



The Right Honourable Lord Carloway
The Lord Justice Clerk

Parliament House
Edinburgh, EH1 1RQ

23 October 2015

Michael McMahon, MSP,
Convener,
Public Petitions Committee,
c/o Public Petitions Clerks,
Room T3.40,
The Scottish Parliament,
Edinburgh.
EH99 1SP

By email: petitions@scottish.parliament.uk

Dear Mr McMahon

PETITION PE1565 - WHOLE OF LIFE SENTENCES FOR VIOLENT RE-OFFENDERS

I am pleased to be able to inform you that the Scottish Sentencing Council was formally established on 19 October this year under the Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010. The Council is scheduled to meet for the first time on 14 December.

The Council's first key tasks will include consideration of how it should carry out its statutory functions and the priorities for its programme of work. As well as deciding what topics to prepare sentencing guidelines on, it will need to consider the most appropriate format for guidelines and the methodology for developing their content. These will be critical pieces of work, which will be fundamental to the successful delivery of the Council's statutory objectives.

I will ensure that the Council is made aware of this petition and correspondence when it meets in December and will write to you again once the Council is able to consider the matter.

The Committee may be interested to note that details of Council activity and arrangements for meetings will be published on the Council's website in due course. The website can be accessed at: www.scottishsentencingcouncil.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

COLIN SUTHERLAND
Lord Carloway