



The Right Honourable Lord Carloway  
The Lord Justice Clerk

Parliament House  
Edinburgh, EH1 1RQ

15 September 2015

Christine Grahame MSP  
C/O:  
Justice Committee Clerks  
Room T2.60  
The Scottish Parliament  
Edinburgh  
EH99 1SP

#### **APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE SCOTTISH SENTENCING COUNCIL**

I am writing in reply to your letter dated 3 September 2015 in respect of the Justice Committee's consideration of The Scottish Sentencing Council (Procedure for Appointment of Members) Regulations 2015, which I will provide to the new Lord Justice General in due course.

I note the Committee's comments in relation to there being no provision in the Regulations for gender parity on the Council. This particular point is a matter for the Scottish Ministers and the Parliament.

In relation to the judicial and other legal members, I am aware of the Scottish Government's 50:50 by 2020 commitment. I would like to reassure the Committee that I am keen to ensure that we have due regard to the principles of equality and diversity, whilst recognising the need to have the best candidates appointed. The selection process is heavily dependent upon the nature of the applying candidates and is being carried out with best practice in public appointments in mind.

An open and fair recruitment exercise for the advocate and solicitor members began in July this year and was publicised widely. The judicial member positions were publicised and communicated to all eligible judicial office holders. Applications were welcomed and encouraged from the widest possible range of eligible persons and particularly from protected groups covered by the Equality Act 2010.

I would be happy to publish our diversity information in due course and will discuss this matter with the Cabinet Secretary for Justice in light of his role in the recruitment of the Scottish Ministers appointees.