

# **New Lord Justice Clerk to be sworn in on Tuesday**

**The Rt Hon Lord Beckett will become the new Lord Justice Clerk on Tuesday when he will be sworn in by Lord Pentland, who himself will be sworn in as the new Lord President on Monday.**

Lord Beckett will take over the position of Lord Justice Clerk from Lady Dorrian who is retiring. Lord Pentland will take over as Lord President from Lord Carloway who is also retiring.

HM The King has appointed Lord Beckett as the second most senior judge in Scotland. As well as becoming Lord Justice Clerk, Lord Beckett will hold the office of President of the Second Division of the Inner House of the Court of Session and will be the Chair of the Scottish Sentencing Council.

He was nominated for appointment by the First Minister based on the advice of a selection panel.

The First Minister, John Swinney, welcomed the appointment and said: "I offer my warmest congratulations to Lord Beckett on his appointment as Lord Justice Clerk, reflecting a long and distinguished career of service in Scotland's legal system.

"The Lord Justice Clerk is one of the Great Offices of State in Scotland and the second most senior figure in the judicial system, with a prominent role in the criminal appeals system. It is a significant appointment that requires careful

consideration, so I am very grateful to the members of the selection panel for their advice before I nominated Lord Beckett.

“Lady Dorrian was the first woman appointed to such a senior judicial office in Scotland. Her legacy will be significant, not only for that reason but as a result of her advocacy for vulnerable victims and witnesses, and her commitment to making court proceedings more transparent. Lady Dorrian leaves office with my gratitude and best wishes for the future.”

Lord President Lord Carloway is about to retire and will be succeeded by Lord Pentland. He said: “Lord Beckett is a very experienced judge who has presided over some of the highest profile trials in recent times. He has been a member of the judiciary, for over 17 years, first as a Sheriff then as a High Court Judge.

“He was appointed to the Inner House of the Court of Session in 2023. His extensive knowledge of criminal cases, together with his work on evidence on commission and on case management in the High Court makes him an excellent appointment as Lord Justice Clerk. I wish him well in this extremely important office.”

Lord Justice Clerk Lady Dorrian said: “It has been a huge privilege to be Lord Justice Clerk and I am pleased to be handing over to Lord Beckett. He is passionate about improving the experience of complainers and witnesses in court.

“He was part of the working group which I chaired on the management of sexual offence cases which will stand him in good stead for the reforms which will be coming in over the next few years. His experience will also be valuable as he takes over as Chair of the Scottish Sentencing Council. As a former Chair of the Judicial Institute and someone who has been leading the way on trauma-informed training for the judiciary, he is ideally suited for this role.”

Lord Beckett is a former Solicitor General. He was appointed as a Supreme Courts judge in May 2016 and elevated to the Inner House of the Court of Session in July 2023. He has been involved in a great deal of work to review process and procedure in cases involving sexual offences. He has also improved trauma training for judges and simplified guidance for juries.

The incoming Lord Justice Clerk was admitted as a solicitor in 1986, working in private practice before being admitted to the Faculty of Advocates in 1993. In 2003, he was appointed as an advocate depute and he became a Queen's Counsel in 2005. He served as Solicitor General for Scotland in 2006, became a sheriff in 2008 and was appointed as an appeal sheriff on the establishment of the Sheriff Appeal Court in 2015.

The installation of Scotland's new Lord President, Lord Pentland will be livestreamed from the Court of Session.

The Right Honourable Lord Pentland will be sworn in as head of the Scottish judiciary on Monday, 3 February, with the ceremony available to watch live on the [Scottish Courts and Tribunals Service website](#) from 10am.

A recording of the event will also be made available afterwards on the SCTS website for anyone unable to watch as it happens.

Lord Pentland has been appointed by His Majesty the King and will succeed the Right Honourable Lord Carloway who is retiring from post after serving as Lord President since 2015.

