

Report No: **SLAB/2022/44**

Agenda item: **15**

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| **Report to:** | The Board |
| **Meeting Date:** | 3rd October 2022 |
| **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, DIRECTOR OF JUSTICE, JUSTICE DIRECTORATE**

**On 6 September:** Colin Lancaster had his quarterly catch up with Scottish Government’s Director of Justice, Neil Rennick. Key agenda items included; the status of negotiations between Scottish Government and the Law Society of Scotland in respect of legal aid fee rates, Resource Spending Review & Public Sector Pay Policy.

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

**On** **23 August and 14 September:** 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 and in particular, progress of negotiations between Scottish Government & the Law Society of Scotland in respect of the ongoing fee dispute.

**On 8 August**: Colin Lancaster, Marie–Louise Fox, Matt Taylor & John Osborne met with Denise Swanson, Justin Haccius, and colleagues from Scottish Government sponsor team, to discuss tender specification for Legal Aid payment panel research.

**On 20 September:** Marie–Louise Fox met with Denise Swanson, Justin Haccius and Alison Dewar, from Scottish Government’s sponsor team to discuss grant funding documentation for Edinburgh Women’s Aid Legal Services.

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT, STRATEGIC PLANNING GROUP, JUSTICE DIRECTORATE***:*

**On 23 August**: Colin Lancaster, Ian Dickson and Andrew McIntosh attended a meeting of the Strategic Planning Group with Scottish Government’s sponsor team representatives. The agenda included the current Scottish Government and SLAB strategic risks, a review of the activity tracker and horizon scan.

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT, LEGAL AID POLICY MANAGER, JUSTICE DIRECTORATE:**

**On 26 September:** Colin Lancaster, Marie – Louise Fox, Matt Taylor & John Osborne attended a meeting with various members of the sponsor Team to discuss progression of the payment panel specification.

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT, JUSTICE BOARD**

**On 18 August**: Colin Lancaster attended the Justice Board via Teams. The focus of the meeting was Public Sector Pay Policy.

**On 15 September**: Colin Lancaster attended the Justice Board via Teams. Agenda items included Budget and Pay Policy, Justice Vision Implementation and Transformational Change Programmes and Programme for Government 22/23.

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT, CRIMINAL JUSTICE BOARD**

**On 26 August:** Colin Lancaster attended the Criminal Justice Board via Teams, the agenda included Electronically Monitored Bail.

**On 23 September:** Colin Lancaster attended the Criminal Justice Board via Teams, the agenda included: GeoAmey Update, Electronically Monitored Bail and Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service Revised Court Modelling Report.

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT’S SINGLE JUDGE PILOT GROUP:**

**On 16 August,** Marie-Louise Fox attended the Scottish Government’s ‘Single judge Pilot’ meeting alongside other justice stakeholders, together with representatives from victims’ rights groups such as Victim Support and Rape Crisis Scotland.

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT – GENERAL**

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT SPONSOR TEAM FINANCE**

**On 18 August:** Linda Ross & Audrey Crawford met with various members of the Scottish Government Sponsor Team for the latest SLAB/Scottish Government accountability review.

**SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT LEADING IN A DIGITAL WORLD PROGRAMME**

**On 30 August, 27 & 28 September**: Adam Ford and Linda Ross attended the Scottish Government’s fourth, fifth & final session of the ‘Leading in a Digital World’ programme. The programme builds professional capital and capability, develops digital champions, and offers senior leaders an opportunity for interactive discussion where they can exchange ideas, discuss solutions to shared challenges and utilise opportunities for collaborative working.

**SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT**

**On 12 September**: Colin Lancaster attended the Scottish Parliament to participate in the Motion of Condolence ceremony for Her Majesty the Queen which was attended by King Charles III and the Queen Consort.

**LAWYERS AND REPRESENTATIVE BODIES**

**LAW SOCIETY OF SCOTLAND**

**On 16 August:** Marie-Louise Fox conducted interviews with Law Society of Scotland colleagues for new members of the Civil Legal Aid Quality Assurance Sub-Committee**.**

**On 18 August**: Marie-Louise Fox attended the monthly Law Society of Scotland’s Civil Quality Assurance Committee, where peer review and matters of civil quality assurance are discussed.

**On 18 August & 1 September:** Paul Haran attended a meeting of the Law Society of Scotland Criminal Covid-19 resilience group on Teams, which continues to monitor the impact of the pandemic on the profession.

