

Report No: **SLAB/2021/33**

Agenda item: 11

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| **Report to:** | The Board |
| **Meeting Date:** | Tuesday 10 August 2021 |
| **Report Title** | Meetings with Outside Bodies |
| **Report Category** | For Information |
| **Issue status:** | Business as usual |

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| **Written by:** | Sarah Lynchehaun |
| **Director responsible:** | Colin Lancaster |
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| **Publication of the Paper** |
| This paper does not contain information of a sensitive nature and can be published. |

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| **Report** |

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT - JUSTICE**

*Criminal Justice Board –* Colin Lancaster attends fortnightly meetings with other justice stakeholder bodies. These sessions are particularly focussed on the Recover, Renew, Transform programme which is reviewing how the system operates to ensure a resilient, effective justice system now and for the future*.*

*Scottish Government Family Law* – on 9 July, Marie-Louise Fox attended a meeting with the Scottish Government Family Law team to discuss issues related to the implementation of the Children (Scotland) Act 2020, including the consultations on Child Welfare Reporters and Curators ad Litem; and representation of those who are prohibited from self-representation in contact/residence cases.

*Justice Board* – on 14 July, Colin Lancaster attended this meeting which the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Minister for Community Safety also attended. Matters discussed included the new justice strategy and the youth justice vision and action plan.

*Scottish Civil Justice Council* – on 19 July, Colin Lancaster joined the regular meeting of the Justice Board to discuss the recent Access to Justice Committee and the use of Civil Online and the Age of Criminal Responsibility (Scotland) Act.

*Scottish Government COP26* – on 22 July, Colin Lancaster, Anne Dickson, Marie-Louise Fox and Kingsley Thomas attended a meeting with Scottish Government Justice Directorate to discuss duty solicitor representation and remuneration during the period of the conference.

*Scottish Government Bill Scoping* - on 27 July, the Executive Team attended a meeting with the Scottish Government to discuss the scope of a potential Legal Aid Bill.

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT – GENERAL**

*Scottish Government, Accountability* - on 30 June, Graeme Hill attended the accountability meeting to provide an update on finance related matters including the latest fund Forecast position, the Administration Budget, Pension scheme update and property business cases for our CLAO/PDSO offices.

*Scottish Government’s Covid-19 Justice Board Sub Group* – Rachel Anderson and Kingsley Thomas attend the fortnightly Teams meeting, which continues to monitor the impact of Coronavirus across the justice sector.

*Scottish Government’s Justice Board Sub Group Working Group* - on 8 July, Kingsley Thomas attended this meeting which is looking at the proposed policing and custody court arrangements for the international COP26 Climate Change Conference in Glasgow this November*.*

**LAWYERS AND REPRESENTATIVE BODIES**

*Law Society of Scotland, Quality Assurance Committee* – on 1 July, Graeme Hill and Marie-Louise Fox attended the monthly Quality Assurance Committee meeting.

*Law Society of Scotland COP26 –* on6 July, Marie-Louise Fox, Kingsley Thomas, Alistair Matheson and Wendy Dalgleish attended a Law Society virtual briefing on the policing and legal perspective of COP26 Conference. Discussion focussed on the likely impacts on the courts and justice system, legal representation as well as looking at case law applying to demonstrations.

*Law Society of Scotland COP26 and legal Aid –* on 9 and 21 July,Marie-Louise Fox and Kingsley Thomas attended meetings to discuss stand-by fees for duty solicitors and enhanced weekend and evening rates during the period of COP26.

**JUSTICE SECTOR BODIES**

*Scottish Court and Tribunal Service (SCTS), Summary Criminal Case Management Pilot –* on 7 July, Wendy Dalgleish and Liz Cuschieri joined members of the SCTS to discuss the new children’s Duty Scheme, as a result of the Age of Criminal Responsibilities (Scotland) Act 2019, which will increase the age of criminal responsibility from eight to 12 years of age.

*Scottish Court and Tribunal Service,* *Custody Courts Working Group* – Marie-Louise Fox and Kingsley Thomas attend the fortnightly standing meeting on VC, which is looking at the expansion of criminal custody cases taking place electronically.

Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service, *Summary Criminal Case Management Pilot Project* *Board* - on 29 July, Marie Louise Fox attended this meeting to discuss ongoing monitoring, evaluation of outcomes and potential next stages of wider roll-out.

**PUBLIC BODIES**

*Police Scotland* – on 26 July, Marie-Louse Fox and Kingsley Thomas meet with the new Divisional Commander of Police Scotland’s Criminal Justice Services Division (CJSD) on Teams, to discuss and develop common issues across the range of custody and criminal justice services.

*Police Scotland, SRO Group meeting for Criminal Justice* – on 1 and 29 July, Marie-Louise Fox attended the monthly meetings organised by Police Scotland.

**OTHER MEETINGS**

*Guidance on the Administration of Legal Aid (GALA) project – Consultation process* – on 22 July, Colin Lancaster, Anne Dickson and John Osborne met with The Scottish Court Service and Quinns Law Accountants to discuss SLAB’s approach to decision-making on legal aid accounts.

*Children’s Hearing Improvement Partnership* – on 28 and 20 July, Liz Cuschieri and Wendy Dalgleish attended meetings to explore the relationship between advocacy workers and solicitors in children’s proceedings, with colleagues from the Scottish Government and Children’s Hearing Improvement Partnership (CHIP).