

<b>Report to:</b>	QSMTM Q4 2022-23
<b>Report by:</b>	Helen Gardner-Swift, Head of Corporate Services (HOCS)
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	26/05/23
<b>Subject/ Title:</b> (and VC no)	C5 Workforce Plan (VC187378)
<b>Attached Papers</b> (title and VC no)	C5 Workforce Plan (draft) (VC183707)

## Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this Committee Report (CR) is consider and seek approval of the Workforce Plan which is required under the key document C5 Human Resources Strategy (HRS).

## Recommendations and actions

2. I recommend that the Senior Management Team (SMT)
  - (i) approves the draft Workforce Plan
  - (ii) subject to (ii), agrees the key document actions set out in paragraph 20
  - (iii) agrees the publication arrangements as set out in paragraph 23.

## Executive summary

3. The HRS sets out what the Commissioner aims to achieve with, and for, staff at all levels and, in doing so provides a framework for the focus of how the organisation manages human resources (HR) and sets operational objectives and activity to develop people and talent.
4. As regards workforce planning, a risk-based approach is taken to mitigate the risk arising from our funding arrangements and this has included taking account of:
  - relationships with external stakeholders
  - having a work-force that concentrates a range of functions in fewer individuals
  - current and interim management structures
  - the ability to fund statutory, mandatory and strategically important functions
  - the impact of decisions, policies and business development on resources including, human resources and workloads.
5. As part of the budget process, the Commissioner is allocated funding for staff costs and the table below sets out the allocated budget for the current financial year and the two previous financial year:

<b>Financial year</b>	<b>Approved budget – total</b>	<b>Approved budget - staff costs</b>
2023-24	£2,232,000	£1,806,653
2022-23	£2,120,000 - originally approved but reduced to £1,940,000 following surrender of £180,000 due to saving re: staff	£1,744,034

	<b>vacancies</b>	
2021-22	£1,903,000	£1,497,816

6. The following should be noted:

- salary costs, the biggest single element of our budget, are derived from the SPCB's terms and conditions. Generally, salary budgets are set using guidance from the SPCB and pay awards are in accordance with the SPCB's pay awards
- the office premises re-opened on 3 May 2022 and a hybrid working trial is in place
- recruitment for freedom of information officer posts (4) and administration posts (2) was carried out in 2022-23
- for each financial year, the SMT monitor and review key workforce statistics, such as staff in post, staff turnover and ill health absence levels

Audit 2021-22

7. The HRS provides for proportionate and risk-based workforce planning and to date there has not been a stand-alone document entitled "Workforce Plan" although there is a proportionate and effective management reporting system to enable the SMT to monitor and review key workforce statistics.
8. Following the audit of the Annual Report 2020-21, the auditor recommended that the Commissioner should develop a formal stand-alone workforce plan, in addition to the work force planning that is undertaken under the HRS. The auditor was of the view that this may assist in the Commissioner in delivering their functions over the medium to long term. A project relating to the development of a Workforce Plan was included in the Operational Plan 2022-23. The auditor repeated this recommendation following the audit of the Annual Report 2021-22.
9. In 2022-23, a Workforce Plan has been developed by the HOCS, in consultation with the SMT, and with the aim of this being put in place in 2023-24.

Workforce Plan

10. The Workforce Plan takes account of the numbers of employees and the kinds of skills and training needed to achieve the Strategic Plan 2020-24 (SP) objectives which are:

<b>Strategic Plan 2020-24 Objectives</b>	
1	increase knowledge and understanding of FOI rights
2	enable and support high standards of FOI policy and practice
3	develop Scottish public sector culture and practice where the proactive disclosure of information is routine and valued
4	influence and support the development and strengthening of Scottish FOI law and practice
5	contribute to Scotland being respected as a world-leader in openness and

	transparency
6	be recognised as an organisation of independent and trusted experts that is run efficiently, governed effectively and is open and transparent

11. As our budget planning is carried out on an annual basis, it is difficult to plan long term for workforce variations. However, it is appropriate for the Workforce Plan to align with the time period of the SP. The SMT should also anticipate the workforce numbers and the kinds of skills and training needed to achieve the SP objectives over the four-year period of the plan. When the SP is reviewed, the workforce plan should be reviewed.
12. The impact of any extension or relaxation of exclusions or exemptions of FOI law will also need to be taken into account in the Workforce Plan so that human resources requirements can be reviewed.
13. The Workforce Plan should be formally approved by the SMT as it will be a key document.

### **Risk impact**

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14. The HRS and the Workforce Plan mitigates the risk of not managing HR in support of strategic aims and objectives.
15. Ensuring that HR will continue to be managed, as far as possible, in line with the HRS and the Workforce Plan mitigates the risk of not following appropriate human resource policies.

### **Equalities impact**

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16. There is no direct equalities impact arising from this report. However, in undertaking HR management, managers should have regard to any relevant equalities issues that arise, and their impact on a member of staff, and seek guidance (as necessary) from their Head of Department or from the HOCS.

### **Privacy impact**

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17. There are no direct privacy impact issues arising from this report.

### **Resources impact**

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18. HR will continue to be managed, as far as possible, in line with the HRS. The additional resource relating to the development of a Workforce Plan will be carried out within the existing resource.

### **Operational/ strategic plan impact**

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19. HR will continue to be managed, as far as possible, in line with the HRS, to ensure, that as far as possible, we are following an HRS which supports strategic aims.

### **Records management impact (including any key documents actions)**

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20. If approved and when finalised for publication:

- the Workforce Plan will be:
  - a Key Document and published within Class 5 of the Guide To Information
  - reviewed to align with the strategic plan that is in place (that is, at least, every 4 years) and annually
- the Responsible Manager will be the HOCS
- the approver will be the SMT
- the Governance Reporting Arrangements should be updated to include an annual reporting requirement under the Workforce Plan (HOCS to coordinate the related CR and present to the SMT)

## **Consultation and Communication**

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21. The SMT has been consulted in the preparation of the draft Workforce plan and their comments have been taken into account.
22. Publication of QSMTM Q4 minute.

## **Publication**

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23. This CR should be published as follows:
  - the CR should be published in full
  - the key document, the Workforce Plan, is withheld on the basis that Section 27 of FOISA applies and the key document will be finalised and published in full on our website as soon as possible.