

# **Registers of Scotland**

## **RoS Board**

**9 March 2021**

### **Invest in Our People Deep Dive**

#### **Purpose**

1. This covering paper has been prepared to outline the approach to the Invest in Our People Deep Dive session with the Board. It includes an overview of the structure of the session alongside questions for exploration during the session which the Board may wish to consider in advance. Additional reading material will be provided should Board members wish to learn more about the latest research on people and change and the future of work.

#### **Background**

2. We believe that investing in our people is an enabler to the successful achievement of our Corporate Plan objectives. The performance of our workforce underpins our ability to fulfil these objectives and therefore the performance of our people remains a priority focus.

3. The context in which we are operating is volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous, with these factors being magnified over the past 12 months. A number of work packages, initiatives and assessments are in place to support organisational performance and enable the transformation that our Corporate Plan describes for the next 5 years.

#### **People Strategy**

4. Underpinning the potential of these efforts are a unique set of driving and restraining factors for RoS. These factors influence how we best achieve the outcomes identified in our People Strategy, which articulates our commitment:

- to create an inspiring organisation
- to create a flourishing workforce
- to nurture and develop thriving individuals

#### **Engagement Insight**

5. The 2020 Civil Service People Survey results have been published and activity is ongoing to explore the findings, discuss the results and agree actions. The RoS wide results and analysis are included as a separate paper at item 5 for the Board to review, as well as an overview of benchmark data and the agreed RoS themes to shape enterprise wide action planning. In addition, another key data set that supports engagement insight is our Investors in People assessment.

#### **People Metrics**

6. Alongside the recent introduction of a new HR digital system, work has begun to develop a people dashboard to help more effectively leverage people data and MI.

This will be utilised to track the impact of our people objectives. The HR Digital programme will continue to enable more robust data to be captured and reported, creating better insight-led discussion and decision making. An early draft of a People Insight report and summary People Dashboard is included at annexes A and B respectively for the Board to review as an artefact to be refined with the input of the Board for future presentation. Even at the stage of initial draft, the dashboard provides some context to frame the performance challenge.

## **Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy**

7. Our new EDI strategy is tabled separately at item 4 for discussion at the Board meeting. As Board members are aware, RoS has several statutory obligations with regard to EDI however we also recognise and value the benefits that can flow from having an inclusive workforce. Work is underway to agree appropriate KPI/health measures for inclusion in the 2021-2026 corporate plan to enable us to track and measure our progress towards meeting our EDI objectives.

## **Employee Relations Landscape**

8. RoS continues to work with the PCS trade union under a partnership agreement. Throughout the past 12 months, PCS has been invited as core members to the Transition Board and each transition workstream. In addition, regular meetings take place with PCS to inform, consult or negotiate in relation to organisational changes. A current priority is the public sector pay negotiations and it is anticipated that this can provide an effective catalyst for change opportunities aligned to our corporate plan objectives. There is specific consultation/negotiation to be held about reducing working hours and it is recognised that any decisions impact “ways of working” considerations.

## **Ways of Working**

9. RoS has adapted to a distributed way of working with only a small number of essential worker colleagues continuing to be office based. Productivity reduced at the point of implementing remote working and an overview of the productivity journey over the past 12 months was undertaken. Unsurprisingly we know that the impact of working from home for individuals has been really varied. Across the whole organisation, according to our responses in a people survey, we were very roughly split into thirds. A small third said they were more productive at home, a large third said they were about the same, and the final third said they were less productive. We know that across registration, overall productivity is improving month on month, but we are not yet back to pre-Covid levels of productivity (total despatches per hours worked) and work is ongoing to speed up recovery. A more detailed productivity paper is tabled for discussion at this Board meeting, as part of the agenda item on reviewing our performance year to date.

10. Distributed working has been the context to some experimentation introduced in the last quarter of 2020 with the aim of introducing improvements to our performance management and development approach. We have trialled and evaluated a collaborative objective setting exercise with short-term objectives themed around service delivery, wellbeing and learning. This has not replaced our traditional performance system with its routine of annual and mid-year performance review, however, our early findings are that the shorter-term, collaborative approach to

objective setting is more engaging and better supports alignment of individuals to service delivery requirements.

11. Within the Registration function, work has been ongoing to design and implement new ways of working that allow for improved flow and therefore higher productivity. This began with experimentation in what we called *service teams*. The rationale for this change can be viewed in this animation which was created by our operational leads within the Registration function:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sAJMQ-PtlzE&list=PLLIrqE6NKhRwZtqgVAOWR6GDOSydpC7ul&index=29&t=0s>

12. We are now implementing the principles of the service team model through reorganisation of our core Registration business into what we call *squads*. This is a major organisational design and development piece. Early evidence-gathering indicates that the benefits of *squads* include reduced cost per case, increased throughput, reduced cycle times and higher engagement levels. Further information on the approach to *squads* can be found in the additional reading pack.

### **Deep Dive Session Format**

13. We intend to engage the expertise of the Board on how we leverage the performance of our workforce in the context of our internal and external constraints and enablers. Specifically, we plan to collaboratively complete a force field analysis (for a descriptor please follow this link: <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/6395.pdf>). This tool will support us to consider all the enabling and restraining forces on organisational performance at RoS from a people-perspective. We plan to create the opportunity to discuss some key questions to capture the Board's experience and insight to support ongoing efforts to improve the performance of the workforce.

14. It is requested that Board members consider these questions in advance:

- In consideration of the RoS context and external environmental factors, what driving forces would the Board recommend we emphasise and what restraining forces would the Board propose we actively pursue a diminishment?
- In relation to the above, what new approaches to workforce would the Board propose we implement to improve performance?

### **Conclusion**

15. Board are requested to consider the questions and supporting documentation in advance of the Invest in Our People Deep Dive session.

**Head of People and Change**  
**23 February 2021**