

Our People Strategy

2017–2022



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Vision for SEPA's people

SEPA's professional, highly skilled and engaged workforce has helped us to become one of the top environment protection agencies (EPA's) in the world. In the 21st century, the challenges facing EPA's have changed, and if EPA's are to continue to be of value to the communities they serve, we must adopt new ways of working with regulated business and stakeholders to deliver great outcomes.

SEPA has an ambitious new statutory purpose and Regulatory Strategy - *One Planet Prosperity*. To deliver these, we recognise that as an organisation, SEPA will need to be clearer in our purpose, stronger in our actions, and more innovative and more collaborative in how we work together.

Our success in developing this type of EPA depends on our people. We need to retain, recruit, and develop the most talented people who have the skills and approach to create one of the first regulatory systems in the world that's suited to the challenges of today. SEPA will be an organisation people are clamouring to work for, with a reputation for delivering excellent results for Scotland.

Working in an environment of trust and empowerment, everyone will be supported in fully developing their skills and capabilities so that we can all make an individual contribution to achieving our statutory purpose.

Inspiring leadership and management are essential to identify, release and develop the talent of our people. The Agency Management Team (AMT), working with all SEPA managers across all portfolios, will ensure the ambition in our People Strategy is delivered. Every one of us needs to contribute to making this People Strategy a reality.

Our People Strategy sets out the destination for 2022 and the **priorities we will focus on** are set out within this document. Initial actions are outlined in Appendix 2 to let you see the changes that will happen.

1. Each of us will lead by example

We will inspire colleagues, customers and partners through our commitment and integrity, by constantly looking for ways to be an EPA fit for the 21st century. We will show leadership with our partners in Scotland and across the world. We will be world class in leading and managing our people and develop excellent managerial capability. Each of us will demonstrate our personal leadership skills.

As an organisation, SEPA will:

- Appoint and develop managers who act as role models, providing clarity about what's expected, and giving meaningful feedback.

Individually, each of us will:

- Embrace our organisational characteristics in the way we work.
- Develop our skills and behaviours so that our customers, partners and colleagues trust and respect us and want to work with us.

- Challenge the status quo and welcome challenge from others.
- Share our expertise nationally and internationally so we can respond to the challenges facing our environment.

2. Each of us will be skilled and motivated to perform at our best

We will retain, recruit and develop the best talent. Each of us will be clear about what is expected and have the confidence to make the best decisions for Scotland's environment and its people. We will focus on actions that make a real difference. We will have a culture of continuous learning.

As an organisation, SEPA will:

- Improve our approach to recruitment and selection so we make the best appointment decisions.
- Create an environment where better decisions can be made quickly, for example, involving diverse working groups in informing key decisions and delivering change.
- Simplify our processes and procedures so we can focus on delivery.

Individually, each of us will:

- Own our personal development and our managers and our colleagues will help us be the best we can.
- Make developing our skills for the future part of how we work e.g. shadowing, learning as we work.
- Regularly ask for and act on feedback from our customers, partners and colleagues.
- Celebrate success and share lessons learned to help create a culture of learning, innovation and openness.

3. Each of us will work together to deliver

To perform at our best we must build strong relationships that allow co-creation and practical delivery. Forming teams that recognise and benefit from diversity will help us innovate and better deliver our services.

As an organisation, SEPA will:

- Develop the skills to create teams and virtual teams that work well together to deliver.

Individually, each of us will:

- Embrace diversity to help us make more rounded and inclusive decisions.
- Value, support and challenge each other through the process of change.

4. Each of us will be flexible and agile

Essential to delivering great outcomes is providing diverse and exciting career opportunities so we can focus on what achieves the greatest benefit to Scotland's environment and its people. We will embrace changing priorities and be flexible in how we work to deliver them.

As an organisation, SEPA will:

- Make it easier to get involved in delivering new work without having to change role.
- Make it easier to implement innovative ways of working.
- Develop a progressive, collaborative and healthy working environment.

Individually, each of us will:

- Encourage flexibility in how and where we contribute to our priorities, so we can maximise our ability to deliver well for Scotland, environmental impact, and well-being.

The People Strategy (2017-2022) helps us to deliver SEPA's statutory purpose, and the priorities for action are captured in our five year Corporate Plan (2017-2022) and detailed within each Annual Operating Plan. You can see how our People Strategy fits with SEPA's statutory purpose, Corporate Plan and other key strategies in Appendix 1. The immediate actions for delivery by March 2017 are detailed in Appendix 2.

