



Ministry of Justice

FAMILY PROCEDURE RULE COMMITTEE

At 11:00 a.m. – 13:00 pm on Monday 6 July 2026,
Hybrid, in person at Royal Courts of Justice and online via Teams

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|------------------------------|--|
| • Sir Stephen Cobb | President of the Family Division |
| • Mr Justice Keehan | High Court Judge (Chair) |
| • Mr Justice Peel | High Court Judge |
| • Her Honour Judge Suh | Circuit Judge |
| • District Judge Foss | District Judge |
| • Poonam Bhari | Barrister |
| • Jennifer Kingsley JP | Magistrate |
| • Shabana Jaffar | Cafcass |
| • District Judge Cassidy | District Judge |
| • Helen Sewell | Legal Advisor |
| • Rhys Taylor | Barrister |
| • Lord Justice Baker | Court of Appeal Judge |
| • District Judge Nelson | District Judge (Magistrates) |
| • His Honour Judge Humphreys | Circuit Judge - Judicial Member for Wales |
| • Laura Coyle | Solicitor |
| • Sophie Crowley | Cafcass Cymru |
| • Graeme Fraser | Solicitor |
| • Vicki Mulligan | Lay Person |
|
Guest | |
| • Mrs Justice Knowles | High Court Judge |

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND APOLOGIES

1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting; no apologies were received.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

2.1 1 HHJ Suh raised a point regarding paragraph 13.19 of the draft minutes, noting that the reference to the Contempt Working Group's consideration of the cross-jurisdictional template did not fully reflect the discussion which had taken place. HHJ Suh explained that the Working Group had accepted that certain aspects of the template would be inappropriate for use in the family jurisdiction without adaptation.

2.2 The Committee agreed that revised wording would be provided to the Secretariat following the meeting. Subject to that amendment, the minutes were approved.

Action Point [1]: Revised wording relating to paragraph 13.19 to be provided to the Secretariat by HHJ Suh for incorporation into the approved minutes.

Action Point [2]: Secretariat to arrange for the June 2026 minutes to be published on the relevant FPRC webpage.

ACTIONS LOG

3.1 The Committee noted that 22 action points were recorded from the June 2026 Committee meeting with 13 of those having been actioned and marked as completed.

3.2 The Committee considered the Actions Log and noted progress against the outstanding actions.

3.3 The President provided an update regarding a November 2025 action point in relation to Family Drug and Alcohol Courts (FDACs). The President noted that representatives of the judiciary had met with the Lord Chancellor and ministerial colleagues to discuss FDACs and the associated Practice Direction. The President noted that the meeting had been constructive and ministers had indicated a willingness to continue engagement once wider spending and policy considerations had become clearer.

3.4 The Committee welcomed the update and noted the continued ministerial engagement. No further actions were identified.

MATTERS ARISING

4.1 The Secretariat tabled a paper which contained updates on the following:

Family Procedure (Amendment) Rules 2026 and Practice Direction No. 3 of 2026

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4.2 The Committee noted that the Family Procedure (Amendment) Rules 2026 ('the 2026 Rules') were signed by members of the Committee at the June 2026 meeting. Following this, they were submitted to the Minister on 18 June 2026 and signed by her on 25 June 2026.

4.3 The 2026 Rules make the following amendments:

- Insert new rule 9.47 FPR to enable provision to be made in a practice direction relating to the court giving permission to communicate information from financial remedy proceedings.
- Amend rule 25.2 FPR to introduce definitions of "regulated expert" and "technical expert".
- Insert new rule 25.5A FPR to require that, in certain children proceedings, expert evidence must be provided by a regulated expert, subject to specified exceptions.
- Include a saving provision so that the amendments relating to expert evidence do not apply to proceedings issued before 20 July 2026.

4.4 The Committee were also informed that Practice Direction Update No. 3 of 2026 amended the following existing practice directions:

- PD2C – Justices' Legal Advisers
- PD11A – Notification of certain protection orders to the police
- PD12A – Care, supervision and other Part 4 proceedings
- PD12B – Child Arrangements Programme
- PD12J – Child Arrangements and Contact Orders: Domestic Abuse and Harm
- PD25B and PD25C – Experts and expert evidence (including provisions relating to regulated experts)
- PD36Z – Private Law Reform: Investigative Approach (including amendments to PD12B (Pilot))
- PD36ZI – Pilot Scheme on notification to the police when certain orders are made under Part 4 of the Family Law Act 1996.