**On 12 September**: Colin Lancaster had an informal catch up with the Law Society of Scotland’s CEO, Diane McGiffen, to discuss the status of negotiations between the Law Society and Scottish Government. An official quarterly catch up meeting had been arranged between SLAB and LSS with the President and Chair, Ray Macfarlane but was cancelled last minute owing to ceremonies which took take place for Her Majesty the Queen in Edinburgh.

**On 16 September**: Marie – Louise Fox and Andrew McIntosh met with Law Society of Scotland’s Head of Policy, Andrew Alexander to discuss work progress in relation to collection and analysis of equalities data.

**JUSTICE SECTOR BODIES**

**DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, NORTHERN IRELAND:**

**On 8 September:** Adam Ford and Marie–Louise Fox met with representatives from the Department of Justice (Northern Ireland) to discuss a statutory registration scheme for Northern Irish legal aid solicitors.

**LADY DORIAN’S GOVERNANCE GROUP**:

**On** **28 September**: Marie-Louise Fox virtually attended Lady Dorian’s Governance Group, which will be focused on exploring changes to the management of sexual offence cases.

**SCOTTISH CHILDREN’S REPORTER ADMINISTRATION**

**On** **24 August**: Adam Ford and Wendy Dalgleish attended a mock children’s hearing training event organised by the Scottish Children’s Reporter Administration (SCRA) via MS Teams.

**On 22 September**: Marie-Louise Fox attended an online research session for the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration, organised by Scottish Government on Teams.

**SCOTTISH COURTS AND TRIBUNAL SERVICE:**

**On 8 September**: Marie–Louise Fox attended the latest National Project Board for Virtual Summary Trials, organised by the Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service on Webex.

**On 22 September**: Colin Lancaster had a quarterly catch up meeting with Eric McQueen, CEO. The Agenda included; Legal Aid Dispute, Legal Aid Changes due to EPR, Virtual Summary cases and Civil Business provision.

**On 29 September**: Marie – Louise Fox attended the latest meeting of the Summary Case Management Pilot - Project Board organised by the Scottish Courts and Tribunal Service via Teams. This was the first meeting of the Project Board since the Pilot has been live.

**OTHER MEETINGS**

**APEX LECTURE**

**On 6 September:** Colin Lancaster attended the Apex Annual Lecture at City Chambers where Keith Brown MSP delivered a lecture titled "Making Justice Work for Everyone”, followed by a Q&A session with Mr. Brown.

**AUDIT SCOTLAND**

**On 31 August:** Linda Ross and Audrey Crawford met with Audit Scotland’s Esther Scoburgh and Mary O’Connor to discuss clearance of the annual accounts.

**EQUALITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

**On 13 September:**  Colin Lancaster, Marie-Louise Fox and John Osborne had a meeting with Irene Henery and Katherine McInnes of EHRC to discuss the progress of SLAB’s Equality and Human Rights Commission Action Plan.

**EDEN SCOTT RECRUITMENT AGENCY**

On **6 September:** Linda Ross met with Sarah Gracie of Eden Scott to discuss applications for Head of Human Resources and Organisation Development vacancy.

**NDPB FORUM**

**On 14 September**: Colin Lancaster attended the latest Non-Departmental Public Bodies’ Forum on Teams, with the agenda including a Public Bodies update from Scottish Government’s Team Leader Ian Thompson, an update on Strategic Purpose and Stakeholder Engagement Scottish Futures Trust CEO Peter Reekie, and a review of the Public Budget and Public Spending Directorate.

**MORTON FRASER:**

**On 30 August:** Adam Ford, Linda Ross and Ian Dickson attended Morton Fraser’s online seminar on the Public Sector Equality Duty, presented by leading discrimination expert, Sarah Gilzean.

**On 5September:** Linda Ross, Linda Laughland and colleagues from HR met with Morton Fraser for an annual catch up on SLAB projects.

**SERVICE OF REFLECTION**

**On 12 September:** Ray Macfarlane attended the service of Reflection and Thanksgiving for the life of Her Majesty the Queen at St Giles’ Cathedral in Edinburgh.

**UK CONTACT CENTRE FORUM’S (UKCCF)**

**On 22 September**: Adam Ford attended the UK Contact Centre Forum’s (UKCCF) Executive Club meeting, hosted at Go-centric in Glasgow. The UKCCF is a membership Forum for customer service professionals and the session featured lively debate on customer service topics and the challenges it has faced amidst Covid-19.