



**Scottish Courts
and Tribunals Service**



Business Plan 2016-17



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Foreword

Eric McQueen
Chief Executive
Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service

I am delighted to introduce this business plan which sets out our activities and the environment in which we will be working in 2016-17.

Our plan builds on a number of significant achievements over the last few years including the successful merger of the Scottish Courts Service with the Scottish Tribunals Service as well as the implementation of both the Courts Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 and the Victims and Witnesses (Scotland) Act 2014.

During this period we have demonstrated the commitment, expertise and professionalism required to deliver our purpose of supporting justice at a time of major development in the justice system. Further change is planned, both to improve the service we provide to the users of Scotland's courts and tribunals and to ensure we operate as efficiently as we can during a period of considerable financial restraint.

We are now entering the third and final year of our 2014-17 Corporate Planning period. Much of what we set out to deliver has either been achieved or is on track, and we continue to align activity under the strategic priorities set out in the Corporate Plan:

- A well-supported judiciary and satisfied court users
- Skilled, engaged and motivated people
- A well-managed estate
- Efficient business processes
- Digital Innovation
- Purposeful collaboration with justice organisations

These priorities have allowed us to continue to deliver a high-quality service, verified independently through improved results in our 2015 Customer Service Excellence assessment and improved ratings in the 2015 biennial Court User Survey.

As we continue to change and develop, the importance of working collaboratively with the Scottish Government and justice partners has never been greater. This year will see initial work on the development of a new, purpose-built Justice Centre in Inverness, alongside detailed consideration and development of proposals to significantly modernise the operation of criminal trials. We will continue to support the efficiency and effectiveness of the Justice system – working through the Justice Board for Scotland.

Our people are at the heart of all we do and our continuing success depends on their commitment, professionalism and enthusiasm. We will continue to invest in their future, developing a new people strategy which will ensure they have the opportunity to develop their skills and build careers in an open, positive and collaborative working environment.

Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service

About Us

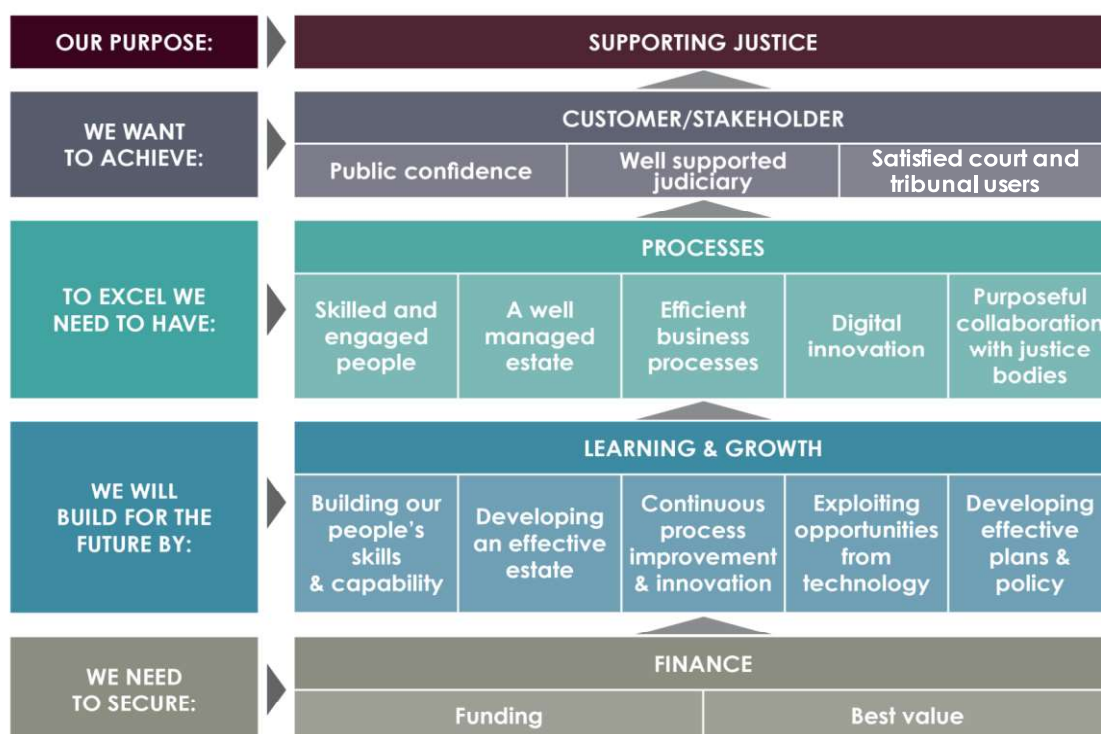
The Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service (SCTS) is a non-ministerial department established by the Judiciary and Courts (Scotland) Act 2008. Its statutory function is to provide administrative support to the Scottish courts, devolved tribunals and the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG).

The purpose of the SCTS is **supporting justice**. We fulfil that purpose by providing the people, buildings and services needed to support the judiciary, courts, devolved tribunals and the OPG. This Business Plan covers the 2016-17 financial year. It aligns with our [Corporate Plan](#) which sets out our strategic vision and priorities over the 3-year period from 2014-15 to 2016-17. For each year of the Corporate Plan, SCTS prepares a Business Plan. This plan explains the environment within which SCTS will be operating and sets out the main outcomes we aim to deliver in 2016-17.

Our **vision** is to **build a stronger Courts and Tribunals Service** – focused on improving access to justice, reducing delay and cost within the justice system and maximising the use of technology to improve our services. In support of our strategic priorities and objectives individual SCTS business units prepare their own plans setting out their more detailed priorities. All the work we do is underpinned by our core values of:

- commitment and professionalism;
- providing a high quality service;
- integrity and impartiality;
- working to improve the justice system; and
- using resources effectively.

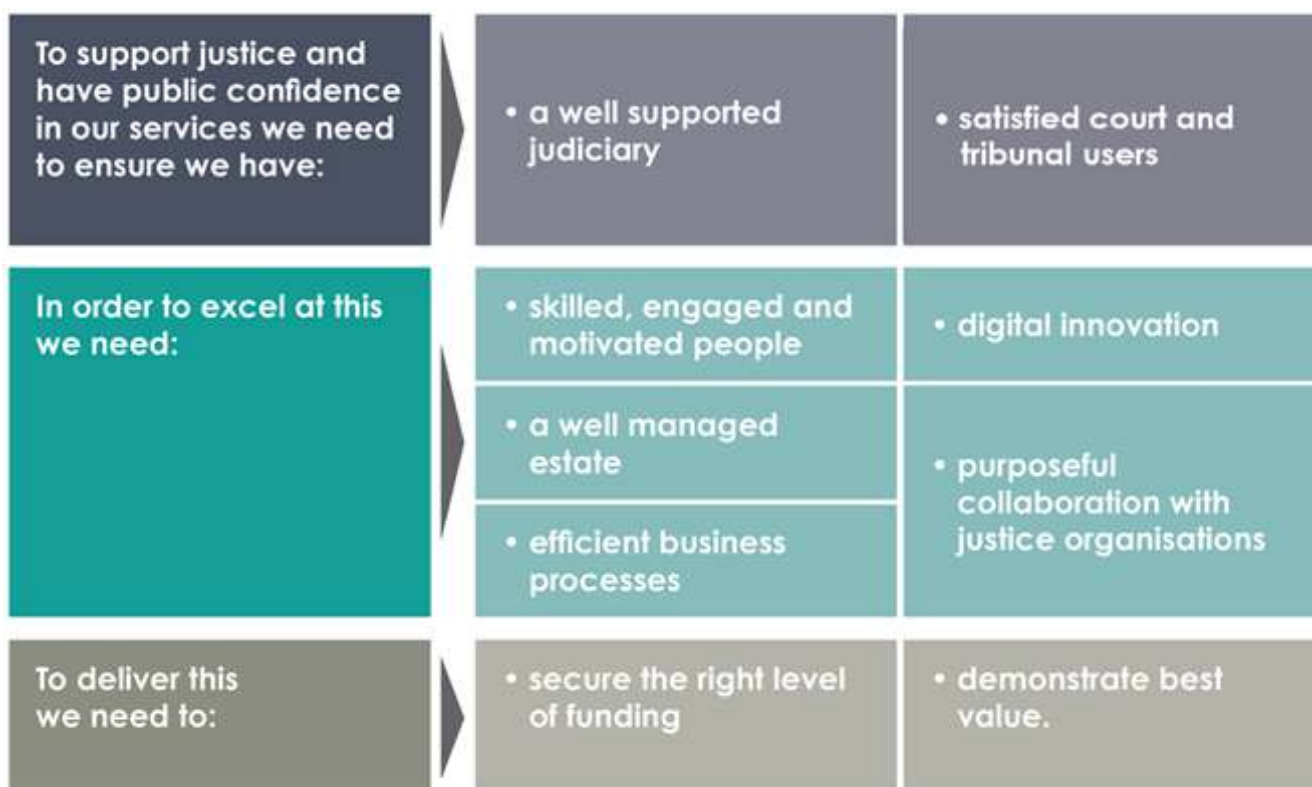
Our **purpose and priorities** are illustrated in our **strategy map**, demonstrating the alignment between the individual priorities and our overall purpose.



