INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE: ACTIVITY REPORT

Purpose

1. To update the Council on activities undertaken by the Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Committee since the Council's last meeting and to give an indication of potential future business.

Background

2. The ICT Committee was established by the Council on 23 September 2013 and held its first meeting on 27 January 2014.

Discussion

3. The ICT Committee is currently giving consideration to the following matters:

Engagement with other ICT bodies

The Committee discussed and noted the remit, membership and on-going work of other related groups and of initiatives, in particular, those being taken forward through the Scottish Government's Making Justice Work Programme. In light of the range of committees that were currently considering the use of ICT in court, it was thought that it would be useful to map out how the various groups relate to each other to assist the Committee in considering how best to formalise links and information flow with these groups.

Research

The Committee agreed that research should be undertaken to help scope what might be done with available and potential technology and to better understand what the barriers to the use of technology are. It is intended to visit England and Wales and to meet the Scottish Legal Aid Board in this regard. Investigation into the barriers to the use of technology will include, in the first instance, Wi-Fi access in courts and issues around internet access in remote locations.

Engagement with the RRWG

Members discussed how the language of court rules could enable the use of technology going forward. It was suggested that the ICT Committee could contribute to the work of the Rules Rewrite Working Group in this regard, in particular in developing a style guide for the rules.

Longer-term strategy

4. The Committee discussed a vision for what technology in courts should look like in the future. The Committee noted that the strategic direction of the SCS was to move towards a paperless court environment. The Committee noted its support of this strategy.

Recommendation

5. **The Council is invited to note:**

   - **the activity of the ICT Committee since the Council's last meeting**

   - **the potential future business of the Committee.**

SCJC Secretariat

February 2014