

<b>Meeting</b>	People Committee
<b>Meeting date</b>	18 September 2024
<b>Meeting time</b>	10:00-13:00
<b>Meeting location</b>	MS Teams (hybrid)

<b>In attendance</b>	Debbie Trafford	Chair, SPPA Head of People and Place
	Jane Malcolm	Non-executive board member
	Mark Adderley	Non-executive board member
	Stephen Pathirana	SPPA Chief Executive Officer
		SPPA People Development Consultant
		SPPA HR Manager
		SPPA Corporate Governance Manager
<b>Minutes*</b>		SPPA Corporate Governance Officer

**1. Governance Matters**

- The Chair welcomed the committee.
- There were no apologies received.
- 1.3 There were no changes to committee members' Register of Interests nor were there any declarations of interest in the business to be conducted.

**2. Minutes of the previous meeting and Actions**

- The committee agreed that the minutes of the previous meeting were a true and correct record.
- The committee reviewed the action tracker. The following actions were approved for closure:
  - 1223.02 – Explore possible correlations between TRS numbers and stress absence
  - 0324.01 – Include at future meetings: possible correlation of high TRS numbers and stress absence in B3/C1 grades, Oracle Fusion implementation and Leadership Development
  - 0324.02 – MAB discussions on productivity
  - 0324.03 – ET discussions on EDI
- An update on 1223.02 was noted:
  - On examination, the available data from 1 August 2023-31 July 2024 showed no correlation between high TRS numbers and stress absence in B3/C1 grades. The committee discussed proactively working with staff experiencing mental health issues to support their return to work. This includes identifying the root cause of their absence and providing appropriate support.

**3. HR update**

- SPPA HR manager gave an update on HR Management Information.
- The Committee noted:
  - 25% of the current workforce are fixed term or agency workers. The committee acknowledged the need for a more strategic approach to resourcing, ensuring that temporary promotions are used for development purposes rather than just filling gaps.
  - Core SG recruitment freeze may be impacting on figures.
  - HR and PD are working together on future workforce and recruitment planning.
  - Importance of supporting middle managers to manage effectively – The committee discussed the need to provide line managers with more support, including a clear performance framework, resources for training and development, and potentially revisiting role design. Stephen Pathirana reflected on his impressions since joining the Agency:

- His central driving goal is the health of SPPA workforce Generally, SPPA staff are passionate about their work however organisational memory reflects previous experiences and frustrations with the systems.
- There's fresh outlook and energy; SPPA is reinforcing good practices e.g. supported leadership training, monthly conversations, the fledgling diversity network and the updated hybrid working policy; all bringing more stability to the Agency.
- Overall there is an optimistic feeling about the organisation.
- The committee was supportive of SPPA's approach and encouraged SPPA to incorporate discussion and ownership across the whole organisation, during the development and implementation of the programme of improvements/changes.

#### 4. Oracle update

- SPPA HR manager gave an update on Oracle:
- The implementation of Oracle brings a major cultural change for the SPPA. The committee highlighted concerns about staff confidence levels and the need to provide adequate training and support. The lack of flexibility in the implementation date and the potential for disruption were also discussed.
- The main priorities on 1 October 2024 are that all staff are paid, the flexi system is running and all staff move to the 35-hour working week – these objectives are owned by the SG programme team, and there was a high level of confidence that these objectives would be met.
- One of the main changes is greater ownership of processes by managers on the system. This is expected to be relatively low impact due to the intuitive nature of the new system.
- The implementation is being staggered, with SPPA having a proposed go-live date of 8 October 2024 (TBC). There will be staff on hand if anyone has any issues on the day.
- Recruitment will recommence after implementation date, also staggered.
- The Committee were content with this update.

#### 5. People Development Update

5.1 SPPA People Development Consultant provided an update on the People Development work programme, including the leadership development programme 'Leadership in Focus' and the Technical Training Framework.

- The committee were content with this update and emphasised the need to gain buy-in from teams and focus on priority areas, and the benefits of developing a digital library of resources, which can be accessed whenever needed.
- Pleased to see evidenced progression on Transition to Professions - rolled out to all professions as part of Oracle and aligning to the recruitment process.

