Justice Committee

Scottish Court Service recommendations for a future court structure in Scotland

Written submission from Garden Stirling Burnet

In response to the questions put forward as to the reasoning WHY Haddington Courts should not close, please consider the following:-

Question 1
The local impact relative to the access to justice available – if there is no local Haddington Court – will be tremendous not just to criminal cases – many of whom simply cannot afford to travel to Edinburgh via various modes of transport to reach a Court, nor will some even bother, thus giving the Police force further tasks of finding these people by way of a warrant arrest etc. more costs involved surely. But also to the Civil cases, which due to the already heavy volume of court cases in Edinburgh, means that the local people to East Lothian and surrounding areas will have extreme pressure put on them as their cases won’t be called for a number of weeks or even months, family law matters, regarding contact etc. will suffer along with those waiting to have their divorces finalised etc.

Question 2
The local impact on the actual court users themselves will be as above relating to the public access via travelling a long distance, some even having to change modes of transport, more time wasted due to having to spend more time travelling to and from Court not forgetting the lengthy waiting times which will be incurred, many job hours lost, plus more expenses incurred.

Not only that the enormous pressure this is going to put on local businesses who rely heavily on Haddington Courts, the employees involved, whom rely on Courts for business either via private or legal aid clients. Jobs will be lost at a great cost to many.

Please therefore re-consider this decision which has been made, as it surely is going to be an expensive exercise.

Garden Stirling Burnet
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