

SCOTTISH CRIMINAL CASES REVIEW COMMISSION

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD ON FRIDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 2025

10:00 AM, HYBRID MEETING (OFFICE & VIDEO CONFERENCE)

FOR DISCLOSURE VIA THE PUBLICATION SCHEME

In line with the Commission's Disclosure policy, various paragraphs may have been edited or deleted from these minutes as the information contained therein relates to specific case information and/or personnel-related matters. Where the summary of discussion has been edited or the names have been deleted, this is indicated at the start of the relevant paragraph or section.

Present:

Mrs Suzie Mertes (Chair) – office
Miss Alyson Forbes – office
Mr Finlay Young – video conference
Ms Jacqueline Fordyce – office
Mrs Gillian Mawdsley – office
Dr Alex Quinn – office

Also Present:

Miss Frances McMenamin KC – video conference
Mr Michael Walker, Chief Executive - office
Mr Chris Reddick, Director of Corporate Services (minutes) – office

Section 1: Governance Matters (Edited)

1.1 Apologies

Dr Davies and Ms Reilly had submitted their apologies.

1.2 Conflicts of Interest/Declarations of Interest/Gifts & Hospitality

Members were asked to declare any known conflicts of interests or gifts and hospitality.

There were no conflicts of interest or gifts, and hospitality declared.

1.3 Minutes of Board meeting held on 29 August 2025

The Board approved the minutes of the Board meeting held on 29 August 2025, subject to minor amendment. The Board also approved the version of the minutes for the Publication Scheme, subject to minor amendment.

1.4 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

1.5 Minutes of Audit Committee meeting on 27 August 2025

The minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 27 August 2025 were noted by the Board.

1.6 Matters Arising

Mr Reddick provided the Board with a summary of matters considered by the Audit Committee, including the year-end audit and signing of the 2024-25 Annual Accounts.

1.7 Chair's Report

In Dr Davies's absence, Mrs Mertes noted how successful Dr Huszar's DNA training had been at the Policy meeting on 19 September 2025. Members agreed that the training had been excellent and asked that the Board's appreciation be minuted.

1.8 Chief Executive's Report

1.8.1 Mr Walker provided the Board with an update on the following matters:

- He reported that the 2024-25 Annual Report and Annual Accounts will be laid in Parliament on 30 September 2025. He confirmed that he had updated the 2024-25 Annual Report to include words of appreciation for Sir Gerald Gordon K.C., who has died.
- He reported that he had written again to Ms Donald at Justice Directorate regarding a likely timescale for a response in respect of the retention of forensic samples issue previously discussed.
- He provided an update on the Victims, Witnesses, and Justice Reform (Scotland) Bill, which had passed stage 3 and was awaiting Royal Assent.
- He confirmed that Dr Tunde Huszar had provided DNA training to all Members attending the Policy meeting on 19 September 2025.
- He reported that he had provided a talk on the role of the Commission to the Franco-British Lawyers Society conference on 19 September 2025.

1.8.2 Mrs Mawdsley referred to the current Homicide (Scotland) Bill consultation and suggested that this be considered further by the Commission. Mr Walker confirmed that this would be put on the agenda for the next legal officers' meeting and would also return to the Board for discussion.

1.9 Court Decisions

There were no court decisions.

1.10 Correspondence:

Mr Walker provided an overview of correspondence received from the Law Society of Scotland in respect of Post Office/Horizon matters and confirmation that a meeting would be set up to discuss further. Mr Fenn also provided Members with an update on Capture, and in particular, one case which had been referred to Scottish Government in May 2025, with no decision as yet having been taken.

Section 2: Management Issues

2.1 Notification by Members of non-case related work

There was no non-case related work notified by Members.

2.2 Training & Development

The following training and development had been undertaken since the last meeting of the Board:

- All Members and staff had now attended DNA training provided by Dr Tunde Huszar from the University of Strathclyde.
- Details of Audit Committee training for new Members had now been circulated to the Audit Committee from Scottish Government.
- All staff had now participated in the initial trauma practices and mental health sessions led by Optima Health.

Mr Reddick provided an update on the staff sessions led by Optima Health, and noted a number of further training needs that had been identified as part of these sessions, including soft skills training in how to deal with vulnerable callers. Miss Forbes also referred to a disabling barriers training session, as part of the access to justice initiative, run by LSA, which she had attended and found extremely useful. Mr Walker confirmed that he would ask Mrs Govan to look into obtaining this training for staff.

2.3 2024-25 Annual Report & Annual Accounts Update

Mr Reddick provided the Board with an update on the finalised versions of the 2024-25 Annual Report and Annual Accounts. He confirmed that the Annual Accounts had been signed off following the Audit Committee meeting on 27 August 2025 and that both documents would now be laid in Parliament by 30 September 2025, in line with the Commission's business plan objectives.

2.4 2025-26 Corporate Risk Register - Update

Mr Reddick provided the Board with a full update on the Corporate Risk Register which had been considered by the Audit Committee on 27 August 2025. After full discussion one update was agreed in respect of the scoring of risk 5, with all other suggested updates being agreed.

Section 3: Case Matters (Edited)

3.1 Monthly Case Summary:

Mr Reddick confirmed that a total of 15 new applications had been received in September 2025.

3.2-3.3 There were no cases in these categories.

3.4 Referral press releases issued since last meeting of the Board:

- Case of CD – 12 September 2025

3.5 One requests for extension of time to submit further representations was agreed.

3.6 Want of insistence cases:

- There were no cases in this category.

3.7 Persistent & Repeated Applications:

The Board noted that one individual had been placed on the Persistent & Repeated Applications Register. A copy of the registration had not been attached to the agenda and it was agreed that this would follow for information in October 2025.

3.8 Discussion Cases:

- There were no cases in this category.

Section 4: Proposed Referral Cases

There were no cases in this category.

Section 5: Proposed Interim Cases (Edited)

5.1 – 5.4 The Board considered four statements of reasons in this category. After full discussion it agreed not to refer the cases to the High Court.

Section 6: Proposed Supplementary Cases (Edited)

6.1 The Board considered one statement of reasons in this category. After full discussion it agreed not to refer the case to the High Court.

Section 7: Stage 1 Pre-acceptance Cases (Edited)

7.1 – 7.22 A total of 22 new applications were considered, and the following decisions were made:

1 case	Accepted for a review of conviction.
1 case	Accepted for a review of sentence.
6 cases	Rejected: in each case there were no plausible or stateable grounds of review.
1 case	Rejected: the applicant had abandoned their appeal without good reason, and it was not in the interests of justice to accept the case for review.
7 cases	Rejected: in each case the applicant had not appealed and there were no plausible or stateable grounds of review.

1 case	Rejected: the applicant had not appealed.
1 case	Rejected: the grounds of review were a repeat of the grounds of appeal and there were no plausible or stateable grounds of review.
1 case	Rejected: the applicant had abandoned their appeal without good reason.
1 case	Rejected: the applicant had abandoned their appeal without good reason and there were no plausible or stateable grounds of review.
2 cases	Continued: both cases were continued for one month for more information.

Dr Quinn left the meeting in respect of one case, having previously declared a conflict of interest, and therefore took no part in its consideration.

Section 8: Concluding Matters

8.1 Any Other Competent Business

There was no other competent business.

8.2 Date of Next Meeting

- Board Meeting – Friday 31 October 2025 @ 10:00

C Reddick
30 September 2025