#### 6. Discussion on People Risks

- Debbie Trafford gave an update and posed the following questions for discussion:
  - Are we capturing risks appropriately?
  - If not, what would we like to add?
  - What further actions/controls should be documented / captured?
- The committee agreed that the single people-related risk on the risk register - failing to build the right operating model - was too broad and lacking connection to specific actions.
- The committee discussed:
  - refining this risk to reflect the current context, including the introduction of Oracle,
  - the development of a positive work culture, and improving resilience and inclusivity
  - improving line management skills
  - Succession planning and potential senior staff turnover being potential areas for risk consideration:
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- The fact that some risks are always going to be present, and the importance of considering how or if risks may be closed
- Sickness, absence and vulnerability of workforce may not be sufficiently captured in register.
- Documenting how the risks associated with turnover of senior level staff are managed and mitigated; with actions identified through contingency planning, succession planning, and talent management.
- It was agreed that Debbie Trafford will re-draft, share the revised risks with committee for comment, discuss with ET then bring back to the next meeting. The redraft will draw out the risks based on the comments given.

#### **Action PC 0924.01**

Debbie Trafford to re-draft People Risks incorporating the feedback provided, share with Mark and Jane for comment, then discuss with ET and provide an update for ARC to consider the revised risk outline at the next ARC meeting.

Deadline: 11 December 2024

Owner: Debbie Trafford/SPPA Corporate Governance Manager

#### **7. EDI update**

- Debbie Trafford gave an update on equality, diversity and inclusion.
  - The executive team has identified several areas for improvement, including recruitment, communication, engagement with staff and the use of equality impact assessments.
  - Progress has been made in embedding ED&I into leadership training and promoting awareness of the employee passport, particularly in relation to reasonable adjustments.
  - Debbie Trafford acknowledged that capacity constraints are a challenge for the ED&I agenda and that the team is seeking to weave ED&I into existing workstreams rather than dedicating specific resources to it
  - The committee discussed the need to improve perceptions of senior-level commitment to EDI and increase the visibility of the agenda. ET is keen to focus on inclusive recruitment practices and staff engagement.
- The committee welcomed this approach, and made the following comments:
  - EDI values need to be embedded and involved in everything the agency does.
  - For the outward-facing EDI work, it's important to understand the profile of SPPA's customers, their vulnerabilities and what their profile means in terms of how they use our services.
  - Adjustments should be made because we want to, not because we have to.

#### **8. Committee discussion**

- Debbie Trafford asked for any thoughts on how the committee is functioning, what works well, what doesn't work so well, and any changes that members would like to see.
- The committee discussed:
  - While part of the MAB's role is to refer specific items to the committee as part of the governance process, the committee would like to see People issues integrated into MAB, rather than separate, to avoid discussions being repeated.
  - How useful does SPPA find the committee discussions? What value does the committee add?
  - SPPA's view that informal conversation and free flowing, open committee discussions on hot topics are very helpful.

- It was agreed the committee should act as a sounding board (almost an action learning set), providing scrutiny, challenge and useful advice and SPPA will investigate using more time with Mark and Jane to explore live issues to share thoughts and ideas.
- Jane advised that she step down from the committee, following her appointment as MAB Chair, and agreed another MAB member should join the Committee. It was agreed that the Governance Team will advise new MAB members of this opportunity.

Addendum:

- It was agreed between members of the People Committee to move away from formally structured meetings to allow for more informal, free-flowing discussions, facilitating ad hoc actions delegated by the MAB and focusing on hot topics.
- The committee recognised the need for some structure, including sharing baseline data and reports.
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- 1. **The agreed future goals were:**
  1. **Sounding Board:** Provide a sounding board for the Executive Team.
  2. **Scrutiny, Challenge, and Advice:** Provide scrutiny, challenge, and advice on people-related strategies and plans.
  3. **Integration:** Integrate People issues into the MAB agenda.
  4. **Strategic Thinking:** Help the Executive Team engage in more strategic thinking.
- 2. **The committee agreed to the proposals:**
  - **Informal Discussions:** Monthly or bi-monthly informal meetings between Mark and Debbie to discuss strategic people issues, share regular data and reports, and provide challenge and advice.
  - **Ad Hoc Deep Dives:** Conduct ad hoc deep dives for specific people issues separate from the MAB agenda.
  - **Review Effectiveness:** Review this arrangement's effectiveness after six months.

**Action PC 0924.02**  
 Governance Team to advise new MAB members of the opportunity to join the People Committee.  
  
 Deadline: 31 October 2024  
 Owner: SPPA Corporate Governance Manager

**9. Any other business**

Version Control		
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