Setting the Scene – Our Operating Environment

The scale and pace of change and reform across the justice system remains significant. The merger of the administration of Scotland’s courts and devolved tribunals to create the SCTS is one example. Significant reforms to both civil and criminal justice have been introduced over the past year and will continue to be implemented this year. Scotland’s devolved tribunals will begin to transfer into a new structure and planning is under way for the devolution of reserved tribunals, the administration for some of which may transfer to SCTS as early as the end of this financial year.

To be successful in this environment the SCTS maintains a clear strategy and is committed to working in partnership. The strategy, set out in our Corporate Plan, details our 9 strategic priorities.



In order to successfully deliver on these priorities the way in which we approach our business is critical. Our **delivery themes** make clear that the SCTS needs to:

- **realise the full benefits from reforms** to the justice system currently underway or planned;
- **continually improve its services** to victims, witnesses and all court & tribunal users – through improvements to facilities and digital innovation;
- be **well managed and affordable** in the long term.

While independent we work in **collaboration** with the Scottish Government and a broad range of justice agencies. The [Justice Strategy for Scotland](#) provides a common focus for all agencies involved in the delivery of criminal and civil justice and our work supports the delivery of its outcomes and goals (which are summarised at Annex A).

Setting the Scene - Policy and Legislative Environment

A range of significant policy and legislative changes introduced over the past few years are now coming into effect across Scotland's justice system. These changes are part of an ambitious programme of reforms set out in the Strategy for Justice in Scotland. Collaborative working has been fundamental to the success of these changes; and to living within tightly controlled budgets

A diagram summarising the approach of the Strategy for Justice in Scotland is at Annex A

Further progress on these fronts will be made in 2016-17, in addition to the development of new priorities arising from the manifestoes of whichever party, or parties, form the new Scottish Government after the election in May 2016. The main policy developments we anticipate having an impact on our work over 2016-17 are summarised below.

- **Civil Court Reform** continued at pace over 2015 – with a number of the provisions of the Courts Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 coming into force, realising the most significant changes in the operation of Scotland's civil justice system for over a century. The all-Scotland personal injury jurisdiction commenced in September 2015, within a specialist court facility developed in Edinburgh. The newly created Sheriff Appeal Court took on its criminal jurisdiction from September 2015 and its civil jurisdiction from January 2016. Its workload will continue to develop over the course of the coming year.
- This programme of change will continue through 2016-17 – the rules rewrite agenda continues at pace and the introduction of the new **Simple Procedure** will take place towards the end of the calendar year. That will be supported by the introduction of a new **Integrated Case Management System** that will provide vastly improved case management and data capabilities over the existing system, and facilitate the on-line submission of case documents.
- The extension of deemed vulnerability set out in the **Victims and Witnesses (Scotland) Act 2014**, granting entitlement to standard special measures in court to a larger range of victims and witnesses, was successfully introduced in 2015. Special measures such as giving evidence by TV link, the use of a screen or a supporter in court are now available to all victims and witnesses under 18, victims of sexual offences, domestic abuse, trafficking and stalking. We will continue to monitor the volume and use of special measures over the course of this year to ensure appropriate arrangements are in place.
- The Act also made provision for **new standards of service for victims and witnesses**. These were drawn up in conjunction with justice partners and were put in place in April 2015. A report on delivery of the standards will be published in April 2016 and they will be reviewed later in the year in order to learn lessons from the experience to date. Ongoing work on standards and support for victims and witnesses will take cognisance of the new Victims' Code for Scotland launched by Scottish Government in February 2016.
- Further changes to **Solemn Criminal Procedure** will come into force as a consequence of the Criminal Justice (S) Act 2016 – requiring the Crown and Defence to communicate with each other and to provide information to the court on the state of preparation of a case by way of a written record. A Practice Note issued by the Lord Justice Clerk, to support judicial case management and the use of court time in solemn business, came into force in December 2015. The Crown is communicating with the defence ahead of the first diet and the Crown and defence are producing a written record, which should increase efficiency and make better use of available resources.

- From April this year a new judicial tier will be introduced in Scotland. There will be 15 new appointments to the office of **Summary Sheriff** and 5 to the office of part-time Summary Sheriff. The Courts Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 created the new judicial office to deal with some types of civil and criminal cases in the sheriff court.
- The **Tribunals (Scotland) Act 2014** creates two new tribunals - the First-tier Tribunal for Scotland and the Upper Tribunal for Scotland, known collectively as the Scottish Tribunals. Tribunals will transfer-in to the Scottish Tribunals in a phased programme. The first tribunals to transfer will be the Private Rented Housing Panel and the Homeowner Housing Panel which will transfer-in to the Scottish Tribunals in December 2016.
- The **Housing (Scotland) Act 2014** confers functions directly on the Scottish Tribunals in respect of the creation of a new Private Rented Sector jurisdiction and a redress mechanism for Letting Agents. It is intended that these new jurisdictions will be operational late 2017 and will form part of a Housing and Property Chamber within the First-tier Tribunal along with the existing jurisdictions being transferred-in. It is estimated that this will result in an additional caseload of approximately 1100 cases per year.
- This is a significant expansion for the Housing jurisdiction, and implementation and planning will be well under way by the end of this year. It is expected that Housing jurisdictions will continue to grow with the introduction of the Private Housing (Tenancies) (Scotland) Bill which will see further applications to the First-tier Tribunal by early 2018.
- The **Smith Commission** included proposals to devolve the UK reserved tribunals operating in Scotland to the Scottish Parliament. This is being implemented through the current Scotland Bill. A Programme Board, led by SCTS, has been formed to work with colleagues in the Ministry of Justice and HM Courts and Tribunals Service to develop proposals for the transfer of these tribunals to the SCTS.

Future Reform

In addition to the reforms outlined above we remain committed, with our partners, to finding new ways of working that improve the quality and efficiency of the administration of justice across Scotland. The Scottish Court Service (as it then was) contributed to this with the publication of the **Evidence and Procedure Review** Report in March 2015.

This Report heralded the next stage in developing thinking about how a criminal trial should be conducted in the modern era, identifying both potential improvements in the way that the evidence of children and other vulnerable witnesses is taken, and also the scope for modernising our approach to criminal trials as a whole, in the light of new technology. Increasingly the public expect services to be delivered digitally and interactively, and the SCTS, like all public sector agencies, needs to consider how best to meet those expectations in a way that protects the quality of justice in Scotland.

A further report, building on the initial recommendations of the Review, was published at the end of February 2016. We anticipate that this may be used as a basis for further significant reforms in relation to both the treatment of children and vulnerable witnesses by the justice system and reform of the way in which criminal trials are conducted generally, based around the premise that our justice system should use all the tools at its disposal to determine facts as effectively as possible at trial and to deliver an efficient and effective system for all those who experience it.

Setting the Scene - Financial Environment

Summary

The Scottish Government's budget for the SCTS has been set at £88.9m for 2016-17. This is essentially a flat-cash settlement. In this challenging financial environment it is essential that we continue to deliver high quality services and promote system-wide reform so that Scotland's courts and tribunals continue to meet the expectations of the public within the resources available.

Further detail on the 2016-17 financial plan is provided at Annex B (p23-24)

In recognition of the fact that significant ongoing reforms are underway, particularly in relation to the transfer of tribunal business to the SCTS, a number of in-year funding transfers have been agreed with the Scottish Government. Over the course of 2016-17 these will supplement the baseline budget by an additional £9.2m (as detailed in the table on page 23) giving a total budget for 2016-17 of £98.1m. This budget meets the majority of the annual running costs with a significant balance (£36.7m) being met from other sources of income (detailed on page 10).

Where do we invest our resources?

Diagram 1 (page 9) shows where the SCTS allocates its **resource by business area**. Some 85% of the total budget is invested directly in supporting front line operations, including the cost of maintaining a diverse and historical estate which accounts for 28% of funding. In line with our ongoing commitment to digitise the service some 9% of available funds are targeted on strengthening ICT provision to improve front line services.

Over the past few years we have delivered a range of efficiencies, through a programme of court closures, coupled with process innovations and an increased use of digital technology to support the efficient disposal of business. Costs are rigorously controlled and budgets managed throughout the year to ensure we balance efficiency with the delivery of a high-quality service.

