

Member Reappointment and Appointment Term Extended to Scottish Legal Aid Board

The Minister for Community Safety, Ash Denham MSP, today announced the reappointment of David Sheldon and the extension of appointment of Rani Dhir to the Scottish Legal Aid Board.

REAPPOINTMENT

David Sheldon was called to the Scottish Bar in 1998 and was appointed as a QC in 2013. His practice at the Bar included both civil and criminal cases and he has appeared in all the major Scottish courts and tribunals, as well as the Privy Council and Supreme Court. He practices mainly in the fields of reparation, contract and commercial law and public law. He acted as standing junior counsel to the Scottish Government from 2002 until 2013 and has provided advice and representation to the Scottish Ministers in a wide range of public and private law matters. He serves as an ad-hoc Advocate-Depute. He is also a trained mediator.

EXTENSION

Rani Dhir brings to the board extensive knowledge, experience and skills as a non-executive director in the private, public and voluntary sectors, including non-executive and chairing roles at Greater Glasgow and Clyde Health Board, Communities Scotland and Lloyds TSB Scotland. Ms Dhir was a member of the Calman Commission. She is a senior housing professional with over twenty years' experience working in some of Scotland's most deprived communities as Executive Director of a pioneering housing association, and also holds a number of voluntary roles including being a trustee of Erskine, the military charity for ex-service personnel.

APPOINTMENTS

David Sheldon's reappointment will be for four years, running from 1st October 2020 until 30th September 2024.

The appointment for Rani Dhir has been extended for six months, running from 1st October 2020 until 31st March 2021.

The reappointments are regulated by the **Ethical Standards Commissioner**.

REMUNERATION

Both the reappointment and the extension are part-time and attract a remuneration of £236.55 per day on a pro rata basis for a time commitment of 3.5 days per month.

OTHER MINISTERIAL APPOINTMENTS

David Sheldon and Rani Dhir do not hold any other ministerial appointments.

POLITICAL ACTIVITY

All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, in accordance with the original Nolan recommendations, there is a requirement for appointees' political activity within the last five years (if there is any to be declared) to be made public.

David Sheldon acts as a disciplinary adjudicator for the Liberal Democrat Party at Scottish and UK levels, and he also canvassed on behalf of the Party at the European Elections in May 2019.

Rani Dhir has had no political activity within the last five years.

BACKGROUND

The Scottish Legal Aid Board (SLAB) was set up in 1987 to manage legal aid in Scotland and is a non-departmental public body responsible to the Scottish Government. Legal aid allows people who would otherwise not be able to afford it, to get help for their legal problems.

The Scottish Legal Aid Board's work is overseen by Board Members, who are appointed by Scottish Ministers. The number of Members can vary from 11 to 15. To give a balanced range of knowledge and experience, they include people with backgrounds in business, the advice sector and the wider community as well as solicitors and advocates and a person with knowledge of court procedure and practice.