

Session 6 strategy: interim review

24 April 2023

Reference: LT (2023) Paper 6

Purpose

At this mid-session point, we are seeking assurance that our S6 strategy remains right for the Parliament and can be delivered, whilst also providing an opportunity to make any adjustments. As the strategy covers both delivering excellence in our parliamentary services & strategic change objectives, Leadership Team will be able to take a complete overview.

I would steer Leadership Team that in preparing for this session, and the one on setting the Delivery Plan activities for 2023/24 in May, it is worth considering if change activities are achievable by September 2025. As we know from this point onwards there is considerable pressure to complete parliamentary business and to plan for the election. It would be useful to discuss and agree if this should be an ambition in refreshing the strategy for Session 6.

Agenda

1. **Introduction** (Michelle)

2. **LT PESTLE & SWOT analysis & discussion** (facilitated as below)

Part 1: Scene setting session (informal presentation by Office Heads & Team Leaders)

- Political & Legal - Lucy Scharbert, Roz Thomson & Kenny Htet-Khin
- Economic - Shona Skakle
- Sociological - Neil Mackie & Sally Coyne
- Technological - Dorothy Sneddon
- Environmental - Victoria Barby

Aligned to each PESTLE area as it pertains to Parliament, this is intended to be a thought-provoking session where colleagues will share key reflections, observations and insights of Session 6 so far and provide horizon scanning to share what they feel are the contextual opportunities and challenges for the remainder of the session. Participants can reflect on delivering excellent services/operations and/or strategic change objectives (such as scrutiny improvement etc) within the session.

Part 2: Leadership Team Session 6 Strategy PESTLE Analysis with a SWOT lens

- PESTLE analysis/SWOT exercise in facilitated break out groups (Andy, Tommy & Huw)
- Feedback on key themes by facilitators
- LT discussion to determine common themes and issues to be carried into next section of workshop (facilitated by Tommy & Lynsey)

3. **Strategy discussion: Is the overall strategy still right and achievable?** (facilitated by Michelle)

Taking account of the previous exercise, we will build on this to collectively reflect and challenge our Session 6 strategy, both delivering excellence in our parliamentary services and the strategic change objectives at a high level only.

4. **Review strategic change objectives and sub objectives** (facilitated by each strategic lead – Callum, Michelle, Lynsey, Lorna & Sara)

Each strategic lead to provide their own reflections and assessment of where we are overall in progress against achieving the Strategic Change Objective (high level); priorities; reprioritisation, challenges, opportunities etc. Thereafter, each lead will facilitate a group discussion using posed questions to collectively review the overarching objective and each sub-objective:

1. [A modern, dynamic, parliamentary democracy](#) – Callum to lead discussion
2. Adapting for a sustainable future:
 - [New ways of working](#) – Michelle to lead discussion
 - [Sustainability & climate change](#) – Lynsey to lead discussion
3. [A values-driven culture](#) – Lorna to lead discussion
4. [Operational excellence](#) - Sara to lead discussion

5. **Final reflections, summation & next steps** (Michelle)

Current Strategic Plan & Delivery Plan

- [Scottish Parliament Session 6 Strategic Plan](#)
- [Session 6 Delivery Plan for 2023-24](#)

Next workshop May 2023

Consideration and agreement of specific smart activities to be delivered within 2023/24 Delivery Plan to achieve Session 6 strategy.

Annex A

Preparation for strategy review discussion.

PESTLE analysis refresher summary

This is a broad fact-finding activity around the external factors that could affect an organisation's decisions, helping it to maximise opportunities and minimise threats. It audits six external influences on an organisation:

Political: eg policy and law impacting SPCB; environmental regulations; trade restrictions and reform; tariffs; political stability and in our context political agenda /manifesto as it may impact our work.

Economic: Economic growth/decline; interest, exchange, inflation and wage rates; minimum wage; working hours; unemployment (local and national); credit availability; cost of living and in our context Scottish public sector reform.

Sociological: Cultural norms and expectations; age distribution; career attitudes; health and safety and in our context evolving expectation of workplace; also, public attitudes/expectations of parliament and politicians, changing ways public [and parliamentarians?] expect to make their views known/be involved/kept informed and how we will anticipate and respond in service design and delivery.

Technological: New technologies are continually emerging (for example, in the fields of artificial intelligence and automation and robotics), and the rate of change itself is increasing. How will this affect the organisation's services? What will parliamentarians and staff come to expect of an effective workplace? What can the public reasonably expect when engaging with us?

Legal: Changes to legislation impacting employment, access to information, new legal requirements as employers, service providers, procurement and contracts in a new regulatory set up in UK post BREXIT, security, policing and enforcement of existing and new laws.

Environmental: Global warming and the increased need to switch to sustainable resources; ethical sourcing (both locally and nationally), including supply chain intelligence, net zero targets. Pandemics and other emergencies.

By analysing those factors, organisations can assess their operating context and make informed decisions. It can also highlight potential issues, and prompt further research to be built into future plans.

