Dear Mr Hunter,

Petition 1458 – Proposal to establish a register of judicial interests

The Justice Committee considered the above-mentioned petition at its meeting of 19 November. Evidence provided to the Committee by the petitioner stated that “the lack of recusals from JPs are a matter of concern and should be investigated further.”

The Judicial Office’s website refers to recusals covering senators, temporary judges, sheriffs principal, sheriffs or summary sheriffs. Members understand that Justices of the Peace were added to the register of recusals in January 2018. However we would be grateful if you could confirm if this is the case and if so provide further information on engagement by JPs with the system of recusals.

The Committee also seeks to establish if there have been instances where JPs have recused themselves from hearing cases and, if so, is this information publicly available? If not, do you have a view on whether in this respect JPs should be treated the same way as sheriffs?

I look forward to your response.

Best wishes,

Margaret Mitchell MSP
Convener, Justice Committee