

APPROVAL OF THE ANNUAL REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME

Purpose

1. To seek members' approval of the Council's draft Annual Report for 2024/25 and the Annual Programme for 2025/26 (**Paper 3.2A**).

Background

2. Section 5 of the Scottish Civil Justice Council and Criminal Legal Assistance Act 2013 (*"the Act"*) requires the Scottish Civil Justice Council (*"the Council"*) to prepare an annual report on its activities and an annual programme setting out its objectives and priorities for each yearly period.
3. The annual report must be prepared as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of each yearly period ending on 31 March. Under the Act, the report must also include a summary of any formal recommendations made by the Council during the period covered by the report.
4. The Act provides that the Council must lay a copy of the programme and the report before the Scottish Parliament. In complying with this duty, the Act provides that the Council may combine the report and the programme so a combined document has been produced (**Paper 3.2A**).

Content of the Report

5. The combined Annual Report and Annual Programme is in four key parts:
 - A **Foreword** by the Lord President as Chair
 - An **About Us** section – which conveys the standing information on the Council, its committees and the arrangements made for support.
 - A **Key Achievements** section - which provides a narrative on the work that was delivered within the 2024-25 reporting period where:
 - The Council has tabled seven sets of new rules with the Court of Session for consideration and approval; and
 - The Council has made no formal recommendations for changes to the civil justice system to the Lord President
 - An **Annual Programme** section – which summarises the eleven priorities for the coming year (2025-26) as agreed at the March 2025 strategy meeting.

Next Steps

6. Subject to members' consideration, the finalised version of the Annual Report for 2024/25 and Annual Programme for 2025/26 will be published online via the Council's website and tabled with the Scottish Parliament.

Recommendation

7. **Members are invited to consider and approve Paper 3.2A** (*the draft Annual Report for 2024/25 and Annual Programme for 2025/26*) subject to any typographical or stylistic amendments.

Scottish Civil Justice Council Secretariat
June 2025