



Social Security Scotland  
Tèarainteachd Shòisealta Alba

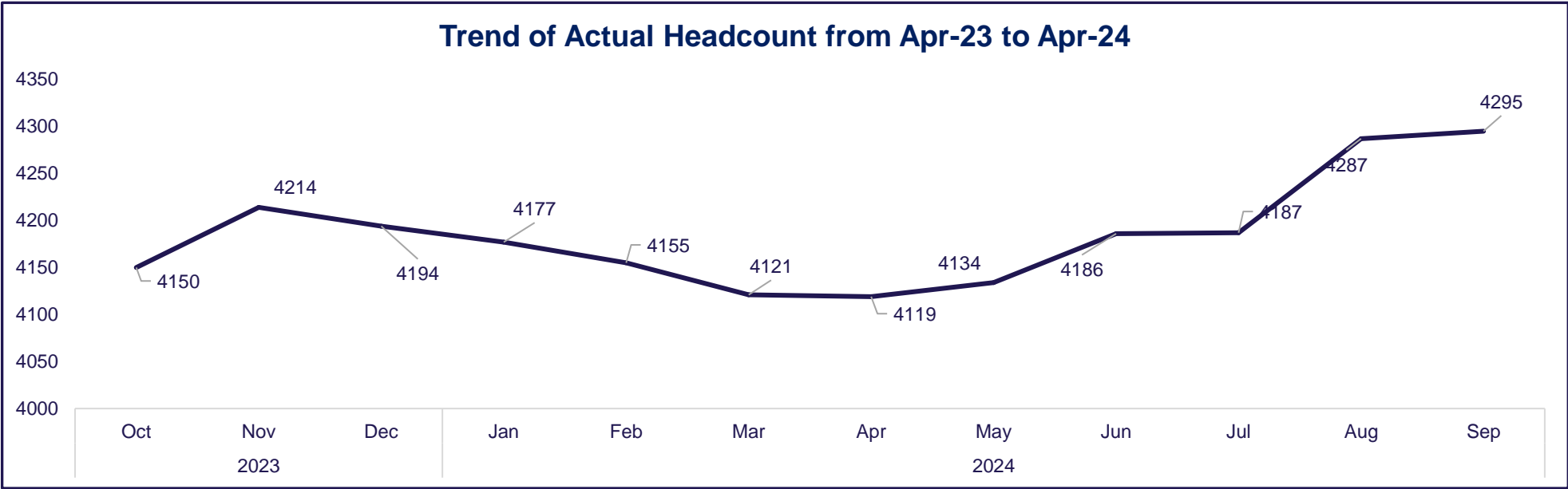
# Human Resources Report for Executive Advisory Body

Dignity, fairness, respect.

# Organisational Growth

As at 30 September 2024, headcount was [redacted].

Workforce Analytics are now providing staffing forecasts to our Finance team which use intelligent assumptions based on trends and historical data. Examples of these assumptions include known recruitment plans where requests have been approved, as well as historical vacancy fill rates. Further work will be required to understand what the longer term staffing requirements are and what the future size and shape of the workforce will be.



# Resourcing

## Key Activities

### **Success Profiles**

Supporting the rollout of Success Profiles across the agency, in alignment with Scottish Government policy and best practice.

### **Oracle Applicant Tracking System (ATS)**

Facilitating transition to the new Oracle ATS. This includes ensuring that all stakeholders are effectively supported during the adoption phase.

### **Operational Resourcing Tool Development**

Design and testing is now complete, with a pilot being planned for the near future to operationally test the product. The tool was developed to streamline large-scale recruitment, improve candidate experience, and ensure high-quality hires.

### **Programme – People Transition**

Work with Programme and hiring managers to support transition of key skills and experience into Social Security Scotland.

### **Talent**

Develop and implement a strategic Talent Approach for both acquisition and development of our people

## Risks and Issues

### **Delays to approved recruitment**

Several challenges have emerged, from ATS access controls, hiring manager training, reporting functionality and job profile requirements being available for advertising. This has limited the Resourcing Team's ability to perform their full range of duties and created delays within our recruitment process.

