

REVISION OF STANDING ORDERS

Purpose

1. To invite members to consider and approve a proposed revision to Standing Order 4.1 of the Council's Standing Orders.

Background

2. Section 12 of the Scottish Civil Justice Council and Criminal Legal Assistance Act 2013 ("the 2013 Act") provides that the Council may determine its own procedure and that of any committees established by it, except in relation to any quorum, which is to be determined by the Lord President.
3. On 30 June 2014, the Council agreed and adopted its [Standing Orders](#). They were most recently revised in January 2017 to reflect changes in practice for issuing papers, revise the provisions for emergency rules and to address referencing errors.

Discussion

4. Standing Order 4.1 provides that:

"The SCJC will meet six times in each financial year on dates and at times and places determined by the SCJC and specified in the notice calling the meeting."

5. Meeting dates are normally agreed and issued to members on an annual basis in the early part of the summer.
6. The Council meeting scheduled for 10 July 2017 was cancelled due to there being insufficient substantive business to merit the convening of a meeting. Papers in relation to administrative matters were considered by correspondence.
7. To date, for the financial year 2017/18, the Council has met on one occasion. Further meetings are scheduled for November 2017, January 2018 and March 2018. With today's meeting, that will mean the Council is scheduled to only meet five times in this financial year.

8. Rather than arrange an additional Council meeting simply to conform with the Standing Orders, it is suggested that Standing Order 4.1 be amended slightly in the following terms:

*“The SCJC will **normally** meet six times in each financial year on dates and at times and places determined by the SCJC and specified in the notice calling the meeting.”*

9. The proposed amendment would create flexibility should this situation arise in the future. The planning assumption of six meetings per financial year would still continue and meetings would be programmed on that basis.

Recommendation

10. **Members are invited to approve the proposed revision to Standing Order 4.1 of the Council’s Standing Orders.**

Scottish Civil Justice Council Secretariat

September 2017