

PE1423/E

Human Resources and Organisational Development
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Alison Wilson
Assistant Clerk
Public Petitions Committee
The Scottish Parliament



Your ref: PE1423
21 May 2012

Dear Ms. Wilson,

On behalf of the Scottish Government, please find the response to the Petition PE1423 as set out in Public Petitions Committee letter of 1 May 2012.

Scottish Government was asked – what is your response to what the petition seeks?

The Scottish Government agrees with the petition about the profound importance of the effective engagement of employees in creating effective services.

The Scottish Government's Business Strategy sets out our developmental opportunities as an organisation recognising that it is our responsibility as civil servants to support delivery of the Government's Purpose - to create a more successful country with an opportunity for all of Scotland to flourish.

As a high-performing organisation, we drive for continuous improvement through high levels of staff engagement by making the experience of working with the Scottish Government *clear*: with transparency and consistent approaches, *manageable*: set within the right framework for resources and *meaningful*: connecting to the motivation and aspirations of our people.

Recognising the critical role our people play in delivering the Government's Purpose, we engaged extensively with staff in developing our People Strategy. This Strategy sets out the ways of working we need now and in the future to ensure we have the right people in the right place at the right time and also create the culture and environment to enable individuals to thrive, develop, get opportunities and enjoy their work.

Delivering our aspirations in the People Strategy will be achieved through ongoing engagement with staff at both a local level in making this „real“ for individuals and teams and in the delivery of corporate activity which covers areas including how we support line

managers, manage our talent, improve our performance management and work across the public and voluntary sectors to develop our collaborative leadership capacity.

We have established a People Board comprising senior managers and Non-Executive Directors to bring coherence, discipline and pace to our plans for workforce development, and for the continuing development of the organisation as an ambitious, flexible, creative whole.

Scottish Government was asked – how does what the petition is calling for fit in with the work being undertaken in relation to Renewing Scotland’s Public Services?

The Scottish Government’s response to the Christie Commission set out in “Renewing Scotland’s Public Services” in September 2011, identified Workforce and Leadership as one of four priority pillars which are vital to delivering the reform of public services we seek. Our approach recognises that reform must be an inclusive and collaborative endeavour involving the workforce at all levels. The expertise, energy and creativity of the public sector workforce will help to shape our evolving programme of public service renewal and improvement. We want all public servants to have the opportunity to have a say in how their organisations operate and be encouraged to contribute ideas about how improvements might be made. We are committed to enhancing the capability of the workforce and will continue to invest in workforce engagement and development and to support leadership collaborations across public service organisations. Growing mutual understanding and shared purpose breaks down barriers between organisations and frees the frontline to respond directly to the needs of individual service users.

Increasingly, we will look to leaders of Community Planning Partnerships across Scotland to disrespect boundaries between public services and focus on the achievement of shared outcomes and cross-sectoral workforce development strategies. We will encourage effective management and strong employee engagement at every level in every workplace. By working in this way we aim to maximise productivity, raise job satisfaction and promote improved well-being across the public services workforce.

Already the **Scottish Leaders Forum** of public service chief executives have committed to:

- make **workforce engagement and development a core priority**. A sub-group of chief executives have set out priorities for action and released resources to take this forward; and
- develop the fundamental **principles of local leadership** to be exercised by Community Planning Partnerships.

Our future priorities include:

- emphasising that Community Planning Partnerships have a key role both in maximising the shared capacity of the public service workforce and in maintaining positive engagement with the frontline staff who deliver public services to people and communities across Scotland day and night;
- sharing the core learning and principles of the UK Employee Engagement Taskforce through targeted events in Scotland.

I hope this information is helpful.

Yours sincerely

Mrs J M Clemie
Head of HR Business Partner Team