

SCOTTISH CRIMINAL CASES REVIEW COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD ON FRIDAY 30 MAY 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
Ms Laura Reilly – office
Miss Alyson Forbes – office
Mr Finlay Young – video conference
Ms Jacqueline Fordyce – video conference
Mrs Gillian Mawdsley – 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 Dr Quinn 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.

Dr Davies reported that she and Mr Walker had attended the Law Society of Scotland's Annual Dinner on 28 April 2025.

1.3 Minutes of Board meeting held on 25 April 2025

Dr Davies referred to 2.3.3 of the draft minutes which included reference to both qualitative and quantitative aspects of the review process and linked this to the concept of "customer journey." After discussion, the Board approved the minutes of the Board meeting held on 25 April 2025, subject to minor amendment and update. 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 referred Members to recent coverage of the Holyrood Audit Committee's Report which had been circulated to Chairs and Chief Executives, noting its content and acknowledging its receipt.
- She referred to the Westminster Justice Committee Report on the CCRC, noting some of the key criticisms raised and confirming that Mr Walker would be presenting a full update on the report at the June Board meeting.

1.6 Chief Executive's Report

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

- He reported that he had arranged a meeting with the Deputy Crown Agent Ruth McQuaid and representatives from Police Scotland to discuss the ongoing issues regarding the lack of forensic archive and the retention of forensic samples. He confirmed that he would provide the Board with a full update at the next meeting.
- He reported that the quarterly sponsor team meeting, scheduled for 29 May 2025, had been postponed and that a new date was currently being agreed. In the meantime he confirmed that updates had been received from Justice Directorate in respect of the 2025-26 Budget and ongoing consideration of maternity cover funding.
- He reported that recruitment had commenced for a new permanent legal officer and that the deadline for applications was 6 June 2025.
- He reported that the external auditors had commenced their audit of the Commission's 2024-25 Annual Accounts and asked Mr Reddick to provide an update. Mr Reddick noted that the audit was late starting as a result of a last minute change with the accounts team and preparation of the first draft. He also noted that the receipt of pension information from MyCSP was also likely to hold the process up. He confirmed that the revised target for laying the accounts was 30 September 2025.
- He referred Members to a number of high-profile cyber-attacks that had been publicised over the past few weeks and confirmed that Mr Reddick had been in further discussions with the Commission's IT support providers regarding enhanced resilience measures. Mr Reddick provided an update on a number of new security initiatives that would be taken forward over the coming months in order to make security measures more robust.
- He reported that he attended an NDPB Leaders Forum on 15 May 2025.
- He reported that he attended a conference in London on 28 May 2025 entitled "Understanding Miscarriages of Justice at 25", which marked the 25th anniversary of

the publication of Schiff and Nobles' book "Understanding Miscarriages of Justice: Law, the Media and the Inevitability of a Crisis".

- He reported that he had met with Tamara Levy KC, Director of the University of British Columbia's Innocence Project, on 29 May 2025.

1.7 Court Decisions

There were no court decisions.

1.8 Correspondence:

There was no correspondence for consideration.

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 member of staff had attended a 3-day online Law Society of Scotland Course on "Working with Vulnerable People," on 6th, 15th and 20th May 2025.
- Miss Forbes was scheduled to attend On-Board induction training in June 2025.
- Mr Walker confirmed that Board training on DNA was being organised with Dr Tunde Huszar from the University of Strathclyde, after her previous session with staff. This would be organised to coincide with the next Policy meeting, date to be agreed.

2.3 Information Governance Papers (S Lynn)

2.3.1 Mr Lynn presented his draft information governance papers to the Board, some of which had already been discussed at the Policy meeting on 21 March 2025. These included:

- Indefinite Retention Cases/Archiving;
- Indefinite Retention Cases Criteria;
- NRS Archive Guidance; and
- NRS Supplementary Guidance on Archiving.

2.3.2 The Board discussed the various criteria set out. After further discussion, it was agreed that Mr Lynn would update his papers and recirculate to the Board for information.