By auditing the external environment, a PESTLE analysis can detect and understand broad, long-term trends. This can support a range of business planning situations, such as:

- **Strategic business planning:** A PESTLE analysis provides contextual information about the business direction, how it is positioning itself to address its mission by achieving its objectives and mitigating risks (such as another pandemic) to productivity. It can help determine the validity of existing services and operations and define new areas for development.
- **Workforce planning:** A PESTLE analysis can help to identify disruptive changes to business models that may profoundly affect the future employment landscape. It can identify skills gaps, new job roles, job reductions or displacements. It can help align people strategies to the broader organisation strategy.
- **Service development:** By monitoring external activity, a PESTLE analysis can help determine if a service still fulfils a need in the organisation or when to launch a new service. It can help prioritise business activities to accomplish specific objectives within a set timeframe.
- **Organisational change:** A PESTLE analysis helps understand the context for change and is most effective when used in association with a SWOT analysis to understand opportunities and threats around any skills issues or current workforce capabilities.

SWOT analysis refresher summary

A SWOT analysis is a planning tool used to understand key factors - strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats - involved in an organisation. It involves stating the objective of the organisation and identifying the internal and external factors that are either supportive or unfavourable to achieving that objective. SWOT is often used as part of a strategic or planning process but can be applied to help understand an organisation or a situation, and also for decision-making for many different scenarios.

The value of SWOT lies mainly in the fact that it offers self-assessment for management. The methodology has the advantage of being used as both a 'quick and dirty' tool or a comprehensive management tool, and that one (the quick) can lead to the other (the comprehensive). This flexibility is one of the factors that has contributed to its success.

However, while the elements can appear deceptively simple and easy to apply, experience shows that deciding what the strengths and weaknesses of an organisation are, as well as assessing the impact and probability of opportunities and threats, is far more complex than first appears. It requires a team effort and can't be done effectively by just one person.

Further, the inherent risk of making incorrect assumptions when assessing the SWOT elements can cause senior management to procrastinate when deciding between various strategic alternatives, frequently resulting in undesirable delays.

Overview of Strategic Plan

Our Strategic Plan

Purpose

Representing the people of Scotland by debating issues of national importance, passing legislation and holding the Scottish Government to account

Vision

Making a positive difference to the lives of the people of Scotland

Mission

- Informing, involving and being accountable to the people of Scotland
- Creating good quality, effective and accessible legislation
- Undertaking rigorous scrutiny of the Scottish Government and bodies accountable to the Parliament

SPS support this by excellence in our parliamentary services

1. Providing Members with high quality support and resources to allow them to excel in their roles as parliamentarians and representatives
2. Delivering democratic accountability through effective scrutiny and debate
3. Encouraging public involvement in our work through welcoming and inclusive facilities and services
4. Providing the Parliament with efficient, high quality and effective corporate services and governance
5. Promoting a respectful and inclusive working environment that inspires excellence, where people and performance thrive

We will transform our services through our strategic change objectives



Our values of **stewardship, excellence, respect, and inclusiveness** drive everything we do

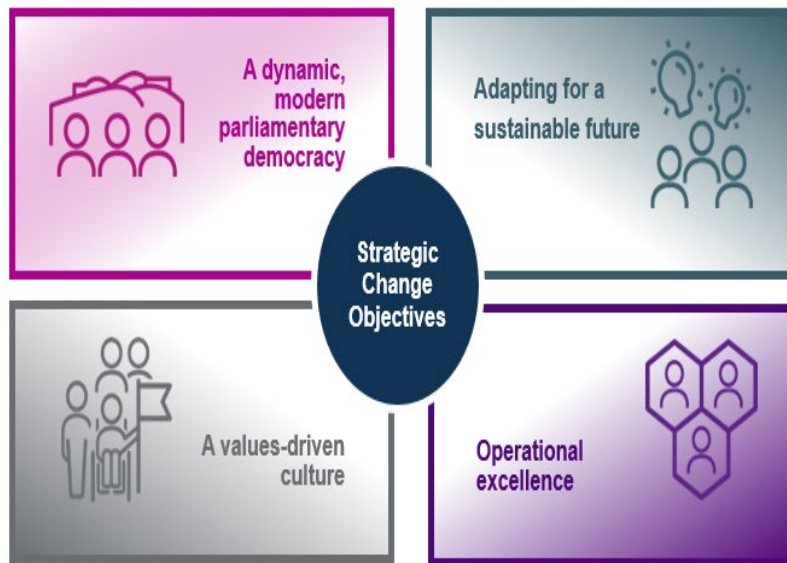
Consideration of delivering Parliamentary Services & Operations – run the business within our Session 6 strategy

Questions to consider in advance:

We have 5 objectives above which set out what we will do to achieve excellence in our parliamentary services and operations. These questions are intended to help you reflect in advance of the session. From a strategic perspective:

- are there strengths in the delivery of our services and operations - **positive tangible and intangible attributes, internal to our organisation and within our control** - that we need to recognise and maximise?
- are there weaknesses - **internal factors within our control that detract from our ability to deliver excellent services? Which areas might we seek to improve?**
- are there any **external positive factors and opportunities that exist which will help propel the organisation forward to achieve excellence in our services and operations?**
- **Are there any external factors beyond the organisation's control which could place delivery of our services and operations at risk? Do we have/require contingency plans or mitigations to address them if they should occur?**

Consideration of delivering strategic change objectives within our session 6 strategy



Each strategic lead will provide their reflections and assessment of progress against achieving the overall Strategic Change Objective. Thereafter, the lead will facilitate a Leadership Team discussion to collectively review the overarching objective and each sub-objective [see [annex B](#)]. This should take account of the Pestle/SWOT exercise.

