

Report No: **SLAB/2022/25**

Agenda item:  **08**

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| **Report to:** | The Board |
| **Meeting Date:** | 27 June 2021 |
| **Report Title** | Meetings with Outside Bodies |
| **Report Category** | For Information |
| **Issue status:** | Business as usual |

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| **Written by:** | Emma O’Hara |
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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**

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT, MINISTER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY, ASH REGAN, MSP:**

**On 8 June:** Colin Lancaster and Ray Macfarlane met with Ash Regan MSP, Minister for Community Safety. Agenda items included the current position on legal aid fee negotiations with the Law Society of Scotland and Scottish Solicitors Bar Association, contingency planning in respect of the duty solicitor scheme, recent court appointment and the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act withdrawals by private solicitors. In addition plans were discussed regarding a meeting between the Minister and SLAB Board members later in the year (likely September).

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT, DIRECTOR OF JUSTICE, JUSTICE DIRECTORATE:**

**On 1 June***,* Colin Lancaster, met with Neil Rennick, Director of Justice within the Scottish Government alongside Denise Swanson, Deputy Direct and Justin Haccius, Head of Access to Justice to discuss contingency planning in respect of ongoing dispute over legal aid fees.

**On 14 June**, Colin Lancaster, had a quarterly catch up meeting with Neil Rennick, Director of Justice to discuss the current issues surrounding legal aid.

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF JUSTICE, JUSTICE DIRECTORATE:**On **8 & 22 June**,Colin Lancaster attended a monthly catch up meeting with Denise Swanson, Deputy Director of Justice, to discuss matters of mutual interest in relation to legal aid.

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT, HEAD OF ACCESS TO JUSTICE, JUSTICE DIRECTORATE***:* On 30 May, Colin Lancaster met with Justin Haccius, Head of the Scottish’s Governments access to justice unit to discuss current issues surrounding legal aid.

**JUSTICE BOARD*:***

**On 26 May,** the regular Justice Board meeting was cancelled and instead an information session held on the Resource Spending Review.

**On 16 June**: Colin Lancaster attended the Justice Board via Teams. The agenda included; Resource Spending Review: Next Steps, Bail and Release Bill: Update and Coronavirus Legislation: Update

**SCOTTISH CIVIL JUSTICE COUNCIL’S COST AND FUNDING COMMITTEE:** On 26 May, Ian Dickson attended a meeting of Scottish Civic Justice Council’s Costs and Funding Committee on Webex, the agenda included -CAFC Working Group - Pre Action Protocol Fees: Business Update, Update from the Scottish Government on legislative developments and Rules Review: Protective Expenses Orders.

**SCOTTISH CIVIL JUSTICE COUNCIL’S RULES REWRITE COMMITTEE:** On 31 May, Ian Dickson virtually attended the latest meeting of the Scottish Civil Justice Council’s Rules Rewrite working group with the agenda including a Work Programme for Ordinary Civil Procedure.

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT’S SINGLE JUDGE PILOT GROUP:** On 26 May, Marie-Louise Fox attended the Scottish Government’s ‘Single judge pilot’ meeting alongside other justice stakeholders, with representatives from victims’ rights groups such as Victim Support and Rape Crisis Scotland.

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT’S STRATEGIC LEADS GROUP*:*** Marie Louise Fox attended fortnightly meetings on Teams. The Group’s focus is draft aims and outcomes to be included in the draft Justice Strategy.

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT – GENERAL**

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT ‘LEADING IN A DIGITAL WORLD PROGRAMME’:** On 9 June Linda Ross attended a Webinar ‘Leadership Alumni Webinar - Understanding Situational awareness in business and why it matters’ which was organised by Scottish Government as part of the ‘Leading in a Digital World programme’.

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT’s PUBLIC SECTOR PAY POLICY:** On 9 June Linda Ross attended the Scottish Government’s Public Sector Pay Policy ‘Practitioner Session’. The agenda included reviewing the public pay policy and proposed 35 hour working week pilot.

**UK GOVERNMENT**

**GOVERNMENT ACTUARY’S DEPARTMENT**: On 23 May, Colin Lancaster and Linda Ross met with the Government Actuary’s Department (GAD) and representatives from the Scottish Public Pensions Agency (SPPA) to discuss SLAB’s pensions scheme.

**LAWYERS AND REPRESENTATIVE BODIES**

**FACULTY OF ADVOCATES**: On 13 June, Colin Lancaster had a quarterly catch up meeting via Teams chat with Roddy Dunlop QC, Dean of Faculty of Advocates, to discuss matters of mutual interest

**LAW SOCIETY OF SCOTLAND**

**On 1 June:** Colin Lancaster met with Dianne McGiffen, CEO of the Law Society of Scotland to discuss matters of mutual interest in respect of legal aid.

**On 8 June**: Marie-Louise Fox and Jennifer Laughland attended the monthly Law Society of Scotland’s Civil Quality Assurance Committee, where peer review and matters of civil quality assurance are discussed.

**On 23 June**: Paul Haran attended the monthly meeting of the Covid – 19 resilience group organised by the Law Society of Scotland together with other justice stakeholders.

**JUSTICE SECTOR BODIES**

**LADY DORIAN’S GOVERNANCE GROUP**: On 25 May and 17 June, Marie-Louise Fox virtually attended Lady Dorian’s Governance Group, which will be focused on exploring changes to the management of sexual offence cases.

**SRO GROUP MEETING FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE ORGANISED BY POLICE SCOTLAND***:* Marie Louise Fox attended the monthly SRO Group meeting for Criminal Justice organised by Police Scotland via Teams.

**SCOTTISH COURTS AND TRIBUNAL SERVICE:**

**On 21 June:** Colin Lancaster had his quarterly catch up meeting with Eric McQueen CEO of SCTS to discuss matter of mutual interest in relation to legal aid.

**On 22 June**: Marie – Louise Fox attended the latest meeting of the Lord Justice Clerk’s Review specialist court working group organised by SCTS via Webex.

**PUBLIC BODIES**

**AUDIT SCOTLAND:** On 30 May, Linda Ross met with Esther Scoburgh of Audit Scotland for an introductory meeting.

**NATIONAL RECORDS OF SCOTLAND:** On 8 JuneLinda Ross met with representatives of the National Records of Scotland to discuss SLAB’S Records Management Project.

**NDPB FORUM***:*

**On 19 May**, Colin Lancaster attended a meeting of the non-departmental public body forum on Teams. The session focused upon Eleanor Ryan’s findings following her commission to review Scottish Government relationships with public bodies.

**On 8 June*:*** Linda Ross attended a meeting with the Public Bodies Directors of Finance Forum.

**SCOTTISH PUBLIC PENSIONS AGENCY (SPPA):** On 1 June, Linda Ross and Linda Laughland met with Scottish Public Pensions Agency members to discuss the SLAB pension scheme.

**OTHER MEETINGS**

**CITIZENS ADVICE SCOTLAND:** On 7 June**,** Marie-Louise Fox and John Osborne had a catch up with Andrew Fraser of Citizens Advice Scotland to discuss policy matters of mutual interest.

**GMB UNION:** On 31 May, Colin Lancaster & Lind Ross attended the latest meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) with GMB union reps.

**ORACLE:** On 9 June, Linda Ross, John McLeod, Audrey Crawford and HR met with representatives of Oracle Cloud to discuss the latest position and priorities in the Cloud Adoption Framework.