2.4 Environmental Papers (A McNab)

2.4.1 Miss McNab presented the following environmental papers to the Board for consideration and approval:

- Environmental Policy – May 2025
- Environmental Action Plan
- Climate Risk Register – May 2025

2.4.2 Miss McNab confirmed that she had made considerable updates to the wording of the Environmental Policy and that the Climate Risk Register had been drafted following the environmental workshop held at the Policy meeting on 21 March 2025. She also confirmed that Scottish Government were updating guidance on Public Sector Climate Change Duties and that the Commission had emphasised the proportionality point in their response to the latest consultation.

2.4.3 After full discussion, the Board approved the Environmental Policy, Action Plan and Climate Risk Register.

2.5 2025-28 Corporate Plan – Final (C Reddick)

Mr Reddick confirmed that he had updated the draft 2025-28 Corporate Plan following the discussion at the Board meeting on 25 April 2025 and after receiving annotations from Members, which he hoped captured discussions fully. He also confirmed that the financial performance data and case statistics would be further updated following the year-end audit. After full discussion the Board approved the 2025-28 Corporate Plan, subject to the inclusion of the year-end updates noted by Mr Reddick.

2.6 2025-26 Draft Business Plan (C Reddick)

2.6.1 Mr Reddick provided the Board with an overview of the draft 2025-26 Business Plan which he had put together to reflect the content of the new 3-year Corporate Plan. He confirmed that the plan included full performance information on 2024-25, along with a new set of business plan objectives for the year ahead. As with the Corporate Plan, he confirmed that the business plan would be updated with financial and budget information as agreed.

2.6.2 The Board discussed the draft plan in detail and agreed that the 2025-26 objectives were both challenging and realistic. Dr Davies suggested that the business plan objectives could be more clearly aligned to the 3-year focus as set out within the Corporate Plan. Mr Reddick agreed to look at the presentation of this. The Board approved the 2025-26 Business Plan, subject to the agreed updates.

Section 3: Case Matters (edited)

3.1 Monthly Case Summary:

Mr Reddick confirmed that a total of 22 new applications had been received in May 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 Notification of decision cases agreed at previous meetings of the Board but not yet issued:

There were no cases in this category.

3.3 One referral press release had been issued since the last meeting of the Board. Miss McNab provided the Board with an update on the referral and confirmed that a procedural hearing date had been set for mid-July.

3.5 – 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 ten individuals had now been identified and written to, with nine letters signed for and one refused and returned. These had not resulted in any applications or contact being made with the Commission.
- Mr Fenn confirmed that he had received no response from any of the strategic partners.
- Miss McNab provided an update on the case of one case, confirming that this was still ongoing and a full update would be provided in due course.

Section 4: Proposed Referral Cases

There were no cases in this category.

Section 5: Proposed Interim Cases (edited)

5.1- 5.2 The Board considered two statements of reasons in this category. After full discussion it agreed not to refer the cases to the High Court.

Section 6: Proposed Supplementary Cases (edited)

6.1 The Board considered one statement of reasons. After full discussion it agreed not to refer the case to the High Court.

Section 7: Stage 1 Pre-acceptance Cases (edited)

A total of 29 new applications were considered and the following decisions were made:

2 cases	Accepted for a review of conviction only.
2 cases	Accepted for a review of sentence.
8 cases	Rejected: in each case there were no plausible or stateable grounds of review.
1 case	Rejected: the applicant had not appealed it was not in the interests of justice to accept the case for review.

8 cases	Rejected: in each case the applicant had not appealed and there were no plausible or stateable grounds of review.
1 case	Rejected: the applicant had abandoned their appeal without good reason 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 and there were no plausible or stateable grounds of review.
3 cases	Rejected: in each case the grounds of review were a repeat of the grounds of appeal.
1 case	Rejected: the applicant had abandoned their appeal without good reason.
1 case	Withdrawn: the applicant with their application.
1 case	Continued: the case was continued for one month for more information

Ms Reilly and Dr Quinn each left the meeting in respect of one case, 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

- Audit Committee – Thursday 12 June 2025 @ 10:30
- Board Meeting – Friday 27 June 2025 @ 10:00

C Reddick
16 June 2025