

ITEM 4.4: ANNUAL REPORT

Purpose

1. To seek members' approval of the SCJC Annual Report for 2013/14.

Discussion

2. Under section 5 of the Scottish Civil Justice Council and Criminal Legal Assistance Act 2013 ("the Act") the SCJC is required to prepare an annual report on its activities as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of each yearly period ending on 31 March.
3. Under the Act, the report must include a summary of any recommendations made by the SCJC during the period covered by the report.
4. The Report covers the following areas:
 - **Key achievements:** preparation for implementation of civil courts reform and Sheriff Principal Taylor's recommendations, consideration of the Tribunals (Scotland) Bill, the establishment of all SCJC committees, research and communications activity, and the public consultation on draft rules for reporting restrictions;
 - **Summary of Recommendations:** outline of the recommendations made by the Rules Rewrite Working Group and consideration of the Courts Reform (Scotland) Bill;
 - **Summary of rules prepared**
 - **Guiding Principles:** outline to how the principles have been built into the SCJC's work (as agreed at the last meeting)
 - **Freedom of Information:** in particular, details as to how requests have been handled
 - **Expenditure:** as noted in the Report, costs incurred (staffing aside) are significantly lower than the resources which have been made available to the SCJC. This is in light of the fact that it took several months for the SCJC to become fully operational. Expenditure is expected to rise in 2014/15 and thereafter.

5. Subject to members' consideration, the Annual Report will be published and provided to Parliament alongside the Annual Programme following the meeting.

Recommendation

6. Members are invited to consider and approve the SCJC's Annual Report 2013/14 for publication in May.

**Scottish Civil Justice Council – Secretariat
April 2014**