



MINUTES

SCOTTISH COURTS AND TRIBUNALS SERVICE BOARD MEETING: MONDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2018, PARLIAMENT HOUSE, EDINBURGH

Present: Rt Hon Lord Carloway, Lord President (Chair)
Joe Al-Gharabally
Sheriff Aisha Anwar
Simon Catto
Rt Hon Lady Dorrian, Lord Justice Clerk
Dr Kirsty Hood QC
Professor Hugh MacDougall
Sheriff Grant McCulloch
Colonel David McIlroy
Eric McQueen
Sheriff Principal Duncan Murray
Morna Rae, JP
Rt Hon Lady Smith

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

Apologies: Dr Joe Morrow CBE QC

1. Minutes of the SCTS Board Meeting of 3 October 2018

1.1 The Minutes of the last meeting were approved.

2. Matters Arising and Declarations of Interest

2.1 There were no outstanding actions from the last meeting.

2.2 There were no declarations of interest.

3. Financial Results (SCTS/Nov18/55)

3.1 The Board considered a report on financial performance to the end of September 2018 and projected expenditure to the end of the financial year. The total budget for the year stood at £127m. The SCTS had received almost £1m from the Scottish Government to allow the organisation to assume responsibility for the recording of evidence by commission hearings.

3.2 The Board reviewed the continued tight budgetary position and the steps being taken to manage costs. The ongoing discussions with Scottish Government in relation to shortfalls in fine and fee income, which were not directly within the control of the organisation, were acknowledged.

4. Spending Review (SCTS/Nov18/56)

4.1 The current position in relation to the Scottish Government's spending review process, which would set the budget for the SCTS and other Scottish public sector bodies for 2019-20, was outlined. It was anticipated that the Scottish Government would publish the 2019-20 Budget Bill on 12 December. The Budget Bill would set out the provisional funding allocations for the year ahead.

4.2 The Board acknowledged that the initial modelling work to illustrate the potential level and impact of funding gaps based on a range of potential reductions had been completed. They reiterated their view that the organisation had already managed a period of significant financial restraint and that further reductions would impact on services.

4.3 The Board stressed that dialogue should continue with the Scottish Government in order to seek the best possible financial settlement.

5. ICMS Progress Report (SCTS/Nov18/57)

5.1 The current position on the development of the Integrated Case Management System (ICMS) was reported. Civil online Phase 2, which would allow for online submission of simple procedure cases, remained on schedule for introduction in the first quarter of 2019-20. Business testing, involving SCTS staff, judiciary and the legal profession was due to commence in December 2018.

5.2 The development of ICMS for personal injury cases in the Court of Session had commenced and future development was planned across different case types. Elements of the Court of Session development would also be of value to the Sheriff Courts. The new model for development and testing would allow regular system rollouts to both courts.

5.3 Three members of the Board had recently attended a workshop which was designed to define the longer term journey towards civil online and which would help inform the future direction of the ICMS programme.

5.4 The Board requested that future ICMS reporting should incorporate the key milestones for the ICMS programme

5.5 Specialist support will be secured in developing the new procurement strategy. The business case will include an assessment of the functionality delivered to date and confirm full project costs and timescales.

6. Quarterly Performance Review and Scorecard (SCTS/Nov18/58)

6.1 The Board carried out its quarterly review of performance, including a progress review of the outcomes in the 2018-19 Business Plan.

6.2 The Board commended the annual Celebration of Success event, where more than 50 staff from locations across the SCTS had received their learning and development awards.

6.3 The Board were informed of the introduction of a new media portal scheme for journalists. The scheme would enable registered journalists to access some case information via an online portal, thus reducing the need to attend court in person to obtain information.

7. SCTS Staff Survey – High Level Results 2018 (SCTS/Nov18/59)

7.1 The results of the 2018 Staff Survey were reviewed by the Board. The SCTS' overall engagement score had improved by 2% since 2017. Improved scores had been recorded across the majority of areas. Participation levels had increased to 75%.

7.2 The Board welcomed the results, whilst stressing the need to focus on areas where further improvement could be made, such as leadership and managing change. 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.

7.3 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.

8. Customer Service Excellence Accreditation (SCTS/Nov18/60)

8.1 The Board recognised the continued improvement recorded by the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) assessors in 2018. The SCTS had improved the number of areas assessed as “compliance plus” and reduced the number of “partially compliant” areas.

8.2 The Board commended the results which, when coupled to the Staff Survey results, portrayed SCTS positively to other organisations and the general public.

9. Inverness Justice Centre (SCTS/Nov18/61)

9.1 The Board reviewed progress on the development of the Inverness Justice Centre. Construction work was on track. A “topping-out” ceremony, marking the building reaching its highest point, would take place on 29 November. The project was programmed to complete construction by the end of 2019, with the physical move from Inverness Castle taking place in early 2020.

9.2 It was agreed that the Board would visit the Justice Centre towards the end of 2019.

10. SCTS Board Operation (SCTS/Nov18/62)

10.1 The Board reviewed the structure of its existing four Committees: People, Estates, Audit & Risk and Remuneration. The Committees had supported the Board in discharging its role to good effect over the past year. It was agreed that the structure would be maintained for 2019.

10.2 Informed by the Board appraisal process, a schedule of workshop sessions, visits and development activities to coincide with each Board meeting in 2019 was considered. The Board approved the shortlist of topics for the sessions and proposed visits.

11. SCTS Committee Update

Audit and Risk Committee

11.1 The Committee Chair updated the Board on discussions at the November meeting and confirmed that the committee’s post-meeting workshop sessions in 2019-20 would focus on: the changes to the Financial Strategy & Outlook (including the impact of Brexit); Business Transformation – Services to Child & Vulnerable Witnesses; Partnership working – key relationships and benefits; and Information Security. They would also scrutinise the progress of the ICMS Programme through progress reports at every meeting.

People Committee

11.2 The Committee Chair summarised the matters discussed at their October meeting and presented the Committee’s Annual Report to the Board. The Committee’s priorities for 2019 would include monitoring ongoing progress of the People Strategy and scrutiny of issues involving organisational development and design, culture and leadership. They would also analyse the results of the Staff Survey 2018 before presenting their findings to the Board in March.

Estates Committee

11.3 The Committee Chair submitted the Committee’s Annual Report to the Board. This reported on the decisions made during the year which included: the approval of Business Cases for the progression of phase 1 at Kirkcaldy to create a 2 court annexe in the local police station; the creation of a victims and vulnerable witness suite on the 6th floor of the Glasgow Tribunals Centre; and progress, subject to a parliamentary order, for the relocation of Coatbridge Justice of the Peace Court to a building adjacent to Airdrie Sheriff Court. The Committee also approved the estates budget priorities for 2017-18 and the list of “shovel ready” projects maintained to ensure effective use of any late release funding from the Scottish Government.

12. Any Other Business

12.1 There was no other business raised.

13. Papers for Scrutiny/Exception Reporting Only

13.1 The following papers had been circulated for scrutiny:

- Court Programming
- ICT High Level Risks
- the SCTS Decision Tracker

No matters were raised by exception.

14. Date of the Next Meeting

14.1 The next meeting would be held on Monday 4 February 2019.

Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service
November 2018