

Criminal Justice Committee

2nd Meeting, 2021 (Session 6), Wednesday, 1 September 2021

Scottish Government priorities for the criminal justice remit in session 6

Note by the clerk

Introduction

1. Following its establishment in June 2021, the Criminal Justice Committee will undertake its first oral evidence taking session of Session 6 at its meeting on 1 September. This session will be the first in a series of evidence gathering sessions, with key stakeholders, during September 2021.
2. The aim of these evidence sessions is to explore the key issues facing the criminal justice system in Scotland and assist the Committee with the formulation of its work programme for 2021/22.

Scottish Government priorities

3. At its meeting on 1 September, the Committee will take oral evidence from the Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans, and the Minister for Community Safety on the plans and priorities of the Scottish Government for the justice portfolio.
4. This will provide an opportunity for the Committee to explore the Government's policy proposals in the area of justice, as well as consider other major policy issues, such as-
 - Scottish Government proposals for primary legislation in the justice portfolio for 2021/22, as well as looking ahead to possible areas of legislation for the rest of Session 6;
 - Outstanding policy issues from Session 5, such as the ongoing impact on, and recovery from, the COVID-19 pandemic on the Scottish criminal justice system (such as the court system, policing, prisons etc);
 - The potential challenges facing the criminal justice sector in Scotland during Session 6 of the Scottish Parliament (2021-26) and how the Scottish Government plans to meet those challenges, and

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- The funding and budgetary landscape for the justice portfolio.

Witnesses

5. The Committee will question the following witnesses at today's meeting:

- Keith Brown MSP, Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Veterans,
- Ash Denham MSP, Minister for Community Safety,
- Neil Rennick, Director of Justice, Scottish Government.
- Donald McGillivray, Director of Safer Communities Justice Directorate, Scottish Government.

**Clerks to the Committee
August 2021**