Achieving the strategy

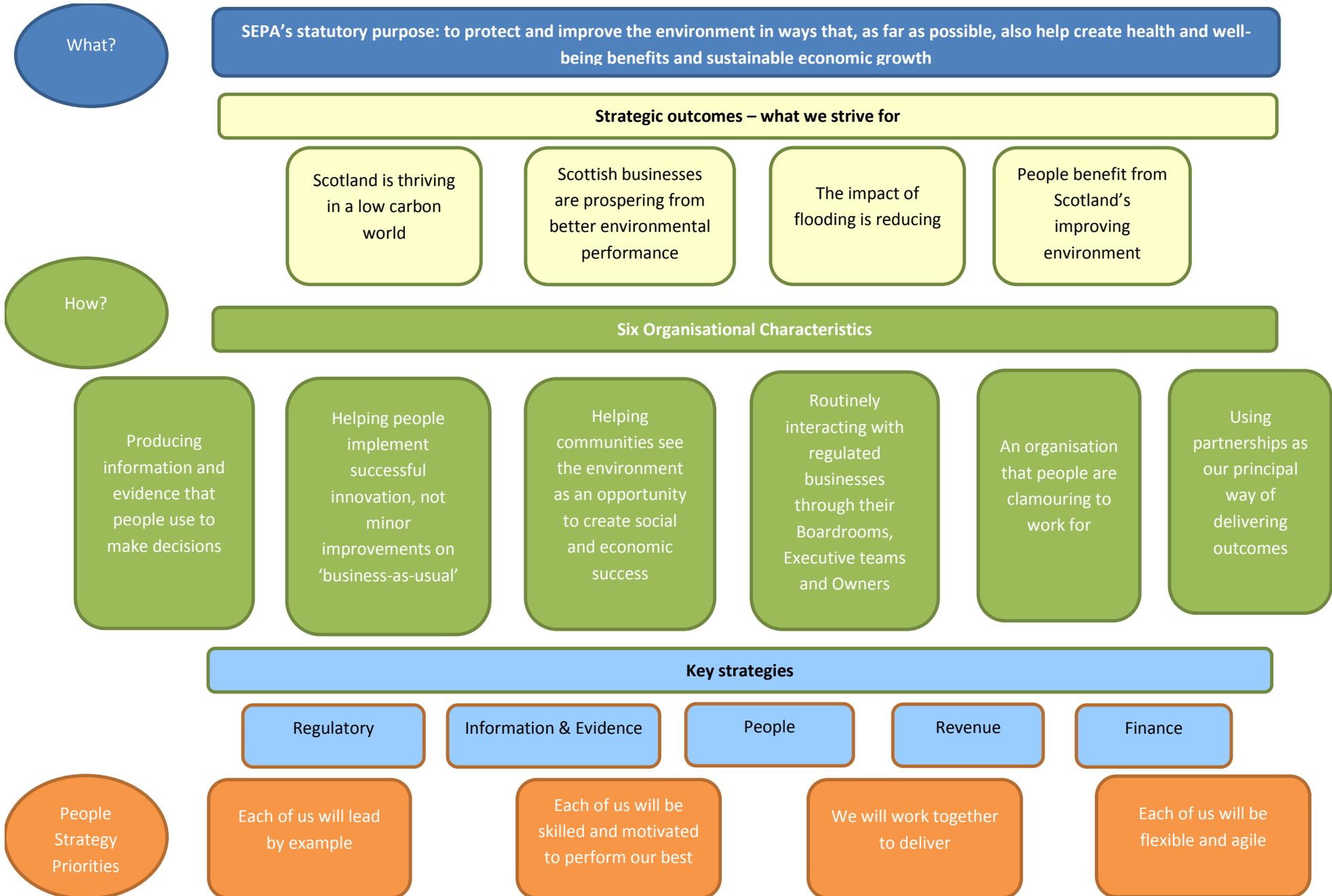
Each of us has an important role to play in making this strategy a reality and to help us create the SEPA described in this and other organisational strategies. We will measure our success in achieving the strategy in a number of ways:

- Through our people surveys.
- What our customers and partners tell us it's like working with us.
- Using specific measures to assess the delivery and effectiveness of changes we make.
- We will annually report on progress in delivering together with the next set of actions that will be taken forward.

SEPA will provide regular feedback on progress to everyone through enhanced and improved internal communications, and also through workplace engagement sessions.

Each of us can also feedback, and we are developing an approach to help each of us either as a team or on an individual level, and to carry out self-assessment and give feedback.

Appendix 1: The People Strategy on a page



Appendix 2: 2016 - 31 March 2017: What will be our first set of actions?

Each year we will publish our proposed set of actions to implement the People Strategy. In the remainder of 2016-2017, we will take the following actions:

1. Support the small number of significant changes to our high level structure. This will help ensure that our internal and external services line up to strongly deliver our statutory purpose and strategic outcomes. It will also help ensure that the necessary leadership capacity is in place. We will utilise selection methods that support the accurate and fair assessment of the applicant against the required skills, experience and attributes to help us appoint the best candidate.
2. We will review the range of development opportunities available to all staff and prioritise the adoption of new opportunities and initiatives that help deliver organisational change and breakdown organisational silos. For example, the introduction of the young shadowers' programme will be complemented by at least one similar initiative.
3. We will continue to improve systems to make them simpler and stronger so everyone in SEPA can focus on delivery. For example, we will continue to improve the Performance Development and Review (PDR) process by streamlining the 'My Development' system to make it simpler and easier to use.
4. We will make it easier to access information about working in SEPA by developing and launching a 'My SEPA' gateway that provides information in a way that is simple, clear, relevant and focussed on the user and their needs.
5. We will introduce cross team short life diverse staff engagement groups which will be used to help inform significant organisational decisions. These groups will be designed to promote diversity of thinking, which will lead to better decisions being reached. We will make sure that feedback is given to those involved in working groups about how their feedback was factored into the decision making process; the rationale for the final decision; to improve communication; and to assist in personal development.
6. We will invite observers to attend Agency Management Team (AMT) meetings and to give feedback to AMT on the content and conduct of meetings, and the value of the learning experience for observers.
7. We will embed two AMT decision-making forums on regulatory matters and flooding evidence to ensure significant organisational decisions are taken, giving a wide range of people the opportunity to contribute to these strategic initiatives.
8. We will review our approach to recruitment and selection, and introduce changes which will improve the experience for candidates; enable us to attract the best talent and use a range of accurate and fair selection methods to identify the best person for the job.

9. We will launch a graduate trainee scheme, inviting recent graduates to apply for a two-year programme with SEPA, starting in September 2017.
10. We will support the health and well-being of staff, and actively promote a positive culture of attendance at work.
11. We will develop an easy self-assessment tool that can be used by individuals or teams to assess progress with our People Strategy at any point in time, and which gives feedback on performance and progress.
12. We will review our approach to the way we use fixed-term contracts to ensure synergy with the directions set within the People Strategy.