

## SCOTTISH CRIMINAL CASES REVIEW COMMISSION

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD ON FRIDAY 27 JUNE 2025

10:00 AM, HYBRID MEETING (OFFICE & VIDEO CONFERENCE)

#### FOR DISCLOSURE VIA THE PUBLICATION SCHEME

In line with the Commission's Disclosure policy, various paragraphs may have been edited or deleted from these minutes as the information contained therein relates to specific case information and/or personnel-related matters. Where the summary of discussion has been edited or the names have been deleted, this is indicated at the start of the relevant paragraph or section.

#### **Present:**

Dr Vanessa Davies (Chair) – office  
Miss Alyson Forbes – office  
Mr Finlay Young – video conference  
Ms Jacqueline Fordyce – video conference  
Mrs Gillian Mawdsley – video conference  
Dr Alex Quinn - office

#### **Also Present:**

Mr Michael Walker, Chief Executive – office  
Mr Chris Reddick, Director of Corporate Services (minutes) – office  
Miss Frances McMenamin KC – office

### Section 1: Governance Matters

#### **1.1 Apologies**

Mrs Mertes and Ms Reilly had submitted their apologies.

#### **1.2 Conflicts of Interest/Declarations of Interest/Gifts & Hospitality**

Members were asked to declare any known conflicts of interests or gifts and hospitality.

There were no conflicts of interest.

Mrs Mawdsley reported that she and Mr Walker had attended the Gordon Seminar on Criminal Law on 13 June 2025 and confirmed that lunch had been provided.

#### **1.3 Minutes of Board meeting held on 30 May 2025**

The Board approved the minutes of the Board meeting held on 30 May 2025, subject to minor amendment. The Board also approved the version of the minutes for the Publication Scheme, subject to minor amendment.

## **1.4 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

## **1.5 Chair's Report**

Dr Davies provided the Board with updates on the following matters:

- She confirmed that her annual one-to-one meeting with Justice Directorate had been scheduled for 29 July 2025.
- She reported that the CCRC's new interim Chair, Dame Vera Baird DBE KC, had been in touch and was interested in visiting the SCCRC in the coming months.

## **1.6 Chief Executive's Report**

Mr Walker provided the Board with an update on the following matters:

- He reported that formal 2025-26 Budget Approval had been received from Justice Directorate, noting that the costs for additional staffing would be addressed via an autumn budget revision (ABR).
- He provided Members with an overview of the current legal officer recruitment exercise, noting that the quality of candidates interviewed had been excellent and that an offer for the permanent position had been made. He also confirmed that a subsequent offer would be made for the fixed-term position.
- He noted that year-end activities were nearing completion and asked Mr Reddick to provide an update. Mr Reddick reported that the annual audit was nearing completion, noting that the process had taken longer this year in part due to the migration to the new Oracle Cloud System and changes within the Accountancy Services Team.
- He reported that he and Mr Reddick had attended a quarterly sponsor meeting on 18 June 2025 and provided a summary of matters discussed, including funding, Oracle Cloud and archiving case-related materials.
- He reported that he had attended a meeting of the Criminal Appeal Court Advisory Group on 11 June 2025.
- He confirmed that he had attended the Annual Gordon Seminar on Criminal Law with Mrs Mawdsley on 13 June 2025.

## **1.7 Court Decisions**

There were no court decisions.

## **1.8 Correspondence:**

### **Correspondence from Cabinet Secretary for Net Zero and Energy**

1.8.1 Members noted correspondence received from Gillian Martin MSP.

- 1.8.2 Mr Walker reported that correspondence had been received in respect of the latest Supreme Court Decision in respect of the Equality Act 2010, noting that an updated Code of Practice was expected in due course.
- 1.8.3 Mr Walker reported that further correspondence had been received from Ian McKee MSP in relation to the Public Services Reform Strategy, which he confirmed covered initiatives such as collaboration, joined-up working, efficiency and person-centred services.
- 1.8.4 Mr Walker report that correspondence had been received from Angela Constance MSP regarding the UK Government's Spending Review and consideration of its impact on the Scottish Government.