4.5 The Update has been signed by the Minister, and both the Rules and Update have been published on GOV.UK with relevant commencement dates.

Register of Members' Interests 2024 – 2025

4.6 The Committee noted publication of the Register of Members' Interests 2024–2025 and the arrangements for collecting declarations for the forthcoming reporting period. The Committee was reminded that members who had completed declarations during the current year would not be required to complete further declarations until the following year unless their circumstances changed. Members also noted that a draft Annual Report had been prepared and would be discussed later in the meeting at Item 10.

Confidentiality of parties' Contact Details (Rule 29.1) Form amendments

4.7 Officials provided an update on implementation of amendments arising from changes to rule 29.1 FPR. Members were reminded that revised English language forms had been

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implemented following commencement of the amendments on 1 June 2026 and that work had commenced on Welsh language versions.

- 4.8 Officials explained that work to complete the Welsh translations had taken longer than initially anticipated and remained ongoing. It was hoped that implementation would be completed by the end of July 2026, with a further update to be provided at the Committee's October meeting.

Action Point [3]: Officials to progress implementation of the confidentiality of contact details amendments following receipt of the Welsh language translation and to provide a further update at the October 2026 meeting in relation to the status of the Welsh translation forms.

- 4.9 Members noted that the remaining work related solely to translation and implementation activity rather than any substantive policy or legal issues. In light of this, the Committee agreed that the workstream could appropriately move to Tier 4 of the Priorities Table pending completion.

Creation of a new Business and Property Division – Glen Wanless

- 4.10 Officials informed the Committee that a new Business and Property Division of the High Court was being created, which would require a minor amendment to the Family Procedure Rules. The Committee was informed that the senior judiciary had proposed the creation of the new Division, bringing together the existing Business and Property Courts currently sitting across the King's Bench and Chancery Divisions into a single Division. It was noted that the proposal was not intended to change the underlying work of the courts and lists but rather to strengthen judicial leadership and oversight.
- 4.11 The Committee noted that the Division would be created through an Order in Council which would move the Business and Property Courts in the King's Bench Division into the Chancery Division, rename the Chancery Division as the Business and Property Division and rename the Chancellor of the High Court as the President of the Business and Property Division.
- 4.12 Officials further informed the Committee that consequential amendments to primary and secondary legislation would also be made and that this included a minor amendment to the Family Procedure Rules replacing references to the Chancellor of the High Court with references to the President of the Business and Property Division in rule 2.
- 4.13 The Committee noted that the Order in Council was expected to be approved by the Privy Council on 8 July 2026 and laid before Parliament on 15 July 2026. Subject to the Parliamentary process, the new Division was expected to come into force from 1 October 2026.

4.14 The Committee noted the update.

SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS

CONTEMPT OF COURT

- 5.1 The Committee considered the proposed response to the Contempt Rules Working Group's draft template rules. Officials had prepared Paper 5 in consultation with HHJ Suh and invited the Committee to consider the proposed response to the Working Group's draft template rules. The Committee considered whether it was content with the proposed responses prior to them being shared with the Working Group.
- 5.2 The Committee noted that related work concerning Recovery of Defence Costs Orders had been included within Tier 3 of the Priorities Table. Members also noted that, at its June 2026 meeting, the Committee had agreed to maintain a watching brief on the work of the Contempt Rules Working Group and agreed that this wider monitoring role should be reflected at Tier 4 of the Priorities Table.
- 5.3 The Committee agreed the proposed response and invited officials to submit it to the Working Group.

Action Point [4]: HHJ Suh to submit the agreed response to the Contempt Rules Working Group on behalf of the Committee.

