

MEETING OF THE SCOTTISH SENTENCING COUNCIL

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

08 AUGUST 2023, VIA WEBEX

MINUTES

Members present: Sheriff Iain Fleming (acting chair)

Susan Fallone, JP (member)

Louise Arrol, KC (member)

Apologies: Dr Hannah Graham (chair)

Secretariat: Ondine Tennant (secretary) – from item 2.4

Andrew Bell (principal research officer)

David Ross (principal policy officer)

Julie Duran (senior policy officer)

Richard Smith (business manager)

1. PROCEEDINGS

Item 1.1: Introduction and welcome

- 1) The Chair opened the meeting and noted that apologies were received from Dr Hannah Graham.
- 2) The Committee noted that Sheriff Iain Fleming had been nominated to act as chair for the purposes of the meeting in advance of proceedings.

Item 1.2: Minutes of previous meeting

- 3) The Committee approved the draft minutes of the meeting of 16 November 2022.

Item 1.3: Staffing update

- 4) The Committee noted the progress of recruitment of a temporary researcher, as well as plans to backfill the Principal Research Officer after Andrew Bell leaves post on 18 August.
- 5) The Committee noted its thanks for Andrew's service and support.

2. RESEARCH PROJECTS

Item 2.1: 2023/24 revised projects and 2024/25 priorities and projects

- 6) The committee agreed to approve the projects for 2023/24, and to recommend these to the Council as required.
- 7) The committee considered and agreed the research priorities and projects for the 2024/25 financial year.
- 8) The committee agreed to recommend these to the Council.

Item 2.2: Monitoring and evaluation of guidelines – Sentencing Young People one year evaluation update

- 9) Andrew Bell provided an oral update on the progress of the one year evaluation of the Sentencing young people guideline. The committee noted the update.

Item 2.3: Update on current projects

- 10) Andrew Bell provided an oral update on the progress of research reports currently underway by external academics. The committee noted the update.

Item 2.4: Judicial survey on mental health and sentencing

- 11) Julie Duran provided an oral update on engagement with stakeholders.
- 12) The committee noted the update on engagement provided in this paper and orally.
- 13) The committee considered and discussed the draft survey of judicial views on mental health and sentencing.
- 14) The committee noted and considered the update on questions in the survey on pre-conviction disposals.
- 15) The Committee felt that a question around the source of information on mental health and the responsibility to present this to the court may be of value. It was agreed that an

updated version of the survey would be circulated to the Committee in due course reflecting this.

3: RESEARCH REPORTS

There were no items under this section.

4: PROMOTING AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING

Item 4.1: Research seminar

16) Andrew Bell provided an update on initial plans being undertaken for the Council's inaugural Research seminar.

5: FUTURE MEETING DATES

Item 5.1: Future meeting dates

17) The committee agreed to set the next meeting date by correspondence in due course.

6: AOCB

Item 6.1: AOCB

18) No further business was raised.