

MINUTES

GLASGOW CIVIL COURT USERS GROUP

Thursday 4 December 23 April 2026 @ 4pm
Sheriff's Conference Room

Present: Andrea Dyer, Head of Civil
Lynsay Sinclair, Civil Court Office Manager
Alec Anderson, Civil Court Office Manager
Craig Donnelly
Samantha Miller
Saima Faheem
Shirley Rhynd

1. Apologies

Joanne McMillan and Alison Heron

2. Process of Business – Issues, concerns, improvements

SF raised a concern regarding a delay in receiving a Proof of Tenor Warrant. **LS** advised that the application was currently with the Commissary Sheriff for consideration and approval. **LS** further explained that, in addition to assessing commissary applications, the Sheriff also has court duties, which may result in some delays depending on other judicial commitments.

CD raised an issue in respect of a delay in receiving warrants in two sequestration petitions and the consequences of that. **AA** advised that this was due to resource issues and apologised for the inconvenience caused and that the section is now fully resourced and up to date.

SF asked whether all Ordinary and Family Ordinary courts are being conducted via WebEx, as her firm had received a court interlocutor that did not specify this. **AD** advised that, the default, of these hearings are by way of WebEx, unless otherwise directed by the court, which should be stated in the interlocutor. **LS** referred the group to the Sheriffs Principal Guidance for Court Users dated 26 October 2023, which sets out how the various types of hearings are to be conducted.

JM sent in email asking if the Ordinary Court and Family Court Running Order could be reinstated. As previously advised, the running order generates a substantial volume of last-minute requests from solicitors seeking amendments to the running order on the morning of the court in addition to frequent requests for WebEx links, which places a considerable strain on resources, rendering the process highly resource intensive and operationally inefficient.

JM also highlighted in her email that there had been a delay in receiving interlocutors. This was due to ongoing training and absences.

AD advised the group that, while they are happy to deal with individual issues, where matters such as this come to the group's attention they can be raised directly with AD, LS, or AA, rather than waiting to be discussed at these meetings. This would allow the group to focus on addressing and improving systems and processes that will benefit SCTS and solicitors more broadly.

3. Returns

AD addressed the statistics circulated to the group, highlighting an improvement in returns for commissary applications. Prior to the introduction of the Commissary Checklist, the average monthly return rate was 50% or higher. Figures now show that this has reduced to an average of 28%, and it is hoped that this will reduce further over time.

In relation to family returns, **AD** noted that there had been no improvement, with figures showing that more applications are being returned than registered. In respect of Ordinary Applications, the average return over the last 3 months was 47%. **AD** addressed the reasons for returns, which had been circulated to the group, and invited views on how this situation could be improved.

SM suggested that the introduction of a checklist may assist. **AD** advised that, given the majority of returns relate to basic requirements and guidance already contained within the Ordinary Cause Rules, that a checklist may not be of value.

SF suggested that an administrative fee should be considered by the courts when applications are returned, on the basis that a financial consequence may encourage a reduction in the number of returns.

It was also suggested that SCTS staff attend the next Family Law seminar to highlight to solicitors the most common reasons for applications being returned. **LS** advised that the large amount of returns may relate to training needs and suggested exploring whether this could be taken forward with solicitors' firms. The group agreed to highlight the issues and to share the reasons for returns with the GBA and RFPG in order to try and address and improve the matter.

The group agreed to further explore ways of improving return rates in respect of Family and Ordinary applications and to discuss this further at the next meeting.

4. Communication – adverse comments update from group.

GBA and RFPG advised that they had circulated the adverse comments received by SCTS staff to their members. **AD** advised the group that they had seen an improvement, which was welcomed.

AD advised that, with effect from 18 May 2026, LS will take over the role of Head of Civil, as AD will be rotating to Court Support. **AD** thanked members for their contributions and support during her time as Chair.

NEXT MEETING TBC