FAMILY JUSTICE AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

- 6.1 Officials set out initial considerations for the new Family Procedure Rule Committee sub-group on AI.
- 6.2 The Committee was reminded that the President had endorsed the proposal for an FPRC sub-group on AI and had asked Lord Justice Baker to chair the group. Officials informed the Committee that potential membership would be discussed with Mr Justice McKendrick, who leads the Judicial Office Steering Group on AI and Family Justice.
- 6.3 Officials noted that the Civil Procedure Rule Committee had already established an AI sub-committee and that a cross-Procedure Rule Committee meeting on AI, chaired by the Master of the Rolls, was due to take place on 9 July 2026. Any relevant outputs would be shared with members of the new FPRC sub-group once established.
- 6.4 Officials suggested that one potential early workstream for the sub-group would be to propose additions to the existing President's guidance for litigants in person on the use of AI in family proceedings, reflecting the increasing use of AI tools and the associated risks for litigants, other parties and the court process.

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6.5 The Committee considered the proposed membership of the sub-group, whether it should consider drafting guidance for litigants in person on the use of AI, and whether any further steers should be provided on the group's priorities and remit.

6.6 The Committee agreed that officials should proceed with establishing the sub-group and continue work on its proposed membership, remit and priorities.

6.7 Graeme Fraser expressed particular concern regarding the increasing use of publicly available generative AI systems by court users who may not appreciate the risks associated with uploading sensitive personal information or confidential court documents into third-party systems. Graeme Fraser considered that immediate consideration should be given to whether public information, judicial guidance or warnings concerning confidentiality and data protection were required before longer-term procedural reforms could be developed.

6.8 Lord Justice Baker noted that the issue extended beyond the family jurisdiction and would require a coordinated response involving other procedural committees and judicial bodies.

6.9 The President asked whether there was a list of members for the Working Group. Lord Justice Baker confirmed it was being developed; the President noted there was a potential member he would like to propose.

6.10 Helen Sewell noted the Justices' Clerk Society representation would be useful and will confirm who would be best placed.

Action Point [5]: Helen Sewell to confirm the appropriate Justices' Clerk Society representative for the Family Procedure Rule Committee Artificial Intelligence sub-group

6.11 Poonam Bhari also noted her interest in joining the Group and noted that independent experts, such as Professor Richard Susskind, may be useful to its work.

Action Point [6]: Officials to consider whether the President's guidance for litigants in person should be amended to include reference to risks associated with publicly available AI platforms.

Action Point [7]: Officials to finalise membership of the sub-group and set up an introductory meeting.

Action Point [8]: Officials to return to a future meeting with proposals regarding potential rule changes, Practice Direction amendments, guidance and training implications arising from AI.

DOMESTIC ABUSE PROTECTION ORDERS (DAPOs)

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- 7.1 The Committee was reminded that Ministers had decided that the DAPO pilot should conclude after two years, on 24 November 2026, which would coincide with process of the external evaluation.
- 7.2 The Committee noted that Ministers had decided that DAPOs should roll out across all court jurisdictions in England and Wales from 25 November 2026.
- 7.3 Officials noted that, the Committee had previously agreed to continue using the DAPO Pilot Practice Direction in the initial stages of national rollout and had invited the Domestic Abuse Working Group ('the Group') to consider proposed amendments to both the Practice Direction and associated forms. The Group had considered these changes at meetings on 21 May and 17 June and had agreed the amendments be put before the Committee.
- 7.4 . Officials noted that positive requirements would not be available in the family or civil court jurisdictions at launch as the necessary referral mechanism was not yet in place. Accordingly, the provisions relating to positive requirements had been removed from the draft Practice Direction. Officials advised that work was continuing to explore how positive requirements could be introduced in future. Officials further explained that electronic monitoring would also not be available at launch due to operational constraints, although the relevant provisions had been retained in the Practice Direction because the statutory framework already existed and could be activated through notification by the Secretary of State.
- 7.5 District Judge Foss queried whether the proposed arrangements for the automatic notification of DAPOs to the police adequately reflected the Committee's recent work on the sharing of confidential information in non-molestation order proceedings. District Judge Foss questioned whether the approach being developed in that context should also be reflected within the DAPO framework. Officials explained that there were technical limitations regarding the extraction of confidential information from FamilyMan in DAPO cases but agreed that the issue merited further consideration. District Judge Foss also expressed concern that, if confidential information could not appropriately be disclosed to the police, there may be safeguarding implications.

