JUSTICE 1 COMMITTEE

AGENDA

6th Meeting, 2006 (Session 2)

Wednesday 22 February 2006

The Committee will meet at 9.30 am in Committee Room 6.

1. Scottish Criminal Record Office: The Convener will speak to a short paper in her name.

2. Scottish Commissioner for Human Rights Bill (in private): The Committee will consider a draft Stage 1 Report.

Callum Thomson
Clerk to the Committee
Papers for the meeting—
Agenda item 1
Note by the Convener on Scottish Criminal Record Office J1/S2/06/6/2

Agenda item 2
Draft report (PRIVATE PAPER) J1/S2/06/6/1

Documents for information—
The following documents are circulated for information:

- Faculty of Advocates, *Faculty News, Spring 2006*; and
- Scottish Executive, *Strengthening Judicial Independence in a Modern Scotland*.

Documents not circulated—
A copy of the following document has been supplied to the clerk:


Forthcoming meetings—
Wednesday 1 March, Committee Room 4;
Wednesday 8 March, Committee Room 5;
Wednesday 15 March, Committee Room 2;
Wednesday 22 March, Committee Room 6;
Wednesday 29 March, Committee Room 1.
The purpose of this short paper is to provide a very brief explanation as to why I have decided that the agenda for this meeting should be revised to include an item on the Scottish Criminal Records Office.

It is vital that there is public confidence in all aspects of the criminal justice system. I am concerned that recent events may have resulted in the public having concerns about the work done by the Scottish Criminal Records Office.

The paramount duty of the Parliament is to hold the Executive to account. As such, the Justice Committees of the Parliament have a duty to scrutinise the work of the Justice Department. The Justice Department is responsible for the police service and the criminal justice system in Scotland and, as such, oversees the work of the Scottish Criminal Records Office, which is currently one of the common police services.

I would like to afford the Committee the chance to discuss what steps, if any, the Committee would like to take in the light of recent events.

I should be absolutely clear that it is not appropriate (even if there were no sub judice issues involved) for the Committee to comment on, or otherwise become involved in, individual cases. In chairing this meeting, I will not allow any Member to stray into the circumstances of any individual case.

I also wish to make it clear in advance that I do not intend to have a long discussion on this agenda item. At this meeting, the Committee also has to finalise its Stage 1 report on the Scottish Commissioner for Human Rights Bill. As such, I intend to timetable discussion of this item for no more than 20 minutes.

Pauline McNeill MSP
Convener, Justice 1 Committee