Justice Committee

Scottish Court Service recommendations for a future court structure in Scotland

Written submission from James Tait

1. How is it improving justice to expect young and/or disadvantaged people to travel from anywhere east of Tranent into Edinburgh. It may be that the SCS and Mr MacAskill need to enquire with FirstBus and Scotrail as the fare structure for journeys into Edinburgh.

2. It takes an hour to get from Tranent to Edinburgh in the bus. Has anyone looked at the bus and train timetables from places east of Tranent into Edinburgh? What time would a young person have to leave Dunbar to get to Edinburgh Sheriff Court for 9:45am (the usual citation time).

3. Having spent much of my professional life in Haddington and Edinburgh Sheriff Courts, I am horrified that anyone being paid from the public purse could be so hard of thinking as to imagine that the movement of any function from the former to the latter could be seen as an improvement to justice.

4. What will be the impact on policing resources. How much longer will officers be abstracted from duty in giving evidence, etc.? Or does the SCS still refuse to take that into the equation? The negatives of travel from Dunbar to Edinburgh and back will impact on police and prosecution witnesses as much as accused.

5. Would you be willing to travel from the east of the county into Edinburgh to give evidence?

5. Forgetting about criminal justice. How is the loss of easy access to assistance in relation to estates, guardianship, etc. an improvement?

James Tait
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