Action Point [9]: Officials to consider how confidential contact information should be disclosed to police forces within DAPO proceedings and report back to the Committee.

- 7.6 District Judge Foss further queried the requirement to serve landlords in certain without-notice applications involving property provisions. District Judge Foss suggested that service before an order had been made could create safeguarding risks in some circumstances and questioned whether landlords needed to be notified at such an early stage. Officials agreed to consider the point further.

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- 7.7 Vicki Mulligan queried whether DAPOs could be used to protect children. Officials explained that DAPOs protect victims of domestic abuse but do not currently provide direct protection for children in the same way as non-molestation orders. Officials noted that a Private Member's Bill promoted by Jessica Toale MP sought to extend protection to children, although any changes would be subject to the Parliamentary process.
- 7.8 The Chair expressed concern that the national rollout would commence without positive requirements, electronic monitoring or direct protection for children. The Chair suggested that there was a risk that the order could be viewed as incomplete at the point of implementation. Officials responded that Ministers remained committed to introducing the order so that it was available for use in circumstances where it could be used effectively, but that further work would continue post rollout to bring on board the other elements. Officials also noted that non-molestation orders would remain available in family courts and were likely to continue to be used in the majority of cases until DAPOs can directly protect children.
- 7.9 HHJ Suh queried whether it was appropriate to commence the regime whilst important operational elements remained unavailable. HHJ Suh noted that section 90 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 allowed powers to be commenced in different areas and questioned how judges would know whether particular powers had been activated in their local area. Officials acknowledged the point and explained that officials were considering how the position could be communicated clearly through guidance and operational material.
- 7.10 Rhys Taylor questioned whether proceeding with national rollout before all aspects of the regime were operational risked creating a perception that DAPOs were a weak order from the outset. Officials recognised the concern but noted that Ministers were keen to proceed with implementation whilst work continued on the remaining elements of the scheme. Officials emphasised the importance of communicating clearly what would and would not be available at launch.
- 7.11 Jennifer Kingsley JP asked whether DAPOs were intended ultimately to replace non-molestation orders. Officials explained that there were currently no plans to repeal non-molestation orders from launch and that any future consideration of such a change would be dependent upon DAPOs becoming fully established and operationally effective.
- 7.12 Laura Coyle raised concerns regarding the position of children under the proposed scheme. She queried whether the application forms adequately distinguished between applicants aged 16 or 17 who may apply for a DAPO in their own right and younger children who could not benefit from equivalent protection. Officials confirmed that individuals aged 16 and over could apply for a DAPO but that the regime did not currently extend equivalent protection to younger children.
- 7.13 A broader discussion followed regarding young applicants and the use of litigation friends. Poonam Bhari queried whether a 16-year-old applicant should ordinarily require

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a litigation friend. Mrs Justice Knowles explained that the Working Group had considered the issue carefully and concluded that imposing a requirement for a litigation friend could create additional barriers to obtaining protection. Mrs Justice Knowles noted that the draft provisions instead required the court to keep the issue under review throughout proceedings involving applicants under 18.

- 7.14 The Committee considered the terminology throughout the draft forms, Practice Direction and order templates. Laura Coyle expressed concern regarding the use of the abbreviation "P" and suggested that the term "perpetrator" may be clearer for court users. District Judge Foss suggested that, in some contexts, "respondent" might be more appropriate. MoJ Legal noted that the underlying legislation referred to "perpetrator", whilst Mrs Justice Knowles explained that "P" in the legislation simply meant "person". Lord Justice Baker invited views on whether the terminology was causing practical difficulties in pilot areas. Mrs Justice Knowles advised that no concerns had been raised by courts participating in the pilot to date.

Action Point [10]: Officials to review references to "P", "person", "perpetrator" and "respondent" across the Practice Direction, forms and order templates and return options for consideration by the Committee.

- 7.15 Mr Justice Peel advised that, following revision of the drafting to reflect the discussion, the documents should be shared with Mrs Justice Knowles before being provided to him in Word format for consideration as part of the standard orders process. Lord Justice Baker suggested that the specific issues raised during discussion should be revisited at the October meeting. Officials agreed and confirmed that a further update on implementation and outstanding issues would be brought back to the Committee in October 2026.