Strategic leads may find the following questions helpful to prepare and to lead discussion with LT.

- Is the overarching ambition/objective still correct?
- Are we as a team assured it is achievable overall?
- Are we content with each sub-objective?
 - Do any need changed, consolidated or removed? Any new ones added? Do they fit SMART criteria?
 - Can these be achieved within the proposed timescales, say by September 2025? If not, are we assured this is okay?
 - What are the opportunities, risks & challenges to delivering this change? Have we plans in place to address?
 - How can we demonstrate success that they have been achieved by end of Session 6 and embedded onwards?

Annex B: Strategic Change Objective extracts from Strategic Plan

For ease of reference, please find below extracts from the strategic plan setting out the change objective and sub objectives which we will focus on in our discussions.

A modern, dynamic, parliamentary democracy

We will develop a modern, dynamic parliamentary democracy through enhancing the scrutiny function of Parliament, including promoting citizen participation, to enable our legislature and its Members to perform their constitutional role. In doing so, we will strengthen the authority of Parliament and improve its reputation as a relevant and trusted institution.

To meet this strategic objective, we will ...

1. Support committees to enable them to be more responsive, innovative and impactful, to deliver better public services and outcomes for our citizens
2. Develop and deliver a strategic Scrutiny Improvement Programme to bring about better legislation; policy and post-legislative scrutiny; public accountability and quality of debate, within Parliament's new ways of working including embedding deliberative democracy in the work of Parliament
3. Develop and deliver a continuing programme of opportunities for Members to develop their role as parliamentarians
4. Build sustainable development considerations into our scrutiny processes
5. Focus our engagement strategy on removing barriers to increase the diversity of the people engaging with us
6. Ensure robust plans and resources are in place to enable the Parliament to scrutinise and respond to the impact of the UK's withdrawal from the EU and any other constitutional change

Adapting for a sustainable future

We will learn from our pandemic response to imaginatively shape the future of how we will adapt and support Members in their work, create a more diverse, hybrid workforce supported by smarter use of our workspaces and technologies. In so doing, we will embed sustainability and deliver on our ambitious climate change goals.

New ways of working

To meet this strategic objective, we will ...

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1. Provide opportunities to enhance flexibility in how and where people work
 2. Sustainable working arrangements that are right for us and the business
 3. A digital-first approach will support the hybrid workforce of the future with a more flexible working style and less reliance on geographical location
 4. Implement changes to parliamentary systems and processes to enable flexibility for Members in how and where they work. This will include an effective and efficient means for remote participation in parliamentary business

Sustainability & climate change

To meet this strategic objective, we will ...

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1. Invest in the parliamentary estate to achieve reductions in carbon emissions and Embed Sustainable Development thinking across the organisation

A values-driven culture

We will develop a culture that brings us together around our vision and values, creating a clear sense of connection and allowing us to excel in all that we do.

To meet this strategic objective, we will ...

1. Act to address negative impacts of power imbalances & ensure all colleagues are treated with dignity and respect
2. Work together to shape our future direction, decisions, & embrace change
3. Use positive action to increase the diversity of the parliamentary service alongside the growing diversity of our Members & their staff
4. Build confidence and skills to achieve our shared objectives, enhance our use of technology & adopting behaviours to make the most of the digital environment & hybrid working
5. Remove barriers & embrace new ways of working to promote diversity & inclusion
6. Nurture talent to make sure all colleagues have the chance to reach their potential

Operational Excellence

To excel in our unique role as a parliamentary service, we will ensure our longer-term financial stability by strengthening our financial planning & decision making. We will drive end-to-end efficiency & effectiveness in our structures, systems & processes, & enable flexible deployment of our staff.

To meet this strategic objective, we will ...

1. Establish financial stability & greater flexibility in our resourcing by creating a robust baseline Session 6 resource model & medium-term financial plan for the session
2. Improve the effectiveness & efficiency of our processes & systems. This will include increased automation of work & use of enabling technologies & consideration of digital first approaches that both support efficiency & our environmental targets
3. Promote a shared understanding of what financial stewardship means in practice by building financial literacy & investment decision-making capabilities
4. Enhance our digital literacy to enable early identification of automation opportunities & better use of work-enabling technologies thereby freeing up resources to concentrate on more complex high value activities
5. Drive a mindset of continuous improvement & cross-organisation collaboration
6. Maintain infrastructure, systems & processes to support excellent parliamentary services