The financial plan detailed at Annex B (page 23) illustrates that revenue expenditure for 2016-17 is budgeted at £108.4m, inclusive of a revenue reserve of £0.6m held to provide flexibility for emerging needs. The major cost drivers are staff, accommodation and estates management, which account for over 71% of expenditure.

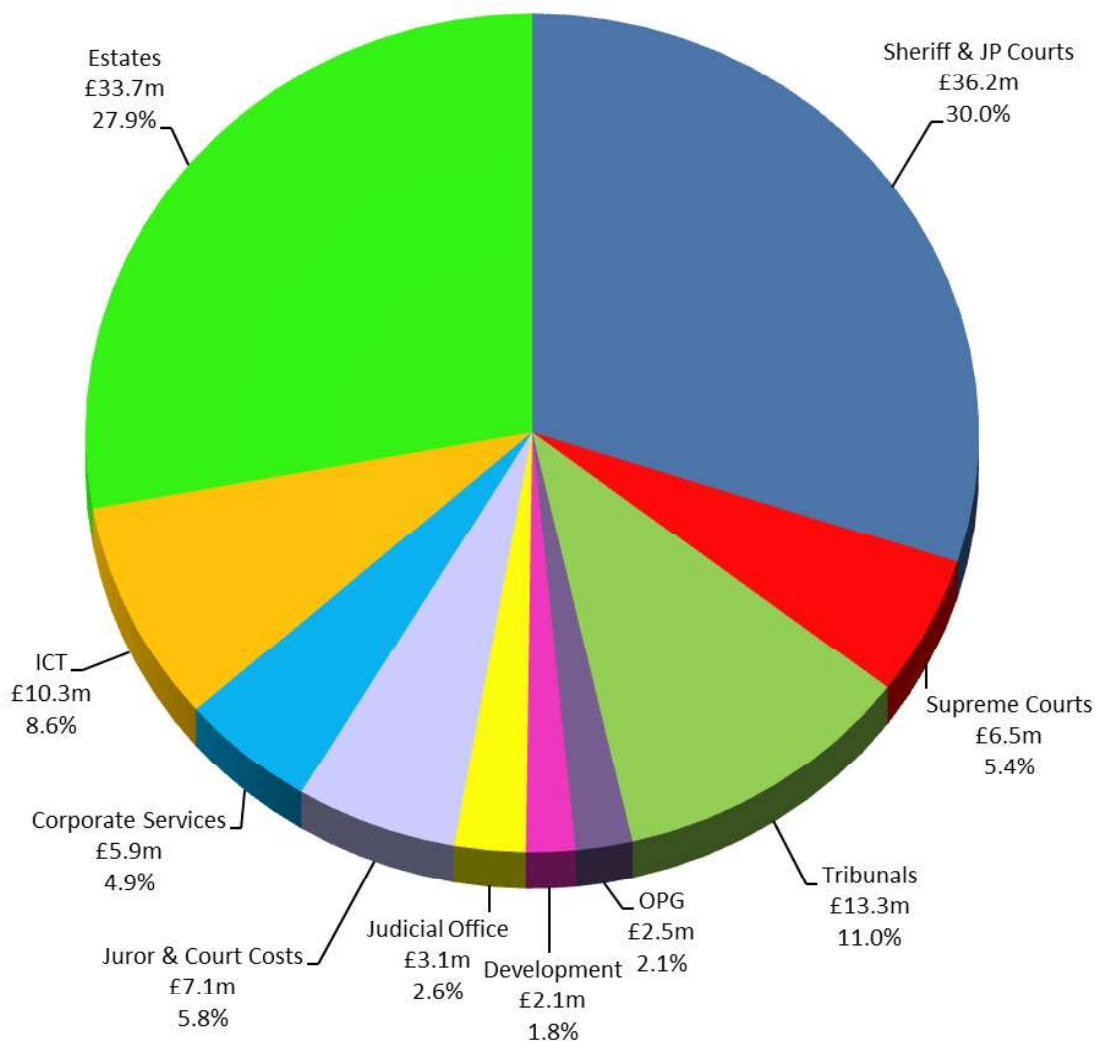
Capital funding for 2016-17 is set at £12.4m which includes £4.9m provided specifically to progress development of the Inverness Justice Centre (projected total cost of £23m over 3 years). As in previous years, the SCTS will continue to invest in its IT infrastructure and digital innovation whilst maintaining the effective and safe estate required of a modern service.

We use robust options appraisal and project management to deliver best value in our capital investment with a continued focus on improving service and minimising future costs to the organisation and the public purse. These disciplines are ably demonstrated in our flagship project to deliver the Inverness Justice Centre where a high level Project Board is supported by a Justice Users Assurance Group and a Technical Assurance Group as well as a project management team drawing on external expertise and support from the SCTS Board. We remain committed to the development of justice centres in other strategic population centres across Scotland, with Kirkcaldy and Airdrie identified as priorities for future investment. We will work with the Scottish Government and justice partners to explore the potential for further such developments, in the context of the next spending review.

Setting the funding for the Inverness Justice Centre apart, capital funding of £7.5m is allocated across Estates (£3.2m), ICT (£3.3m) and Integrated Case Management System development (£1m). In terms of continuing and new capital investments to improve service delivery, key areas of focus in 2016-17 will be:

- rolling out Wi-Fi capacity across courts;
- roll out of a high standard court room technology;
- upgrading video conferencing capability – including special measures to protect the vulnerable;
- development of the new integrated case management systems – with the new civil case management system to be introduced from the autumn of 2016;
- investment in IT and cyber security;
- investing in estates improvement and backlog maintenance; and
- continuing to promote carbon reduction initiatives.

Diagram 1 – SCTS Resource Expenditure – 2016-17 by business area



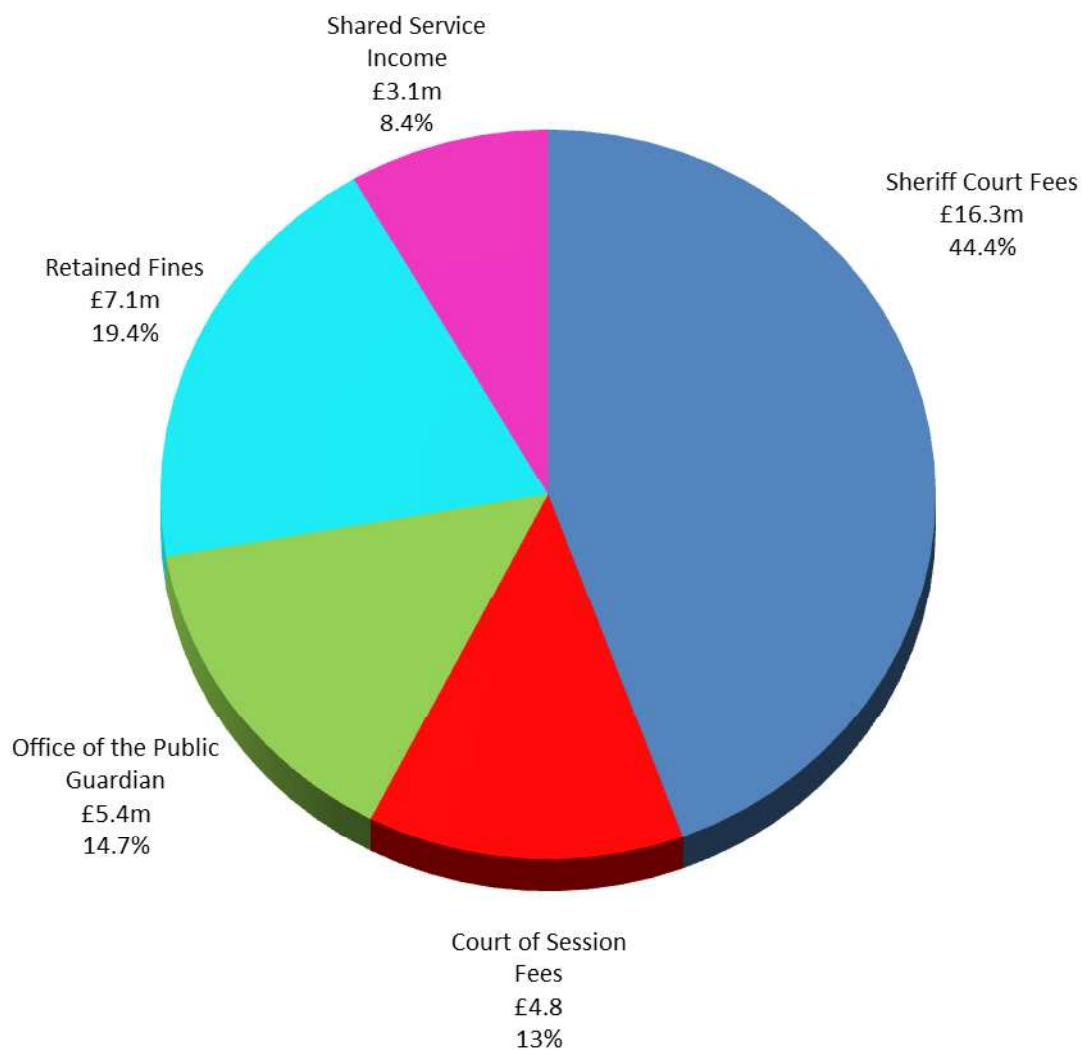
Income

Income for 2016-17 is projected to be £36.7m. Some 72% of that projection (£26.5m) is derived from fees. At £16.3m, the majority of these come through Sheriff Court fees, where activity levels are forecasted to increase somewhat - as recent reforms lead to a shift in cases being heard in the Court of Session to the Sheriff Court and specialist Personal Injury Court. Court of Session fees are projected to show a corresponding decline. Continued growth in the registration of Powers of Attorney has led to increased income being collected by the Office of the Public Guardian. This is projected to continue.