- 7.16 The Committee agreed in principle to the updated PD before them, together with the application forms and court order template, subject to the points raised during the meeting requiring further consideration.

Action Point [11]: Officials to provide a further implementation update, including progress on outstanding judicial concerns regarding national rollout, at the October 2026 meeting.

Action Point [12]: Officials to revise the draft DAPO documentation in light of the Committee's discussion and share the revised order wording with Mrs Justice Knowles and Mr Justice Peel before referral to the Standard Orders Group.

WEB INACCURACIES: HYPERLINKS

- 8.1 Officials informed the Committee that the Secretariat had reviewed the Family Procedure Rules and associated Practice Directions on the FPRC webpages to check the accuracy of hyperlinks.

- 8.2 The review had identified a number of links which appeared to be inaccurate, outdated or no longer accessible. Officials explained that further work was required to determine whether each link had been inserted on the FPRC website and could therefore be corrected administratively, or whether it formed part of the text of a Practice Direction and would require amendment through a future Practice Direction Update.
- 8.3 Officials further noted that where a Practice Direction amendment was required, consideration would also need to be given to whether the relevant Practice Direction was otherwise out of date and whether wider amendments would be appropriate.
- 8.4 The Committee considered whether officials should continue with the work and the priority which should be given to it alongside other Committee priorities.
- 8.5 Rhys Taylor queried whether there might be scope for some form of delegated authority permitting straightforward updates to hyperlinks without requiring the matter to return to the Committee. MoJ Legal noted that a clear distinction needed to be drawn between inaccuracies arising solely from website administration and inaccuracies embedded within the text of a Practice Direction. Whilst the former could be corrected administratively, amendments to the text of a Practice Direction would require the established approval process because the authority to amend Practice Directions rested with the President.
- 8.6 The Committee agreed that officials should continue this work and return to the Committee once the next stage had been completed, including categorisation of the links and initial advice regarding any Practice Direction amendments that may be required. The Committee noted that it would need to be balanced against other priorities already before the Committee.

Action Point [13]: Officials to undertake a comprehensive review of all web inaccuracies identified through the initial exercise and categorise each issue according to whether it may be addressed administratively or requires formal amendment to the Family Procedure Rules or a Practice Direction.

Action Point [14]: Officials to engage with the Ministry of Justice web team and Ministry of Justice Legal Advisers to establish the most appropriate route for correcting identified inaccuracies.

Action Point [15]: Where amendments to a Practice Direction appear necessary, officials to consider whether wider consequential or housekeeping amendments should be undertaken at the same time.

Action Point [16]: Officials to provide a further paper to the Committee setting out the outcome of the detailed review and recommendations for any required rule or Practice Direction amendments.

JADE'S LAW

9.1 Officials updated the Committee on the outcome of the consultation on proposed procedural changes required to implement Jade's Law and invited members to consider a number of issues arising from the consultation responses received.

9.2 Officials explained that eight consultation responses had been received. Responses were broadly supportive of the proposed amendments but also raised a number of issues for consideration. Officials invited the Committee to consider the principal themes arising from the consultation responses, together with wider points raised by Mrs Justice Knowles regarding potential amendments to PD12Q.

9.3 The Committee first considered the position of relative carers. The Chair questioned whether kinship carers should automatically become respondents to proceedings rather than relying upon existing mechanisms for joinder. HHJ Suh noted that the issue had been discussed extensively by the Group and agreed based on the policy behind Jade's Law being, in part, to prevent carers from being drawn in to additional litigation, but given the suggestion came from Resolution, there was merit in providing carers with automatic involvement, rather than requiring them to be added as a party by the Court.

9.4 Mrs Justice Knowles agreed and observed that relative carers, as distinct from foster carers, should ordinarily be automatically joined to proceedings. She considered that such an approach was consistent with the intention of Parliament to provide protection and stability for children affected by these circumstances. Lord Justice Baker queried at what stage relative carers would become parties to proceedings. Mrs Justice Knowles indicated that this would occur when the local authority made the relevant application.

