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10 July 2013

Dear Ms Boyack

**SCOTTISH PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION S4W-15786, S4W-15787, S4W-15788 & S4W-15789**  
***Proposed Court Closures***

The Cabinet Secretary in his response to the above PQ indicated that it relates to operational matters within the responsibility of the Scottish Court Service corporate body. I am now writing to you in response to the matters you have raised.

**S4W-15786: To ask the Scottish Government what analysis it or the Scottish Court Service has carried out regarding the impact on accessibility of the proposed closure of sheriff courts.**

SCS conducted analyses on various aspects accessibility, including for example travel times and costs. It also conducted an Equality Impact Assessment for all courts which were closing and for those courts which would receive the business of the closing courts.

**S4W-15787: To ask the Scottish Government what the staffing implications are for Edinburgh Sheriff Court of the closure of Haddington and Peebles sheriff courts.**

Staff in Haddington will follow the business to Edinburgh and will be based in Edinburgh Sheriff Court once Haddington closes. There are no staffing implications for Peebles as there are no full time staff based there; it is only staffed on court days by staff who are based at Selkirk and travel to Peebles as required.

**S4W-15788: To ask the Scottish Government what investment will be required to increase the capacity at Edinburgh Sheriff Court as a result of the proposed closure of Haddington and Peebles sheriff courts.**

There is no investment required to increase Edinburgh's capacity resulting from the closure of Haddington. Costs of £45k (as set out in the consultation paper) will be one off and will be solely to provide staffing accommodation.

**S4W-15789: To ask the Scottish Government, in relation to the proposed closure of sheriff courts, what representations it or the Scottish Court Service has received regarding accessibility for disabled people (a) travelling to sheriff courts and (b) in the buildings housing sheriff courts.**

The Scottish Court Service (SCS) received representations in the context of some of the responses received in the course of its consultation on closures. These were considered in the SCS response to the consultation. Additionally, SCS conducted an Equality Impact Assessment for all courts which were closing and for those courts which would receive the business of the closing courts.

A copy of this letter will be placed in the Scottish Parliament Information Centre and published on the Scottish Court Service website.

Yours sincerely



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