Income from retained fines accounts for almost 20% of the SCTS's income and is projected to be £7.1m in 2016-17. The SCTS also provides accommodation and associated services to a number of public bodies, notably the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, attracting income of £3.1m.

Diagram 2 – SCTS Income – Projected Levels 2016-17 (total income £36.7m)

Tables summarising the financial allocation for 2016-17, broken down by both service area and cost category, can be found at Annex B.



Setting the Scene – Business Volumes

Levels of business across Scotland's courts and tribunals remain high. Summary criminal business continues to represent the highest caseload volume with over 120,000 summary complaints forecast to be registered in 2016-17.

Sustained action has been taken by SCTS and other justice partners to tackle increased waiting periods that were caused by a surge in business levels over the past 3 years. This action has ensured that waiting periods are now within the timescales considered to be optimal in the majority of Scotland's courts.

Workloads in the High Court are equally demanding. We anticipate that increased numbers of indictments will be registered and an increased number of High Court trials will be held in 2016-17 compared with recent years. In addition to these increases the nature of the cases appearing before the court has changed over recent years, leading to an increase in the average length of cases. Criminal trials are becoming increasingly complex as investigative techniques improve. Trials in the High Court now regularly involve multiple offences and allegations of sexual offending.

The impact of significant reforms to Scotland's civil court system, based on the recommendations of Lord Gill and delivered through the Courts Reform (Scotland) Act 2014, should become apparent in the distribution of civil court business from 2016-17. The introduction of the exclusive competence of the Sheriff Court to hear cases under £100,000 coupled with the establishment of the specialist personal injury jurisdiction will lead to a number of cases that would have previously been heard in the Court of Session now calling in the Sheriff Court. This is reflected in the projections for 2016-17 which will be kept under review as the practical impact of the changes becomes clear.

Office of the Public Guardian

Business levels continue to grow in the Office of the Public Guardian, with increasing numbers of people realising the importance of registering a Power of Attorney in order to ensure their financial affairs can be effectively managed should they not be able to manage them, coupled with the ability to easily register the Power on-line.

Tribunal Business

Levels of business across Scotland's devolved tribunals are projected to be largely in line with those forecast for 2015-16, although the largest jurisdiction, the Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland, has experienced around a 5% increase in business levels year on year. This trend is anticipated to continue in 2016-17.

Financial Penalties

Our round-the-clock on-line and automated telephone payment channels are proving a success with customers. These innovations have made it easier for people to pay their fines at a time convenient to them. During the last year over £7m worth of transactions have been fully automated. We will work with Police Scotland during 2016-17 to expand our telephone payment system to accept a range of police fixed penalty fines.

Annex C provides summaries of key business volumes for 2013-14 & 2014-15. It also provides a forecast for 2015-16 and a projection for 2016-17. (Pages 25-27)

Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service

Business Outcomes for 2016-17

In 2016-17, we will continue to deliver on the ambitious strategic priorities set out in our Corporate Plan 2014-17 which will enable us to effectively deliver our core business while operating within strict budget allocations. As members of the Justice Board we will also work with the Scottish Government and other justice organisations, contributing to the development of new approaches and the implementation of major reforms which support delivery of the Strategy for Justice in Scotland.

Our key business outcomes for 2016-17 are listed on the following pages – grouped under our strategic priorities, as follows:

A WELL SUPPORTED JUDICIARY

SATISFIED COURT & TRIBUNAL USERS

SKILLED ENGAGED AND MOTIVATED PEOPLE

A WELL MANAGED ESTATE

EFFICIENT BUSINESS PROCESSES

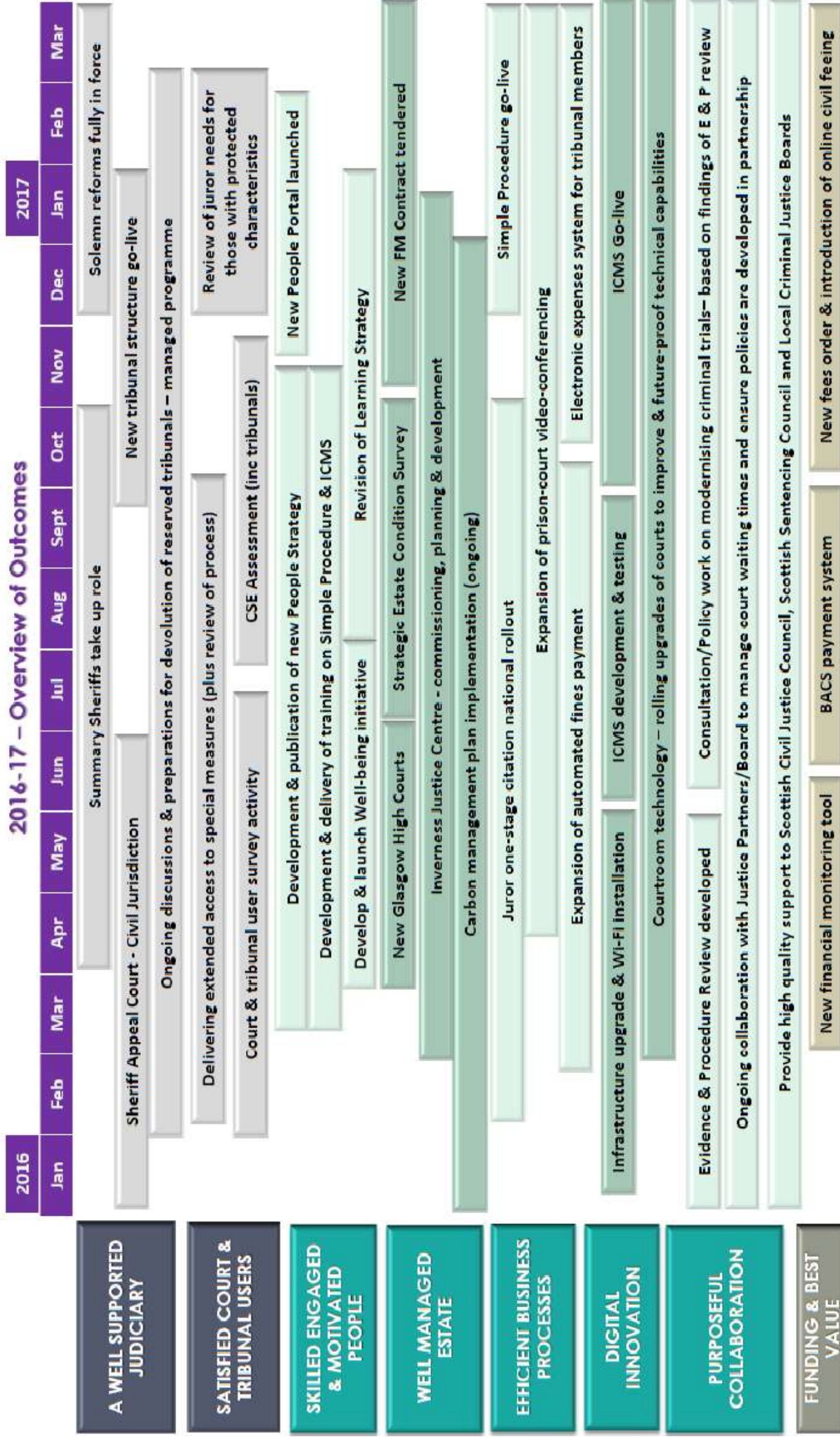
DIGITAL INNOVATION

PURPOSEFUL COLLABORATION WITH JUSTICE BODIES

FUNDING AND BEST VALUE

The SCTS Board scrutinises progress against this plan quarterly, alongside consideration of the Board Scorecard which reports on performance against the key indicators listed at Annex F. This plan is supported by more detailed unit plans produced by each business area of the SCTS, which are used by Directors to manage progress in their areas.

