

Lord Advocate to step down next year

The Lord Advocate, Rt Hon Elish Angiolini QC has today announced that she will be stepping down from office at the next Scottish election.

The Lord Advocate said that it had been an enormous privilege to serve the people of Scotland both as a prosecutor for 27 years and as a Law Officer, to two different Governments, over the last decade.

She wished to recognise the skill and dedication of all those who work in, and support, the justice system in Scotland. In particular, she thanked the team of Crown Counsel and staff of the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service; and all staff in the Scottish Government legal service.

Speaking after a Sexual Offences Conference in Glasgow she said:-“I can think of no more fitting occasion than this Conference to announce that I will stand down from office at the next election, and to thank those who work tirelessly to achieve improvements in the criminal justice system for their dedication and skill. This last decade has been a time of great change for the Scottish prosecution system, during which we have worked together with other agencies across disciplines to build a justice system which better serves victims and witnesses, and deals more effectively with serious crime. I hope we have formed a strong foundation on which we can continue to build in the months and years ahead. I would like to thank all those who work so hard across the Scottish criminal justice system to make this possible.”

First Minister Alex Salmond said:=“By next year Elish Angiolini will have completed an unprecedented 10 years as a Law Officer, including five years as Lord Advocate. In doing

so, she was the first woman to hold the post and the first to be appointed by successive administrations. It has been a pleasure to work with her since 2007, and her term as Lord Advocate has been marked by significant improvements and substantial success in the disposal of justice in Scotland.

“Among her many achievements are reform of the courts system, and a much-needed new approach to tackling sexual crime. Under her leadership, recorded crime has dropped to a 32-year low in Scotland, and citizens fear crime significantly less than they did when she took office.

“She will be a substantial loss to government after next year, but her positive legacy will be long and lasting. I wish her well in her future career.”