

**Sentencing Council meeting:** 27 July 2018  
**Paper number:** SC(18)JUL07 – 10th anniversary  
**Lead official:** Phil Hodgson  
020 7071 5788

## **1 ISSUE**

1.1 This paper presents for consideration by the Council recommendations for how the Sentencing Council might mark its 10th anniversary.

## **2 RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 That the Council:

- agrees that the Sentencing Council should mark its 10th anniversary, and
- approves, in principle, the recommended programme of anniversary activities for further development.

## **3 CONSIDERATION**

3.1 On 6 April 2020, the Sentencing Council will reach its 10th anniversary. This anniversary is an important milestone that could provide the Council with an opportunity to take stock of our achievements, strengthen awareness and understanding of the Council and the sentencing guidelines, and build on our reputation.

3.2 To make the best use of this opportunity, we recommend that members agree that the Council should mark the anniversary and agree now, in principle, how that might be done. This will allow us to investigate ideas that might take some time to develop and, where necessary, to seek sponsorship and partnership opportunities.

3.3 To help focus our efforts, we suggest the following objectives for the anniversary year:

- Leave a lasting legacy
- Position the Sentencing Council at the centre of the development of academic thinking on sentencing
- Strengthen existing relationships within the criminal justice system to build a body of advocates and friends
- Seek local opportunities to strengthen public confidence in sentencing
- Raise the profile of the Sentencing Council and the guidelines among sentencers internationally

### **SUGGESTED PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES**

3.4 In considering how the Council might meet the objectives for the anniversary year, we have followed the principle that each activity should:

- have a clear purpose tied to our objectives and a clear benefit for the Council,
- deliver maximum impact for minimum staff resources, in the short and long term,
- be low or no cost, and
- use existing partnerships and channels.

## **4. Priority projects**

### ***Anniversary symposium***

#### *Proposal*

4.1 A one-day event, hosted by the Sentencing Council. Contributions would be invited from former Council members, academics and high-profile commentators and influencers with an interest in the field of sentencing.

4.2 The theme for the event would be to seek ideas to help shape the development of the Council's priorities for the next 10 years.

#### *Benefit*

4.3 Such an event would help to position the Council at the centre of current thinking about sentencing and could assist in developing its legitimacy with stakeholders. It would also allow us to strengthen our connections with former Council members.

### ***Book on sentencing***

#### *Proposal*

4.4 A collection of papers, pulling together current thought on aspects of sentencing and the role of sentencing council(s). Collated and edited by the Council and introduced by the Chairman of the Council.

#### *Benefit*

4.5 To lead on the production of such a publication would demonstrate the influence of the Council in being able to pull together the work of leading thinkers in the field. It would place the Council at the centre of developing thinking without committing it to taking ownership of any of the ideas or proposals under discussion.

### ***Annual academic conference***

#### *Proposal*

4.6 To establish an annual conference that would provide a forum for academics to explore current sentencing issues.

4.7 We have already laid the groundwork for an annual event. Last year we held a round-table discussion with several of the leading academics in sentencing. We have extended the concept this year to a one-day, public seminar.

4.8 The aims of the conference would be to facilitate greater links between the Sentencing Council and academics, and between academics; to identify gaps in knowledge and research; and to foster opportunities for collaboration.

#### *Benefit*

4.9 Hosting an annual conference of this nature would, again, place the Council at the centre of developing thinking. It would allow the Council to facilitate the investigation and discussion of potentially controversial topics, without committing the Council to taking ownership.

### ***Sentencing competition***

#### *Proposal*

4.10 A sentencing-related competition aimed at undergraduate students of criminology or law.

#### *Benefit*

4.11 The Council currently has a presence in schools, working through the Citizenship Foundation, but we do not have anything similar at university level. A competition would allow us to raise the Council's profile among undergraduates (and their lecturers), to

contribute to their education on sentencing and to build relationships with the next generation of legal practitioners.

## **5. Secondary projects**

5.1 A number of the objectives identified for the 10th anniversary year are extensions of our existing confidence and communication work:

- Strengthen existing relationships within the criminal justice system to build a body of advocates and friends
- Seek local opportunities to strengthen public confidence in sentencing
- Raise the profile of the Sentencing Council and the guidelines among sentencers internationally

5.2 Adopting these objectives for our anniversary year would allow us to prioritise these areas of work and dedicate resources of the whole organisation, including members of the Council, to achieving them.

5.3 Involvement of members of the Council is likely to include invitations to speak at public engagements, as well as requests to make use of existing connections within the CJS and, particularly, internationally, to open doors for the Council.

5.4 Activities for the OSC are likely to include speaking at events, targeted meetings with key stakeholders, invitations to international visitors, presentations and exhibitions, promotional activities within other government departments, contributing to existing public events and a focus on providing content for local media.

## **6. Delivery**

6.1 It is important that we are able to deliver – and be seen to deliver – any anniversary activities at very low or, preferably, no cost.

6.2 In areas where we might require funding, for example staging events or the student competition, we would apply for sponsorship or contributions. We would also explore opportunities to work in partnership, for example with an academic publisher.

## **7. Identity**

7.1 We recommend that the Council develop a logo marking the anniversary for use on all stationery, templates, presentations, tweets and other materials. This would be a clear and simple way to draw attention to the anniversary throughout the year, and could be done at no cost via MoJ.

## **8. Next steps**

8.1 In the event that the Council approves the programme of activities, detailed proposals including feasibility assessments would be worked up for each strand of activity.

### **Questions**

- 1. Do members agree that the Sentencing Council should mark its 10th anniversary?**
- 2. If so, do members approve, in principle, the recommended programme of activities?**

Blank page