The identification and effective management of **risk** is also necessary to ensure that risks to achieving our priorities are identified, assessed, addressed and reviewed. The key corporate risks identified by the SCTS Board are summarised at Annex D. These were reviewed by the Board in February 2016 and are kept under regular review. Actions to control and mitigate corporate risks are monitored by the SCTS Board's Audit and Risk Committee.



Further information on these outcomes can be found on pages 14-21

A WELL SUPPORTED JUDICIARY

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

We aim to ensure that the right people, technology, systems and processes will be in place to assist the courts and tribunals judiciary as they implement reforms, including a greater focus on case management and the introduction of the First Tier Tribunal and Upper Tribunal.

The key areas for our focus in 2016-17 will be:

- Delivering effective support to the courts and tribunals judiciary.
- Continuing to ensure that we take account of the views of the judiciary to help us inform improvements in service.
- Supporting the judiciary in the implementation of the reforms introduced by the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act
- Supporting the tribunal judiciary as further reforms to the tribunal system are considered and developed.

Outcomes	Delivery Date
1.1 We will support the introduction of the new office of Summary Sheriff – ensuring that the initial appointees can discharge business effectively across the Sheriffdoms to which they will be appointed.	April 2016
1.2 We will facilitate the transfer of tribunals into the new devolved tribunal structure, establishing and supporting the business of the new housing chamber of the First Tier Tribunal and The Upper Tribunal.	December 2016
1.3 We will provide effective operational and administrative support to the judiciary as they implement improved case preparation and management practices, facilitated by the provisions of the Court Reform (Scotland) Act and the Criminal Justice (Scotland) Act.	December 2016
1.4 We will establish a programme – involving the UK and Scottish Governments – to ensure that the transfer of the administration of reserved tribunals is well-managed, adequately resourced and appropriately phased.	Ongoing to March 2017

SATISFIED COURT & TRIBUNAL USERS

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

We aim to provide the best possible service to all court and tribunal users, seeking views on the quality and effectiveness of the services we provide, and using feedback to inform improvements to our future service delivery.

The key areas for our focus in 2016-17 will be:

- Continuing to build our understanding of the needs and views of court, tribunal and OPG service users to inform improvements in service quality.
- Reviewing the significant reforms in service provision for victims and vulnerable witnesses to ensure these are achieving the desired outcomes.
- Building our insight on the needs & views of tribunal users, as these are distinct from court users.
- Using the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) standard as our principal tool for understanding user needs, driving continuous improvement and independently validating our service.

Outcomes	Delivery Date
2.1 We will secure corporate re-accreditation to the Customer Service Excellence standards for SCTS – to ensure we continue to develop our services with the benefit of users' insight.	September 2016
2.2 We will review the operation of our published standards of service for victims and witnesses of crime to ensure suitable provision is in place and to learn lessons from the experience to date.	October 2016
2.3 We will improve communication and scope the potential for increasing accessibility to court for potential jurors with protected characteristics as defined by the Equalities Act 2010 – to ensure that all those willing and able to carry out jury service can do so.	February 2017
2.4 We will review the results of the 2015 Court Users Survey, identifying where these suggest further improvements that can be made to local service delivery.	June 2016
2.5 We will pilot a tribunal users' service survey in the housing jurisdictions to assess the views of those who use these services, and use the findings to support future improvements.	September 2016

SKILLED ENGAGED AND MOTIVATED PEOPLE

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

We aim to maintain a skilled, engaged and motivated workforce supporting the judiciary and providing excellent customer service across the courts, Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) and the tribunals.

The key areas for our focus in 2016-17 will be:

- Continuing to develop the capability of our managers and people to contribute at strategic and operational level to the delivery of justice reform initiatives.
- Building our capacity through developing innovative learning technologies and skills development.
- Ensuring that our strategies and systems are efficient and forward-looking, supporting delivery of customer service.

Outcomes	Delivery Date
3.1 We will develop a new People Strategy setting out our key priorities for leadership and people management in the period 2016-2019.	January 2017
3.2 We will ensure that training and skills development is provided for all staff involved in the administration of the new civil case management system and the new civil simple procedure ahead of its introduction.	September 2016
3.3 We will review our approach to organisational learning in line with our People Strategy. The review will consider the results of consultation on the draft framework for Professional Standards for the Administration of Courts and Tribunals and future methods of training delivery.	December 2016
3.4 We will launch an on-line people portal to make more efficient and user friendly the process of maintaining accurate people records for payroll, administration and workforce planning.	October 2016
3.5 We will launch a new wellbeing initiative, to ensure we have the right policies, support and tools in place, so that our people can perform effectively, with access to guidance and support when required.	July 2016

A WELL MANAGED ESTATE

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

We aim to deliver an estate that is fit for purpose for the 21st century – ensuring that cases are heard at the right level in an environment that is safe, secure, sustainable and fully meets our equality obligations.

The key areas for our focus in 2016-17 will be:

- Implementing our new estates strategy and carbon management plan to deliver facilities that are optimal for the 21st century.
- Working in partnership to develop new justice centre facilities in strategic population centres across Scotland, initially in Inverness, with Kirkcaldy and Airdrie identified as priorities for future investment.
- Balancing estates investment with maintenance and access requirements across the estate, against the backdrop of a constrained budget.
- Exploring the potential for further joint working and shared services with justice partners.

Outcomes	Delivery Date
4.1 We will commence construction of a new justice centre facility in Inverness – ensuring that the needs of court users and justice partners are fully incorporated in the initial design and development phase of the project.	December 2016
4.2 We will provide additional courtroom capacity in the High Court through the addition of two new courtrooms in Glasgow, to ensure increased levels of trial business can be managed efficiently.	May 2016
4.3 We will meet our new carbon reduction targets ensuring that the SCTS continues to act as a leader in sustainability in the justice sector.	March 2017
4.4 We will ensure the resources available to maintain our estate are invested to best effect by conducting a strategic condition survey and using it to prioritise investment.	June 2016
4.5 We will ensure the ongoing efficient and high quality management of our estate, further integrating tribunal properties and letting the third generation facilities management contract for SCTS, Crown Office and other potential partner buildings.	March 2017

EFFICIENT BUSINESS PROCESSES

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5

We aim to create the right platforms for court processes and court users to interact with the SCTS electronically. We will continue to develop services that are “digital by design”. Our processes will make sure that business through the courts, OPG and tribunals will be effective, reliable and economical to deliver.

The key areas for our focus in 2016-17 will be:

- Ensuring that clear and efficient business processes are in place, meeting the needs of the judiciary, court, tribunal & OPG users.
- Ensuring that progress of business is reliable, economical and avoids inappropriate delays.
- Expanding operation of our services in other electronic formats and improving the customer journey in various areas.

Outcomes	Delivery Date
5.1 We will roll out a new process for juror citation nationwide, reducing levels of correspondence, cutting costs and allowing jurors to respond online.	September 2016
5.2 We will introduce the new simple procedure for civil cases, streamlining applications, case management and disposal processes to the benefit of all parties.	November 2016
5.3 We will work with our justice partners to increase the use of video technology to reduce the number of prisoners attending court for procedural hearings.	Ongoing to March 2017
5.4 We will implement an on-line process for all tribunal members to claim their hearings expenses electronically, saving staff and members' time, reducing costs and improving the accuracy and efficiency of claims.	December 2016
5.5 We will work with Police Scotland to expand the automated telephone payment system for fines to include Police-issued fixed penalties.	March 2017

DIGITAL INNOVATION

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6

We aim to place digital innovation at the centre of our service delivery, making sure that courts maximise the opportunities afforded by technology to create better processes, provide easy access & sharing of information, and provide courtrooms with the technology to minimise physical appearance and support quicker outcomes.

The key areas for our focus in 2016-17 will be:

- Consolidating our ICT on secure and flexible technology platforms.
- Providing courtrooms with a consistently high standard of ICT to ensure current and future systems can be used to best effect.
- Ensuring that our systems are ready to support greater use of online transactions, video conferencing and digital evidence presentation – so that the amount of paper in the courtroom reduces.