## **Section 2: Management Issues (edited)**

### **2.1 Notification by Members of non-case related work**

There was no non-case related work notified by Members.

### **2.2 Training & Development**

The following training and development had been undertaken since the last meeting of the Board:

- One staff member attended On Board training at St Andrew's House, Edinburgh on 4 June 2025.
- One staff member attended the Sustainable Scotland Network Annual Conference online on 11 June 2025.
- One staff member attended the Law Society for Scotland's Mental Health First Aid training in Glasgow on 16 and 17 June 2025.
- One staff member attended the Policing, Justice and Law Enforcement Conference in Edinburgh on 24 June 2025.

### **2.3 Discussion Paper (M Walker)**

Mr Walker presented his discussion paper on the role of the Commission to the Board. The paper was considered by members. It was agreed after discussion that it would be useful to have insight of other jurisdictions in respect of the issues discussed and that the matter should be discussed further at a future meeting of the Board later this year.

## **Section 3: Case Matters (edited)**

### **3.1 Monthly Case Summary:**

Mr Reddick confirmed that a total of 13 new applications had been received in June 2025.

### **3.2 There was one case where a final decision had been issued since the last meeting of the Board, following the 28 days for submission of further representations expiring.**

### **3.3-3.4 There were no cases in these categories.**

3.5 There was one request for an extension of time to submit further representations which was not granted on the basis that the matters being addressed had been outstanding since February 2025. They agreed that the case should now be closed, and the applicant be advised that a new application could be submitted if new information becomes available.

3.6 – 3.7 There were no cases in these categories.

### 3.8 Discussion Cases – Post Office/Horizon/Capture Update – Mr Fenn & Miss McNab (Conflict: G Mawdsley – one case)

Miss McNab and Mr Fenn provided a verbal update as follows:

- Miss McNab confirmed that no applications had been received following the contact initiatives.
- Miss McNab confirmed that no response had been received from Scottish Government in respect of one case.

Miss McNab reported that POL had advised the Commission that it was putting in place new Cold Storage/Archive facilities on account of it incurring significant data storage costs. This would potentially have an impact on the turnaround timescales for subsequent requests for information, although service levels had been advised. After full discussion it was agreed that a letter should be issued to POL highlighting the impact of potential delays.

## Section 4: Proposed Referral Cases (edited)

4.1 The Board considered one statements of reasons in this category. After full discussion it agreed to refer the case to the High Court.

## Section 5: Proposed Interim Cases (edited)

5.1 – 5.3 The Board considered three statements of reasons in this category. After full discussion it agreed not to refer the cases to the High Court.

Special arrangements were agreed in respect of the issuing of the decision in one case due to the personal circumstances of the applicant.

## Section 6: Proposed Supplementary Cases

There were no cases in this category.

## Section 7: Stage 1 Pre-acceptance Cases

7.1 – 7.22 A total of 22 new applications were considered, and the following decisions were made:

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| 4 cases | Accepted for a review of conviction & sentence.                                |
| 1 case  | Accepted for a review of sentence.   |
| 3 cases | Rejected: in each case there were no plausible or stateable grounds of review. |

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| 2 cases | Rejected: in each cases it was not in the interests of justice to accept the case for review.                     |
| 7 cases | Rejected: in each case the applicant had not appealed and there were no plausible or stateable grounds of review. |
| 1 case  | Rejected: the grounds of review were a repeat of the grounds of appeal.   |
| 1 case  | Rejected: the application was incompetent.  |
| 2 cases | Rejected: in each cases the applicant had abandoned their appeal without good reason.                             |
| 1 case  | Continued: the case was continued for one month for more information  |

Ms McMenamin left the meeting in respect of two cases, having previously declared conflicts of interest, and therefore took no part in their consideration.

## Section 8: Concluding Matters

### 8.1 Any Other Competent Business

There was no other competent business.

### 8.2 Date of Next Meeting

- Board Meeting – Friday 25 July 2025 @ 10:00

C Reddick  
8 July 2025