### **Operational resourcing tool**

Without integration with Oracle, the system would be “standalone” and still require manual data input/handoffs by the resourcing team. This would continue to drain some level of resource for large scale campaigns on admin duties.

### **Talent**

If we do not develop a strategic approach to talent, we risk ineffective talent acquisition, high turnover, growing skills gaps, decreased employee engagement and ultimately, reduced organisational performance.

## Impacts/Mitigations

### **Success profiles**

We are proactively engaging with Heads of Profession to support development of job profiles and our Organisational Development team to scope provision of training from January.

### **Oracle**

The access limitations on Oracle ATS have a medium-level impact on Resourcing staff; however, a temporary workaround is in place to enable staff to perform essential functions. We are also working closely with the Corporate Transformation Team and SG to resolve and escalate these issues.

### **Operational resourcing tool**

There is the potential for future integration with Oracle and this is being explored with Scottish Government. In the interim we have created robust process flows to ensure the handling of data is done efficiently and securely.

### **Talent**

Priority Talent is one of our top Divisional Business Plan objectives, with a cross-collaborative community of practice set up to explore development of our Talent Framework

# Capability & Leadership

## Key Activities

We continue to deliver Client Services benefit induction learning events that support benefit launches while enhancing the learning that supports Management, Leadership and the approach to performance in the organisation.

Some of our key deliverables in the last 6 months:

- 588 learners have attended Management, Leadership and Strategic Capability events (includes Approach to Performance sessions)
- 1,182 learners have attended Operational events
- 3,304 learners have signed up for our Learning at Work Week events with 2,689 attending the events
- 1,166 learners attended a learning event during Learning at Work Day that was scheduled to support system downtime when launching Pension Age Disability benefit.

We continue to design and deliver several benefit learning plans for future benefit releases.

## Risks and Issues

As volume recruitment ceases and we continue in a period of sustain and develop, we are required to develop the benefits training material beyond minimal viable product and deliver cross-skilling training.

Affordability constraints will drive team resources and capacity, driving a focus on priority learning interventions, including the design and redesign of training materials above.

Redesign of management learning continues with the recent launch of a management brochure that defines and signposts all the required learning however we are not seeing this flowing through to accessing of the brochure, enrolment on the learning or behaviours of managers.

## Impacts/Mitigations

Our design team continue to proactively engage with Social Security Programme colleagues to capture anticipated changes to benefit processes to deliver updated learning to benefit delivery teams, focussing their efforts in line with organisational priorities.

A review of line management training has been undertaken and a new management development brochure was launched. Focus groups scheduled to review new approach and update as required.

Three initial leadership programmes have been announced with Emerging Leaders commencing in October 2024. Leadership Essentials and Senior Leadership Programme will follow and are currently in design.

# Wellbeing

## Key Activities

Over the past 6 months we see an average of 26 colleagues return to work from long term absence, however, an average of 29 new cases are reported each month.

One of our Wellbeing Partners has left on promotion and we are about to recruit to replace. We continue to provide counselling, learning and awareness sessions to colleagues to address our main reasons for absence.

These include sessions on anxiety, stress and burnout; resilience and change; suicide awareness; balance and setting boundaries and men's mental health. We are planning our Wellbeing Calendar for 2025.

People Advice and HR Business Partners are working closely with senior managers to ensure the right support is being provided for colleagues who report as unfit for work, ensuring early support is put in place.

## Risks and Issues

We are awaiting sickness absence data from Oracle. From our own People Advice casework tracker, an average of 60 colleagues have been absent from work long term over the past 6 months.

We continue to see much more complex casework where colleagues have multiple conditions impacting on their attendance.

## Impacts/Mitigations

Although we do not yet have data from Oracle, we are using our own case tracker data to manage caseload.

We are continuing our focus on working closely with individuals who are long term absent to support them to return to work and have restructured the People Advice team to provide targeted interventions in this area. We are seeing the average length of our long-term absences decreasing and have had some good news stories with colleagues who have been absent long-term return to work or benefit from a career break. Overall caseload remains at around 4.5% of headcount.

Colleagues continue to provide excellent feedback on the counselling and wellbeing service.