Outcomes	Delivery Date
6.1 We will implement our Digital Strategy and IT Service Improvement Plan to enable a more efficient and effective service and a better experience for all our users.	March 2017
6.2 We will provide professional court users with a robust and secure wireless service across our estate, enabling them to access their resources and systems in real time.	June 2016
6.3 We will design and deliver courtroom technologies to meet the current and emerging needs of the judiciary and court users and establish a rolling annual technology refresh programme.	March 2017
6.4 We will launch a new integrated case management system for all Civil Business – paving the way for digital case submission and evidence handling.	October 2016

PURPOSEFUL COLLABORATION WITH JUSTICE BODIES STRATEGIC PRIORITY 7

We aim to work with other justice bodies to keep under review how the justice change agenda is being managed and communicated and to work on collaborative initiatives to reduce costs and to drive improvement in the efficient delivery of justice.

The key areas for our focus in 2016-17 will be:

- Continuing to actively support collaborative reform and improvement of courts and tribunals through the Making Justice Work programme.
- Exploring the potential benefits of greater joint working in particular services and at particular locations.
- Contributing to effective policy development and innovation – ensuring that the future design and operation of court and tribunal systems is efficient, effective and meets user needs.

Outcomes	Delivery Date
7.1 We will support the work of the Justice Board for Scotland in delivering the Strategy for Justice, by sharing our plans and activities with partners to ensure a co-ordinated approach is taken to both policy development and operational delivery.	June 2016
7.2 We will provide administrative support to the Scottish Civil Justice Council and Scottish Sentencing Council to allow them to deliver their work programmes.	Ongoing
7.3 We will support Sheriffs Principal in their leadership of the newly reformed Local Criminal Justice Boards, ensuring they are used as a forum to drive collaboration and improvement at local level.	September 2016
7.4 We will continue work to reduce levels of outstanding summary trials, to deliver the optimum period of around 16 weeks between first calling and trial diet wherever possible.	Ongoing to March 2017
7.5 We will work with the Scottish Government and justice partners to develop an improved operating model for criminal trials, with the potential for significant efficiencies, based around the proposals contained in the Evidence and Procedure Review.	Ongoing to March 2017

FUNDING AND BEST VALUE

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 8 & 9

We aim to provide a stable, efficient, proportionate financial base that will allow us to implement the justice reforms, continually improve our services and be sustainable in the long term.

The key areas for our focus in 2016-17 will be:

- Building greater financial competency and knowledge across the organisation.
- Strengthening our financial management through benchmarking and improved use of management information.
- Embedding and demonstrating best value principles in our operational delivery.
- Maintaining our commitments to equality and sustainability.

Outcomes	Delivery Date
8.1 We will increase our capacity to handle financial transactions on-line, introducing on-line feeing for Civil Cases.	November 2016
8.2 We will enhance our financial monitoring and reporting capabilities through the development and implementation of a new budget analysis tool.	February 2017
8.3 We will speed up the process for paying compensation to entitled parties by introducing a new BACS payment system.	July 2016
<i>The following outcomes which feature elsewhere in this plan are also relevant to the best value themes of equality and sustainability</i>	
2.2 We will review the operation of our published standards of service for victims and witnesses of crime to ensure suitable provision is in place and to learn lessons from the experience to date.	October 2016
2.3 We will improve communication and scope the potential for increasing accessibility to court for potential jurors with protected characteristics as defined by the Equalities Act 2010 – to ensure that all those willing and able to carry out jury service can do so.	February 2017
4.3 We will meet our new carbon reduction targets ensuring that the SCTS continues to act as a leader in sustainability in the justice sector.	March 2017

Annex A – Strategy for Justice

PURPOSE					
To focus government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth.					
VISION					
Our vision is of a justice system that contributes positively to a flourishing Scotland, helping to create an inclusive and respectful society in which all people and communities live in safety and security, individual and collective rights are supported and disputes are resolved fairly and swiftly					
NATIONAL OUTCOMES		We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others		Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs	
We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger					
JUSTICE OUTCOMES	We experience low levels of crime	We experience low levels of fear, alarm and distress	We are at a low risk of unintentional harm	Our people and communities support and respect each other, exercising both their rights and responsibilities	
We have high levels of confidence in justice institutions and processes	Our public services are fair and accessible	Our institutions and processes are effective and efficient	Our public services respect the rights and voices of users		
PRIORITIES	Reducing crime, particularly violent and serious organised crime	Reducing reoffending	Tackling hate crime and sectarianism	Enhancing efficiency	Supporting victims and witnesses
Widening access to justice and advancing law reform	Reducing the damaging impacts of drug and alcohol problems	Preventing offending by young people	Reducing the harm from fires and other emergencies	Increasing public confidence and reducing fear of crime	Strengthening community engagement and resilience
TRANSFORMING CIVIL AND ADMINISTRATIVE JUSTICE	Transforming civil and administrative justice	Reducing reoffending II	Reducing reoffending II	Reducing reoffending II	Reducing reoffending II
APPROACH	Building safer communities	Getting it right for every child	Whole system approach	Making justice work	Victims and witnesses legislation
Road to recovery	Equally well	Early years framework	Achieving our potential	Reassuring the public	Police and fire reform

Annex B – Summary Financial Plan

2016-17 - Financial Summary by Cost Category

Cost Category	2016-2017 Budget Bill £000's	In Year Funding	2016-2017 Budget £000's
Pay	45,836	3,995	49,830
Other Staff Costs	1,851	94	1,946
Rent & Rates	10,444	513	10,957
Accommodation	7,679	120	7,799
Building Maintenance	5,628	112	5,740
Judicial Costs	3,210	1,214	4,424
Office & Other	6,144	644	6,788
Supplies & Services	3,976	280	4,256
Training	290	12	302
Travel	886	59	945
Tribunal Members' Fees	5,663	2,159	7,822
Total Direct Costs	91,606	9,202	100,808
Total Operational Costs	7,052	0	7,052
Reserve/(Shortfall)	568	0	568
Total Revenue Expenditure	99,226	9,202	108,428
Fees for Civil Cases	(26,500)	0	(26,500)
Rents Receivable	(3,065)	0	(3,065)
Retained Fines	(7,100)	0	(7,100)
Total Receipts	(36,665)	0	(36,665)
Net Revenue Expenditure	62,561	9,202	71,763
Estates capital	3,200	0	3,200
ICT capital	3,286	0	3,286
Inverness Justice Centre	4,900	0	4,900
ICMS Development	1,000	0	1,000
TOTAL CAPITAL	12,386	0	12,386
Total Cash Outturn	74,947	9,202	84,149
Depreciation	13,961	0	13,961
Total Net Expenditure	88,908	9,202	98,110

Annex B (cont) – Summary Financial Plan

2016-17 - Financial Summary by Service Area

Budget Funding Allocation	Budgets 2016-2017		
	Revenue £000's	Capital £000's	Total £000's
Sheriff Court and Justice of the Peace Court	32,736		32,736
High Court and Court of Session	6,516		6,516
Tribunal Operations	13,317		13,317
Office of the Public Guardian	2,486		2,486
Operations Policy and Development	1,935		1,935
Judicial Office	3,113		3,113
Part Time Judicial Fees (Shrieval Fees)	3,482		3,482
Juror Costs, Medical and Specialist Court Reports	7,052		7,052
Civil Courts Reform	210		210
CMS	354	1,000	1,354
Corporate Services	5,361		5,361
Information Communications and Technology	5,705	3,286	8,991
Estates and Property Services	25,593	8,100	33,693
Reserve	568		568
Total Operational Running Costs	108,428	12,386	120,814
Receipts	(36,665)		(36,665)
Depreciation	13,961		13,961
Total SCTS Net Expenditure	85,724	12,386	98,110

A commentary on the financial environment and budget can be found at pages 8-10 of this plan.

