

ISSUED ON BEHALF OF THE SCOTTISH COURT SERVICE

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NEW LIVINGSTON SHERIFF AND JUSTICE OF THE PEACE COURT OPENS

The new Livingston Sheriff Court and Justice of the Peace Court located within the new West Lothian Civic Centre will open for business next Tuesday (September 1, 2009).

Instead of three current court locations – Linlithgow Sheriff Court, Livingston Sheriff Court Annexe and Livingston Justice of the Peace Court, there will be one Livingston Sheriff Court and Justice of the Peace Court located in the new Centre alongside the Procurator Fiscal Service, police and criminal justice social work service and near to health, crime prevention and other relevant West Lothian Council services.

Within the new Livingston court complex there are six courtrooms, two jury, two non-jury and two civil courts, one more than currently available to the Scottish Court Service (SCS) and the new courts have been designed to be capable of holding High Court sittings in the future.

Chief Executive of the Scottish Court Service, Eleanor Emberson said:

“The courts in West Lothian will now have modern, purpose-built facilities with more courtroom space to accommodate the business.

“Bringing court staff together in a building along with Lothian and Borders police, the Procurator Fiscal Service and social work teams will help the criminal justice system in West Lothian work more effectively and will help make best use of public money.

“There are also new opportunities for SCS to work more closely with their new neighbours in education and community services and contribute to crime prevention.”

Gail Smith, Sheriff Clerk at Linlithgow Sheriff Court reflected on the transfer of business from the existing courts saying:

“The current court at Linlithgow has been operating since 1863 and it will be sad to see the doors finally close on this historic building. However we are all looking forward to the opportunities that the new Livingston Sheriff Court offers, particularly having all our court staff operating under the one roof.

“We particularly look forward to working collaboratively with our justice partners and other colleagues as part of the multi-agency centre. I am sure this approach, together with our new court facility, will offer real benefits for all our service users. “

Notes for Editors

1. 32 staff, four sheriffs and seven Justices of the Peace will move to the new court.

2. The £50 million building is jointly owned by West Lothian Council and Lothian and Borders Police. The Scottish Court Service will lease their part from the owners.

3. Lothian and Borders Police were the first to occupy the centre in July 2009 and the Crown Office Procurator Fiscal Service will move in at the same time as the Court Service.

Contact details

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