# Strategic Design

## Key Activities

Strategic Workforce Design is collaborating with cross-Agency colleagues to support modelling, headcount assumptions and associated affordability through longer term projections. Aligning planning to strategic objectives and incorporating skills and capability data at divisional level will support intelligent assessment of future requirements through a sustainability lens.

We are delivering an organisational approach to performance to support our desired performance culture which has now been implemented in Child Disability Payment, Adult Disability Payment, Health and Social Care, Fraud and Error and Client Experience. We are now implementing the approach in our enabling areas, starting with People and Place.

We are preparing to share the finalised People Plan with Executive Team in early December for review and sign off. The People Plan remains aligned to our Charter and Corporate and Business Plans as well as the Equalities Strategy, Staffing Principles and frameworks.

## Risks and Issues

Losing sight of strategic objectives in the current financial climate could impair ability to continue our service offering. Our work encompassing longer term views is supporting planning towards efficient and effective structures and we are now introducing a skills and capabilities view to enhance this thinking.

Poor implementation of the approach to performance could result in uncertainty and unrealistic expectations for colleagues, adversely impacting morale and negatively influencing client experience. We have developed bespoke learning to enable and equip colleagues to understand, manage and measure performance and are continually reviewing the impact of this.

Final inputs and suggestions from Executive Team may need some additional time to implement however, we will work with appropriate teams to mitigate these to ensure successful launch of our People Plan.

## Impacts/Mitigations

We have established a community of practice to remain current and consistent whilst sharing knowledge. Enhanced data with organisational context is aiding more strategic conversations and decision making across Agency supporting both affordability and sustainability.

We have seen a significant increase in our performance capability, colleague engagement and manager capability across the organisation. The approach has identified and quantified “savings” from productivity improvements circa £3M whilst offering a more effective and quicker benefit delivery service to the people of Scotland. This is a significant step towards achieving our desired performance culture.

More than 400 colleagues actively engaged in development of the People Plan, taking the opportunity to improve employee experience. Drafts are being consulted on at different levels in the Agency to ensure identified activities meet identified needs.

# Corporate Transformation

## Key Activities

Oracle Cloud went live for the Agency on 8 October 2024. The transition, whilst challenging has not caused significant disruption, but there have been considerable issues with using the new Flexi and Time & Absence modules, the 35hr week transition and transfer/migration of data (hour to decimal change). Specialist users have been particularly impacted with guidance/training lacking, limited and unstructured instruction and difficulty adapting existing processes.

User Acceptance Testing of the Operational Resourcing Tool completed on 14 October 2024. Final sign off has been given by Project Team to finalise build of SOVA tool to align to go live of the Recruitment Module of Oracle Cloud working with SOVA as our supplier.

We have started to implement and use Success Profiles on new recruitment campaigns to align with Oracle Cloud which is the recruitment and performance replacement for the Skills for Success competency framework.

## Risks and Issues

Some specialist users (mainly in HR) have been managing reactively experiencing difficulty undertaking their roles due to incorrect assignment of Role Based Access Profiles, Oracle reporting not working as intended, and other challenges related to positions management, recruitment and onboarding.

Purchasing experiencing initial difficulty in paying some suppliers, raising Purchase Orders required for supplier payment and several key Purchase Contract Agreements not correctly migrated to Oracle Cloud.

Current Service Model appears unfit for purpose with colleagues not satisfied with service model/hypercare arrangements, escalation routes, limited Service Level Agreements and post reporting engagement.

We are also experiencing issues with increased profession oversight by Scottish Government and unexpected challenges around new positions because of the Oracle workforce model.

## Impacts/Mitigations

Resourcing and Onboarding activity can be completed as some members do have correct access, but this is not sustainable in the long term. Workforce Analytics Team are also making use of internal workarounds in the short to medium term.

We have developed a payment workaround while system catalogue omissions are addressed although this may have repercussions for reporting and spend tracking and is mainly suitable for urgent payments.

Our Corporate Transformation Programme is collating issues with specialist staff and acting as an escalation and engagement champion. We have managed communication messaging to cascade awareness of existing Q&A, guided learning and training resources.

We are also developing internal support mechanisms through our Digital Champion network to provide targeted user assistance and support.