

# News Release

19 November 2009

## **UNIFIED COURTS ADMINISTRATION IN THE SHERIFFDOMS OF NORTH STRATHCLYDE AND SOUTH STRATHCLYDE, DUMFRIES & GALLOWAY**

The following arrangements for Justice of the Peace Courts across the Sheriffdoms of North Strathclyde and South Strathclyde, Dumfries and Galloway have been approved by the Justice Committee.

Under reforms to the summary justice system, District Courts, currently operated by local authorities, will become Justice of the Peace Courts operated by the Scottish Court Service.

The establishment of a unified courts administration ensures consistent service for court users around Scotland and introduces integrated technology to the new courts compatible with other courts and justice partners.

The arrangements for the final two Sheriffdoms, which were developed following consultations and discussions with a range of justice and local agencies, will come into force on 14 December 2009 for courts in North Strathclyde and on 22 February 2010 for courts in South Strathclyde Dumfries and Galloway.

### *In North Strathclyde:*

- Paisley, Irvine, Lochgilphead, Dunoon, Oban and Campbeltown Justice of the Peace Courts will operate from their respective current District Court locations.
- Dumbarton Justice of the Peace Court will re-locate to the Sheriff Court Building, Dumbarton, which recently underwent a £12 million refurbishment and extension.
- The District Courts of Clydebank, Milngavie and Helensburgh will close and the business of each of these courts will be transferred to Dumbarton Justice of the Peace Court and be incorporated into the Dumbarton Justice of the Peace Court programme.
- Giffnock District Court will close and the business of the court will be transferred to Paisley Justice of the Peace Court and incorporated into the Paisley Justice of the Peace Court programme.
- Greenock Justice of the Peace Court will re-locate to the Sheriff Court Building, Greenock.
- Kilmarnock Justice of the Peace court will continue to operate from the current District Court premises in Kilmarnock in the short to medium term; co-location in the Sheriff Court building will be considered within approximately 18 months.

*In South Strathclyde Dumfries and Galloway:*

- Dumfries, Kirkcudbright and Stranraer Justice of the Peace Courts will each sit in the Sheriff Court buildings in these towns. This reflects the current District Court arrangements in each of these locations.
- Annan Justice of the Peace Court will sit in the former Annan District Court
- Coatbridge, Cumbernauld, Hamilton, Motherwell and Ayr Justice of the Peace courts will each sit in the former District Court buildings in these towns.
- Lanark Justice of the Peace Court will relocate and sit in Lanark Sheriff Court.
- East Kilbride District Court will close with business transferring to Hamilton Justice of the Peace Court
- Girvan and Cumnock District Courts will close with the business of each court transferring to Ayr Justice of the Peace Court

**Notes**

1. The Scottish Court Service currently has responsibility for the administration of the Court of Session, the High Court of Justiciary, the Office of the Public Guardian and the 49 Sheriff Courts throughout Scotland. As each Sheriffdom is unified in accordance with the phased unification plan, SCS assumes responsibility for the Justice of the Peace Courts in each Sheriffdom

The Sheriffdoms that have already unified are –

- Lothian and Borders Sheriffdom unified their courts administration on 10 March 2008
- Grampian, Highland and Islands unified their courts administration on 02 June 2008.
- Glasgow and Strathkelvin unified their courts administration on 08 December 2008
- Tayside, Central & Fife unified their courts administration on 23 February 2009

2. The enabling legislation for court unification is contained in the Criminal Proceeding etc. (Reform) (Scotland) Act 2007. This Act was passed unanimously by the Scottish Parliament and received Royal Assent on 22 February 2007.