

Criminal Justice Committee
Wednesday 11 December 2024
39th Meeting, 2024 (Session 6)

Victims, Witnesses, and Justice Reform (Scotland) Bill – Victim Notification Scheme

Note by the clerk

1. The Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Home Affairs has [written to the Committee](#) to set out the Scottish Government’s intentions in relation to Stage 2 amendments to the above bill.
2. Amongst other changes, the Scottish Government proposes to bring forward amendments relating to reform of the Victim Notification Scheme.
3. On 9 October 2024, the Scottish Government published its response to the [independent review of the Victim Notification Scheme \(VNS\)](#), which reported in May 2023.
4. In her [letter to the Committee](#), the Cabinet Secretary stated—

“The Scottish Government wants to ensure this work on VNS reform takes place as quickly as possible, but we are aware that legislation can often take much time to develop and introduce. Therefore, we intend to use the Victims, Witnesses, and Justice Reform (Scotland) Bill to deliver the recommendations that need primary legislation. The fact that this Bill is still within Parliament presents an opportunity we must grasp so we can deliver at pace the benefits of VNS reform we all want to see, and I would hope the Committee would support that aim.”

Evidence

5. At today’s meeting, the Committee will be taking evidence on the Scottish Government’s plans in this area from **Siobhian Brown MSP, Minister for Victims and Community Safety** and her officials.
6. The Minister is leading on Stage 2 and 3 amendments relating to recommendations from the VNS Review, as this falls within her ministerial responsibilities.
7. **Today’s meeting will only focus on proposed amendments to the Bill relating to the Victim Notification Scheme.**
8. The Committee has agreed to invite the Cabinet Secretary to a future meeting in the New Year to give evidence on the Scottish Government’s intentions for Stage 2 in relation to the rest of the Bill.

Action/decisions

9. The Committee is invited to question the Minister on the Scottish Government's intentions in relation to amendments to the Victims, Witnesses, and Justice Reform (Scotland) Bill relating to the Victim Notification Scheme.

**Clerks to the Committee
December 2024**