Annex C – Business Volumes and Planning Assumptions

Supreme Courts, Sheriff and Justice of the Peace Courts, Office of the Public Guardian

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16 (Forecast)	2016-17 (Projection)
High Court				
High Court judge days	3964	3881	3900	4200
Indictments Registered	829	812	700	810
Trials Evidence Led	429	443	430	465
Court of Session				
Court of Session judge days	2071	1956	1900	1850
Cases Registered	3242	3727	3800	2000
Proofs proceeding	119	114	160	140
Sheriff Appeal Court*				
Criminal appeals lodged				804
Civil appeals lodged				430
Sheriff Courts				
Sheriff Court Sitting Days	28160	28946	29000	29000
Sheriff Courts: Summary				
Complaints Registered	76584	71350	71500	71000
Trials Evidence Led	7866	8912	9300	9200
Sheriff Courts: Solemn				
S&J Indictments Registered	6033	6920	6600	6700
S&J Trials Evidence Led	1379	1430	1480	1500
Sheriff Courts: Civil				
Ordinary Cause Registered	24026	23628	23500	25800
OC Proofs Proceeding	984	875	810	850
Summary Cause/Small Claims Reg'd	48485	47977	48700	48000
SC Proofs Proceeding	649	509	500	530
JP Courts				
Complaints Registered	67762	66819	56000	52000
Trials Evidence Led	2590	3151	3200	3000
Office of the Public Guardian				
Powers of Attorney registered	45576	55527	57457	60000
Guardianship Orders registered	2264	2500	2755	3030
Access to funds orders registered	364	351	370	370
Intervention orders registered	369	343	376	413

* The Sheriff Appeal Court was established in 2015 – the criminal jurisdiction came into effect in September 2015 and the civil jurisdiction in January 2016. Projections for criminal appeals have been provided for 2016/17 based on part-year data from 2015-16. There is insufficient data to provide an accurate projection for civil appeals at this point in time – but forecasts and projections will be provided in future years

Annex C (cont) – Business Volumes & Planning Assumptions

Devolved Tribunals

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16 (Forecast)	2016-17 (Projection)
Additional Support Needs Tribunals				
Receipts	58	78	71	71
Disposals	63	68	78	78
Hearing Days	14	48	19	28
Homeowner Housing Panel				
Receipts	133	189	156	156
Disposals	330	311	174	174
Hearing Days	61	81	80	84
Lands Tribunal for Scotland				
Receipts	261	194	247	240
Disposals	1187	243	422	300
Hearing Days	69	68	68	80
Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland				
Receipts	3715	3870	4142	4337
Disposals	3719	3816	4050	4283
Hearing Days	3140	3381	3404	3572
Mental Health Tribunal for Scotland (Excessive Security)				
Receipts	n/a	n/a	30	78
Disposals	n/a	n/a	30	78
Hearing Days	n/a	n/a	60	297
Pensions Appeals Tribunals Scotland				
Receipts	184	316	247	300
Disposals	248	237	241	300
Hearing Days	70	87	72	85
Scottish Charity Appeals Panel				
Receipts	4	0	0	2
Disposals	2	0	0	2
Hearing Days	9.5	0	0	2

Annex C (cont) – Business Volumes & Planning Assumptions

Devolved Tribunals (cont)

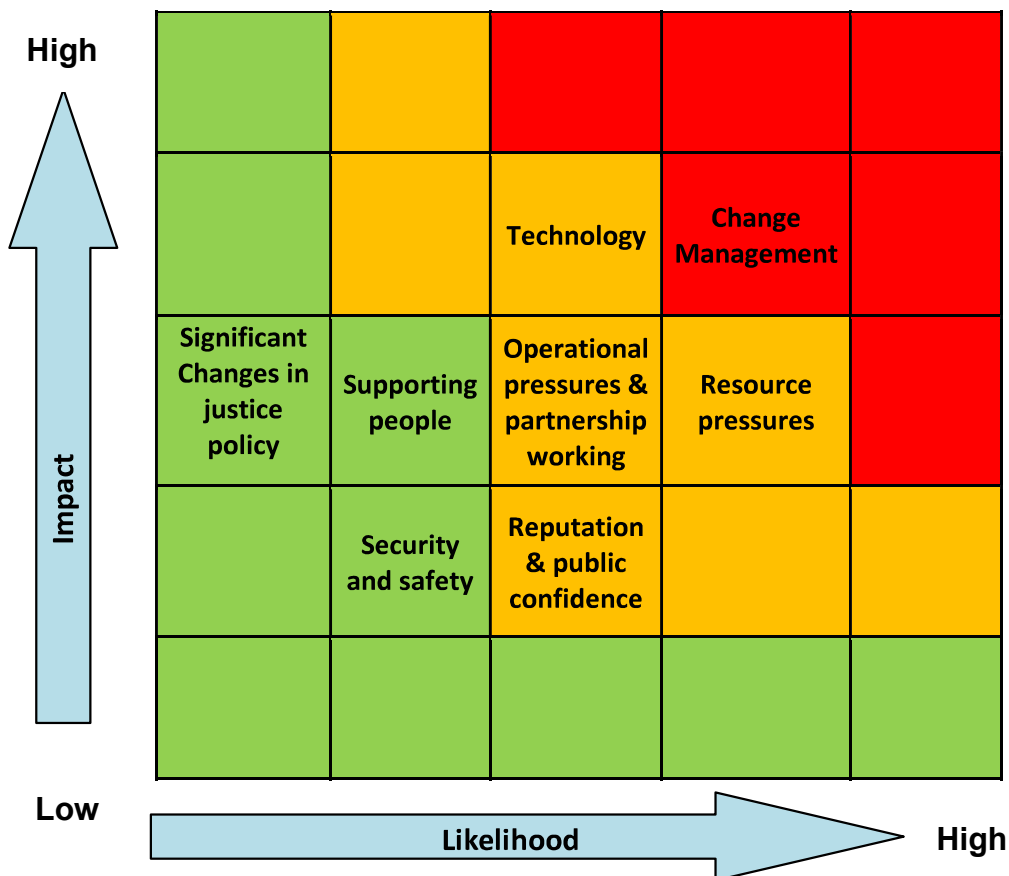
	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16 (Forecast)	2016-17 (Projection)
Tax Tribunal				
Receipts	n/a	n/a	10	40
Disposals	n/a	n/a	10	35
Hearing Days	n/a	n/a	10	20
Private Rented Housing Panel				
Receipts	172	331	352	352
Disposals	296	217	430	355
Hearing Days	133	200	200	200
Private Rented Housing Panel - (3rd party access)				
Receipts	n/a	n/a	3	650
Disposals	n/a	n/a	0	250
Hearing Days	n/a	n/a	0	448
Private Rented Housing Panel - (section 35)				
Receipts	n/a	n/a	12	150
Disposals	n/a	n/a	6	125
Hearing Days	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Other functions administered by Tribunal Operations

	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16 (Forecast)	2016-17 (Projection)
Council Tax Reduction Review Panel				
Receipts	6	52	84	100
Disposals	12	51	64	64
Hearing Days	0	8	7	24

Annex D – Key Strategic Risk Areas & Corporate Risks

Strategic Risk Categories – Identified and Mapped by the SCTS Board



Strategic Risk Category	Corporate Risk(s) monitored by SCTS Board and Audit & Risk Committee
1. Change Management	Scale and pace of change exceeds capacity to deliver Ability to effectively deliver business and/or reform falls due to budget constraint Operational and delivery structures do not adapt to realise full benefits of reform
2. Technology	Loss of Business due to failure of ICT /breach in cyber security arrangements New IT infrastructure and/or systems do not allow full realisation of benefits
3. Resource Pressures	Ability to effectively deliver business and/or reform falls due to budget constraint Failure to maintain right level of skilled and knowledgeable staff to deliver SCTS business
4. Operational Pressures and Partnership Working	Essential Court business and services compromised due to staff/building shortages Failure of information management controls leading to data loss. Loss of business due to failure of ICT Partnership Working fails to maximise system efficiency or realise full benefits of reform
5. Supporting People	Failure to maintain right level of skilled and knowledgeable staff to deliver SCTS business Lack of staff engagement
6. Significant Changes in Justice Policy	Scale and pace of change exceeds capacity to deliver New IT infrastructure and/or systems do not allow full realisation of benefits
7. Reputation and Public Confidence	Loss of personal or sensitive data. Loss of business due to failure of ICT/cyber security Essential Court business and services compromised due to Staff/building shortages Scale and pace of change exceeds capacity to deliver
8. Security and Safety	Significant Health and Safety or Security breach

Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service Our Strategic Priorities & Objectives – 2014-2017

To support justice and have public confidence in our services we need to ensure:

- A well-supported Judiciary; and
- Satisfied court and tribunal users.

In order to excel at this we need:

- Skilled, engaged and motivated people;
- A well-managed estate;
- Efficient business processes;
- Digital Innovation; and
- Purposeful collaboration with justice organisations.

To deliver this we need to secure:

- The right level of funding; and
- Demonstrate best value.

For each of these nine strategic priorities the SCTS Board has set out what the organisation aims to achieve through 4 key strategic objectives covering the 2014-2017 Corporate Planning period.

Strategic Priority 1 – A Well Supported Judiciary

We aim to ensure that the right technology, systems and processes will be in place to assist the judiciary to implement the justice reforms, including the move to judicial specialism and case management, with well-trained staff directly supporting the judiciary.

In achieving this we will focus on the following strategic objectives:

- Support the judiciary in the efficient disposal of business in particular in the creation of the specialist National Personal Injury Court, and Sheriff Appeal Court.
- Support the Lord President in the development of a judicial deployment model to facilitate specialisation and the introduction of summary sheriffs.
- Support the judiciary in introducing case management and specialisation by delivering appropriate technical solutions and systems and by supporting the work of the Judicial Institute.
- Support the Lord President and the President of the Scottish Tribunals in providing leadership to the Tribunals' judiciary and implement the merger of SCS and STS providing high quality support to the judiciary.

