

Additional Evidence:

Criminal Justice Modernisation and Abusive Domestic Behaviours Bill

12th February 2025

Dear Members of the Criminal Justice Committee,

Further to our evidence session on the 22nd January we were asked to provide additional information regarding our position on fiscal fines as outlined in Section 6 of the Criminal Justice Modernisation and Abusive Domestic Behaviour Reviews (Scotland) Bill.

Victim Support Scotland has not received any direct feedback from victims of crime regarding Section 6 of the bill, whether in our consultation for this Bill or otherwise. In our initial evidence, we did raise the issue of communication with victims regarding fiscal fines, mainly that we would welcome good communication between the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service and any victim of the crime. We believe that victims should be provided with information as to what a fiscal fine is, and how this differs from a conviction through a court.

As we mentioned in our evidence, victims have frequently told us that delays in the justice system can be a distressing and frustrating experience. VSS is satisfied with the notion that court time will not be tied up in prosecuting crimes that can be disposed of with a fiscal fine. Furthermore, we see a benefit for witnesses who will not have to attend court to give evidence if the offer for a fine is accepted.

We acknowledge Mr Kerr's concerns that this could potentially have the impact of legalising shoplifting – which is the example that was specifically mentioned. From VSS's experience, fiscal fines are relevant to wider crime types including anti-social behaviour. While we understand the trauma that can occur when you are the victim to these types of this crime, we have not received any direct feedback from victims of crime, that the increase to £500 would not be appropriate or otherwise.

We trust that the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service will make alternative arrangements regarding people who have offended on multiple occasions, where it is evident that the fiscal fine is not suitable.

Kind regards,



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