

## ITEM 1.4: COMMITTEES

### Purpose

1. To provide the Council with proposals for a Communications and a Research Committee.

### Background

2. Two potential committees were proposed and discussed briefly at the last meeting, one for communications and the other for research. It was agreed that the principles and purposes guideline work would be carried out by the full Council, rather than a committee, given its significance and breadth.
3. A final decision on committees to be established was deferred until the September meeting for which the Secretariat was to prepare proposals. Members were to provide notes of interest in any committees they wished to join.

### Discussion

4. **Paper 1.4A** is a draft remit and initial areas of work for a Communications Committee and **Paper 1.4B** is a draft remit and initial areas of work for a Research Committee.

#### *General arrangements*

5. **Composition of membership.** We would suggest around 3 members per committee and ideally 1 judicial, 1 legal and 1 lay member on each. Membership should be reviewed every three years.
6. **Input from non- members.** Whilst only Council members may form a committee (para 8 of Schedule 1 to the 2010 Act) it is possible to ask others to provide input to particular projects should that be considered advantageous. It is proposed at para. 14 that a sheriff or sheriff principal be invited to provide input to the Research Committee.
7. **Chairing arrangements.** We understand that guideline working groups of the E&W Sentencing Council are traditionally judge-led but this may not be considered necessary for subject committees. It is suggested that Committees should self-select a Chair.

8. **Reporting to the Council.** Committees should provide a short update at each Council meeting on the activity which has taken place. That update should be provided by the Committee Chair, failing which another Committee member.
9. **Operations.** We are keen for there to be as little burden as possible on members' diaries, as well as administrative burden on the Secretariat. It is suggested that each committee should meet for a minimum of 2 times per year, though no more than 4, and for as much work as possible to be taken forward by correspondence.
10. Following the Council's consideration of this paper we will update the [Standing Orders](#), should that be required, and circulate for approval.

#### *Communications Committee*

11. It is recommended that a Communications Committee is established to support the Council in its communications activity and in particular to assist in delivering the Communications and Engagement Strategy, which was approved at the 20 June meeting. Please see **Paper 1.4A** for further details.
12. Following receipt of notes of interest, it is proposed that membership should comprise the following Council members: Sheriff McFadyen, John Scott and Sue Moody. Val MacGregor, Communications Officer, will support the Communications Committee.

#### *Research Committee*

13. It is recommended that a Research Committee is established to support the Council in its research activity, particularly in the creation and oversight of a research commissioning framework and the tendering of research projects.
14. Following receipt of notes of interest, it is proposed that membership should comprise of the following Council members: Lord Turnbull, Gillian Thomson, Prof. Hutton and Stephen O'Rourke. It is suggested that it would be of assistance to invite input from a sheriff or sheriff principal, as a volunteer advisor, to provide perspective from the sheriff court.
15. Andrew Bell, Principal Research Officer, will support the Research Committee.

## **Recommendation**

### **16. Members are invited to:**

- a) consider and provide comments on the proposals for general arrangements (paras. 5-9);**
- b) agree the Communications Committee remit and initial areas of work at Paper 1.4A;**
- c) agree the Research Committee remit and initial areas of work at Paper 1.4B;**
- d) agree that a sheriff or sheriff principal be invited to provide input to the Research Committee; and,**
- e) agree the proposed membership of each committee.**

**Scottish Sentencing Council Secretariat**

**August 2016**