



John Lamont MSP  
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Chief Executive's Office  
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2 March 2015

Dear Mr Lamont

**SCOTTISH PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION S4W-24280**

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 matter you have raised.

**S4W-24280** asks: *what its position is on reports that Jedburgh and Selkirk sheriff courts are to hear cases on alternate weeks, and for what reason it did not seek parliamentary approval before this change was introduced.*

Both Selkirk and Jedburgh Sheriff Courts and Justice of the Peace Courts continue to operate independently on a full time basis, five days a week.

On alternative weeks, one court deals with summary criminal courts, including custodies, while the other deals with civil business, criminal jury trial business, Fatal Accident Inquiries and other miscellaneous business, and vice versa.

The current court programme was introduced on 2 February 2015, following consultation with local justice partners, including solicitors, the COPFS and Police Scotland.

The statutory responsibility for court programming is solely a matter for the Sheriff Principal and does not require parliamentary approval. All court programmes are subject to change to ensure they dispose of business in the most efficient way.

We recognise and understand the very important role that Jedburgh and Selkirk courts play in delivering justice in the Borders area and we continue to work with justice organisations and Scottish Borders Council to make sure that justice is delivered effectively and efficiently.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Eric McQueen', written over a horizontal line.

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