Strategic Priority 2 – Satisfied Court & Tribunal Users

We aim to provide the best possible service to all court and tribunal users, seeking views on the quality and effectiveness of the services we provide, and using feedback to inform improvements to our future service delivery.

In achieving this we will focus on the following strategic objectives:

- Deliver our equality outcomes making sure that people with protected characteristics feel confident about using SCTS services because we have tackled prejudice and promoted understanding of their needs.
- Improve the ‘user experience’ for court and tribunal users by providing a greater level of specialisation in the court services and digital delivery of our services.
- Use Customer Service Excellence to challenge and validate continuous improvement of our service delivery.
- Continue to seek the views of court and tribunal users through quality surveys to assess the effectiveness of our services, driving further improvement.

Strategic Priority 3 – Skilled Engaged and Motivated People

We aim to maintain a skilled, engaged and motivated workforce supporting the judiciary and providing excellent customer service across the courts, OPG and tribunals.

In achieving this we will focus on the following strategic objectives:

- Develop new professional standards for court administration, supported with continuous professional development.
- Use coaching as our approach to managing and developing our people, building our capacity and capability to manage and deliver change effectively.
- We will continue to develop people policies that make us an employer of choice and we will engage our people in planning and decision making.
- Support the reform and change programme by making sure our people have the skills, responsibilities and opportunities to maximise their contribution and to develop their career progression ambitions.

Strategic Priority 4 – A Well Managed Estate

We aim to deliver a court estate that is fit for purpose for the 21st century and supports the pyramid structure of ensuring that cases are heard at the right level in an environment that is safe, secure, sustainable and fully meets our equality obligations.

In achieving this we will focus on the following strategic objectives:

- Implement our new court structures model and progress feasibility studies to explore the potential for realising our vision for the “justice centre” model.
- Continue to develop court standards to meet the needs of victims, witnesses and jurors
- Continue to reduce our carbon emissions in line with our Carbon Management Plan.
- Continue to improve the protection, safety and security of our staff, the judiciary and court and tribunal users.

Strategic Priority 5 – Efficient Business Processes

We aim to create the right platforms for court processes and court users to interact with SCTS electronically and we will continue to develop our services that are “digital by design”. Our processes will make sure that business through the courts, OPG and tribunals will be highly effective, reliable and economical to deliver.

In achieving this we will focus on the following strategic objectives:

- Support the Scottish Civil Justice Council in making sure that the consolidation and simplification of civil courts rules is supported by effective business processes and technological solutions, supporting judicial case management.
- Provide courtrooms with technology that fully supports digital evidence presentation, video links and the use of mobile devices.
- Review all our key internal business processes to seek opportunities to maximise digital delivery, improve service and reduce cost.
- Work with the judiciary to research how rules of evidence and criminal procedures could be simplified and modernised, taking advantage of the new technologies available, to help secure fairer, more efficient and effective trials.

Strategic Priority 6 – Digital Innovation

We aim to place digital innovation at the centre of our service, making sure that courts maximise the opportunities afforded by technology to create better processes, provide easy access and sharing of information, and provide court rooms with the technology to minimise physical appearance and support quicker outcomes.

In achieving this we will focus on the following strategic objectives:

- Create an ICT infrastructure that is resilient, responsive and accessible, while fully facilitating our ambition of future digital, delivery of our court and administrative service.
- Introduce modern civil and criminal case management systems that move away from paper based processes, minimise duplicate data and allow us to transact business electronically with court users.
- Implement web based technology to introduce easy access to our services, with wireless connectivity, digital evidence presentation and extensive video links available across our courts.
- Work with justice bodies to develop a justice digital strategy that will enable greater sharing of electronic data and increase access to justice by creating new and innovative ways for people to access justice advice, information and legal services at lower cost.

Strategic Priority 7 – Purposeful Collaboration with Justice Bodies

We aim to work with other justice bodies to keep under broad review how the justice change agenda is being managed and communicated and work on collaborative initiatives to reduce costs and to drive improvement in the efficient delivery of Justice.

In achieving this we will focus on the following strategic objectives:

- As members of Scotland’s Justice Board, actively improve partnership working at all levels across justice organisations and support the high level vision and priorities for justice organisations, in line with the Strategy for Justice.
- Through Making Justice Work take a co-ordinated system wide approach, integrating long term justice legislative policy development with short term operational delivery projects to improve efficiency and effectiveness.
- Engage with 3rd sector, voluntary groups and representative groups to explore their priorities and ensure that as far as possible our services reflect the wide ranging needs of different court and tribunal users.

- Work with justice bodies to deliver the planned legislative programme including, courts reform, criminal justice and victim and witnesses bills.

Strategic Priority 8 – Funding

We aim to provide a stable, efficient, proportionate financial base that will allow us to implement the justice reforms, continually improve our services to court and tribunal users and be sustainable in the long term. In doing so we recognise the continuing constraints on public service expenditure and the need to provide services at reduced costs

In achieving this we will focus on the following strategic objectives:

- Ensure that all funding decisions are consistent with the Board’s strategy to improve access to justice and deliver services at a lower cost.
- Develop our costs models for all court business to assess the cost of court churn, allow greater benchmarking of courts and target areas for improvement.
- Develop a new pricing strategy for civil court fees to match the reformed delivery model, seeking where possible to align fees with the cost of the service.
- Develop a long term strategy for the funding of reserved tribunals that may be transferred to a merged SCTS in the future.

Strategic Priority 9 – Best Value

We aim to embed best value principles throughout the organisation to support the delivery of our key outcomes, by securing continuous improvement in our performance maintaining the right balance between quality and cost, whilst maintaining our commitment to equality and sustainability.

In achieving this we will focus on the following strategic objectives:

- Ensure our vision and strategic direction is communicated to staff, judiciary and stakeholders, demonstrating our direction of travel, commitment to continuous improvement and alignment with the Justice Strategy for Scotland.
- Maintain our strong commitment to effective partnership working and collaborative leadership through the Justice Board and Scottish Governments Making Justice Work Programme.
- Robustly apply performance management to monitor the achievement of outcomes, supporting decision making and risk management.
- Review the management of resources across the organisation to demonstrate that investment in staff, assets, information, technology and procurement contribute to the delivery of our outcomes.

Annex F – Summary of Key Performance Indicators

Performance against the KPI measures is monitored quarterly by the SCTS Board, using its Performance Scorecard, which assesses a range of measures relating to delivery of our 9 Strategic Priorities. These are summarised below.

1. A WELL SUPPORTED JUDICIARY

1a Judicial Satisfaction levels (assessment of most recent judicial attitudes survey plus qualitative assessment by SCTS Executive Team)

2. SATISFIED COURT & TRIBUNAL USERS

2a User Satisfaction levels (based on SCTS Court User Survey Data and ratings provided in independent Customer Service Excellence analysis).

2b Percentage of summary criminal cases disposed of within 26 weeks (based on official justice system statistics)

3. SKILLED ENGAGED AND MOTIVATED PEOPLE

3a Employee engagement levels (indicator based around staff turnover, absence levels and survey data).

3b Delivery of staff development (indicator based around skills assessment tool and index rating).

4. A WELL MANAGED ESTATE

4a Investment in the Estate (assessment of investment levels to ensure that backlog maintenance is being managed effectively).

5. EFFICIENT BUSINESS PROCESSES

5a Sheriff summary criminal waiting periods (assessment of the length of time between pleading and trial diets, based on court system data).

5b JP Summary criminal waiting periods (assessment of the length of time between pleading and trial diets, based on court system data).

5c Summary trials adjourned with no evidence led (proportion of trials called where the substantive business cannot proceed, based on court system data)

5d Court business waiting times (non-summary). An analysis of 12 key waiting indicators across a broad range of court business, assessing whether waiting times in relation to that business remain within optimal levels

5e Effective Tribunals Operations – an assessment of 14 key administrative targets monitored by Tribunal Operations Directorate, to ensure that tribunals are effectively administered.

6. DIGITAL INNOVATION

6a Proportion of applicable transactions carried out on line (measure to assess and drive greater use of on-line systems, such as online fines payment).

6b IT system availability (% of time that core systems are available for use).

7. PURPOSEFUL COLLABORATION WITH JUSTICE BODIES

7a Assessment of collaboration with other justice bodies and through the Justice Board for Scotland.

8. FUNDING & BEST VALUE

8a Managing expenditure (comparison of actual expenditure with profiled expenditure to ensure robust budgeting).

8b Managing income (comparison of actual fines and fees income with profiled income to ensure robust profiling).

9a Programme and Project Delivery (assessment of delivery of business change activity).