



## Executive Advisory Body

Date of Meeting	26 November 2024
Subject	HR Report
Agenda No.	5.1
Prepared By	People Services
Purpose	Discuss

### 1. Background

- 1.1. We have presented some of the key areas of work across the People and Place function for the attention of Executive Advisory Body.
- 1.2. The detailed data on workforce composition as at the end of June 2024 is available in the published dataset which can be found at [Social Security Scotland - Social Security Scotland – workforce information: June 2024](#).
- 1.3. Data for period ending 30 September 2024 is still awaited due to the implementation of Oracle Cloud and will be published when available. Locally held data has been used in the report and withheld under Freedom of Information on the basis it is exempt under section 22 (1) – future publication.
- 1.4. Locally held data sources have been used to provide headcount information for this report.

### 2. Key points

- 2.1. Headcount has risen at the end of September 2024. Work is being done with colleagues in Finance to align longer term workforce plans with future budgets to ensure affordability of the workforce and delivery of business plan priorities.
- 2.2. As part of this work, Deputy Directors will be asked to ensure that alternative options to fill posts have been considered prior to any recruitment. This may include redeployment of existing staff, consideration of whether the work still needs to happen or could be moved elsewhere or whether the post could be filled on a temporary basis rather than permanently.
- 2.3. We are also planning for the potential impacts of Programme closure and some staff moving to Social Security Scotland. We are engaging with our trade unions on the implications of this work.
- 2.4. To aid our trade union partnership arrangements, we have established regular meetings with the senior leadership teams of each division. This was already the practice in Client Services Delivery Division where it has proved to be a useful way of keeping the trade unions up to date with activity in that area .A



workshop with trade union representatives and members of People Services will be held at the end of November to discuss ways of improving partnership working across the Agency.

- 2.5. The new Oracle Enterprise Resource Planning tool was implemented on 8 October 2024. Learning was provided for colleagues on Pathways and is also built-in to the system. Scottish Government has also been running open learning sessions for colleagues in response to specific issues and problems which have been identified by staff. This has included elements such as the new flexi and annual leave recording processes. A list of issues is being monitored, addressed and updated by Scottish Government.
- 2.6. Whilst most colleagues are able to utilise the system on a day-to-day basis, there are more complex issues for specialist users such as HR and finance teams. There are issues with a lack of guidance, training for specialist users, role-based access not having been applied correctly, management information reporting and adapting existing processes to fit Oracle. We are working with Scottish Government to have these resolved.
- 2.7. To support our people and understand any issues they are having using the system, we recently ran a pulse survey on people's experiences with Oracle Cloud and will be looking to run a series of drop-in sessions following the results.
- 2.8. Key findings from our survey show that 71% of colleagues have managed to complete all the first day journeys on Oracle Cloud, with a further 23% working through these. The findings also show that 72% of colleagues have found Oracle Guidance helpful, with a further 74% finding Pathways e-learning helpful as part of their learning to support the use of Oracle Cloud. However, around 47% of colleagues who took part said they do not feel confident using the new system, 34% feel confident and the others gave a neutral rating.
- 2.9. Since Oracle launch, Scottish Government have been supporting staff on accessibility both through accessibility drop in sessions and via iFix accessibility support queue which are supported by accessibility specialists. The iFix queue has reported small numbers of queries, and the sessions have been mostly attended by screen-reader users seeking support.
- 2.10. They have also been working through user feedback on multiple channels (Viva Engage, iFix, events etc) to gather insights and identify system improvements and supporting content improvements. In terms of issues identified, they have picked up a couple of accessibility issues that are being resolved: expenses journey – change approved for screen-reader users who are unable to include a receipt; decimal time (more a usability issue than accessibility but impacting particularly users with dyscalculia). This issue cannot be resolved completely as it is linked up to various other parts of the system including payroll but improved employee reports are being put in place that should improve this experience greatly.
- 2.11. The guidance and support put in place for assistive technology users has helped to mitigate barriers and will be added to as necessary. Quarterly updates are also being tested to ensure that anticipated improvements are delivered, and that fresh barriers are not introduced.



- 2.12. To align with Oracle, changes have been made to our resourcing policy and process. Colleagues are being trained in the use of success profiles which have replaced the Skills for Success competency framework. Managers also need training and support for the new applicant tracking system in Oracle and the additional requirements around authorisation of posts is causing some delays in filling posts as well as occupying a significant amount of resourcing team time.
- 2.13. Design and testing of the new operational resourcing tool for volume recruitment has been completed by work continues to align this to Oracle.
- 2.14. A review of our leadership development offer has taken place and the revised first level, Emerging Leaders, has now been rolled out to colleagues. All learning interventions delivered by the Organisational Development team are evaluated using the Kirkpatrick model of evaluation therefore this will be evaluated to understand its impact and the behavioural change it delivers. The second and third tiers of the offer, Leadership Essentials and Senior Leadership Programme will be rolled out in 2025.
- 2.15. We saw good engagement from all parts of the organisation with Learning at Work week and with Client Services Delivery colleagues with a specific learning day delivered during down time for preparation for Pension Age Disability Payment.
- 2.16. We are reviewing our learning products for benefit delivery to ensure continuous improvement and ensure we have captured any changes to processes and systems.
- 2.17. We have not been able to obtain data on sickness absence levels from Oracle for this report. However, we continue to deal with a high number of complex long term sickness cases and to focus our wellbeing offer on stress, anxiety and other mental health issues, resilience and change to try to address the underlying causes of absence.
- 2.18. The implementation of Approach to Performance, supporting the development of a performance culture across the organisation continues with positive outputs from both Child and Adult Disability Payment, Client Experience and Fraud and Error. This has led to a reduction in processing times. The Approach is now being rolled out in enabling functions starting with People and Place Division, and a plan is in place that will see every division in Social Security Scotland having completed the implementation by summer 2025.
- 2.19. The People Plan is currently being finalised and is expected to be published in early December 2024. It will be presented to Executive Advisory Body at the next meeting.

### 3. Conclusions

- 3.1. Executive Advisory Body is asked to note the work taking place across People Services.
- 3.2. We would appreciate any suggestions or advice members may have regarding the content of the report.