Strategy as a whole. It would consider any major projects in

progress, the benefits which they would deliver and the associated risks. The effectiveness of this approach would be reviewed around the end of the year.

9. SCTS Committees:

Audit and Risk Committee

9.1 The Committee Chair updated the Board on discussions at its February meeting. The Committee had reviewed the closure report for the Integrated Case Management System. This detailed the project from its inception to the present day. A recruitment exercise was underway to appoint a new Non-Executive member of the Committee. It was anticipated they would be in position for the next meeting.

10. Any Other Business

10.1 A recruitment exercise was underway for appoint a new Non-Executive member of the Board. A very high number of applications had been received. These would be sifted by the selection panel which consisted of Sheriff Anwar, David McIlroy and Eric McQueen. Interviews would be held on 19 February.

11. Papers for Scrutiny/Exception Reporting Only

11.1 The following papers had been circulated for scrutiny:

- Court Programming update;
- the SCTS Decision Tracker;
- Brexit Update.

No matters were raised by exception.

12. Date of the Next Meeting

12.1 The next meeting would be held on Monday 23 March 2020.

12. Annual Review of Corporate Risk

12.1 Following the meeting the Board held a workshop with its three Committees (People, Estates and Audit and Risk). The workshop allowed Board and Committee members to review the SCTS Corporate Risk Register and consider new or emerging risks that may arise over the coming 2-3 years. Discussion groups explored three key areas of risk and opportunity faced by the organisation. These focused on Tribunals' Reform; the changing nature and volume of criminal court business; and proposals to transform the Court of Session into a more modern and dynamic court.

12.2 The Board concluded that the key challenges faced by the organisation over the coming years were generally identified and managed within the Corporate Risk Register. These included the importance of continuing to effectively manage change and reform; the need to continue balancing an ambitious reform agenda with core service delivery; and the need to manage within a continuing tight financial climate. It was agreed that the significance of the new challenge which was being placed on public sector organisations to respond to climate change should be reflected on the Corporate Risk Register.

12.3 The Corporate Risk Register would be updated following the workshop and kept under regular review by the Board, the Audit and Risk Committee and the Executive.