9.5 The Committee therefore agreed that relative carers should ordinarily become automatic respondents to proceedings.

Action Point [17]: Officials to amend the draft Rules and Practice Directions to provide for the automatic participation of relative carers in Jade's Law proceedings where appropriate.

9.6 Laura Coyle raised concerns regarding the legal aid position. She noted that information provided by the Legal Aid Agency suggested that carers would remain subject to existing gateway requirements and eligibility tests. She questioned whether this adequately reflected the realities of Jade's Law cases and observed that, where parental responsibility had been restricted, the court would inevitably need to consider who would exercise parental responsibility in practice. In those circumstances, she considered it difficult to justify excluding carers from proceedings.

9.7 Mrs Justice Knowles noted that the impact assessment suggested that approximately 17 cases per year would fall within the scope of Jade's Law. She expressed concern that legal aid arrangements had not developed alongside the legislation and observed that, where a convicted parent's parental responsibility was restricted, courts would inevitably

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need to consider who should assume responsibility for the child. She regarded this as a further reason why carers should ordinarily participate in proceedings.

9.8 The Committee agreed that concerns regarding the Legal Aid Agency's position should be communicated to the Agency for further consideration.

Action Point [18]: Officials to communicate the Committee's concerns regarding legal aid provision in Jade's Law cases to the Legal Aid Agency.

9.9 In relation to service arrangements members agreed with the proposal that, where a local authority-initiated proceedings, responsibility for service should principally rest with them.

Action Point [19]: Officials to continue development of the proposed service arrangements involving local authorities and reflect agreed changes within future drafting.

9.10 The Committee then considered whether additional provision should be made within PD12Q regarding section 91(14) orders. Mrs Justice Knowles observed that, whilst Jade's Law restricted an offender parent's ability to exercise parental responsibility, it did not prevent repeated applications from being made to the court. She noted that section 91(14) orders could therefore become relevant in some cases and suggested that there was a logical connection between the legislation and consideration of such orders.

9.11 Members acknowledged the point but noted that the anticipated volume of Jade's Law cases was likely to be small and that courts already possessed broad case management powers to respond appropriately where repeated applications arose. Following discussion, the Committee agreed that no amendment to PD12Q was required at this stage.

9.12 The Committee endorsed the overall direction of travel proposed by officials and agreed that revised drafting should be prepared to reflect the conclusions reached during discussion.

FAMILY PROCEDURE RULE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2025 - 2026

10.1 Officials invited the Committee to review the draft Annual Report covering April 2025 to March 2026 and to consider whether it provided an accurate and balanced reflection of the Committee's activity over the reporting period.

10.2 The Committee considered the content of the report, including whether the level of detail was proportionate and whether any additional areas should be included.

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- 10.3 District Judge Foss noted that the draft did not reference the Express Financial Remedies Working Group and that whilst the Group had not been active during the reporting period, it remained in existence so should be covered.
- 10.4 The Committee agreed that reference to the Group should be included within the final report. Subject to that amendment and any consequential updates arising from decisions taken during the current meeting, the Committee approved the report.

Action Point [20]: Officials to amend the Annual Report to include reference to the Express Financial Remedies Working Group.

Action Point [21]: Secretariat to update the report following the July meeting and prepare the final version for publication.

PILOT PRACTICE DIRECTION (PD36ZI): NOTIFICATION OF CERTAIN ORDERS TO THE POLICE

- 11.1 Officials noted that, in June 2025, the Committee had approved a new Pilot Practice Direction (PD36ZI), enabling automatic electronic notification of certain non-molestation orders made by the family court and the Family Division of the High Court to the police. The pilot became operational in September 2025 and had performed well. The Committee further noted that, in May 2026, it approved a one-year extension to the pilot until 13 July 2027 and, in June 2026, approved an expansion in the scope of the data provided to the police to allow for sharing of the applicant's date of birth from the Manage Cases system, where available.
- 11.2 Officials reminded the Committee that, in October 2025, it had invited the Committee's Domestic Abuse Working Group to consider further proposals regarding the sharing of parties' contact details where parties had requested that those details be kept confidential under rule 29.1 FPR. Following consideration by the Working Group in November 2025 and June 2026, the proposed amendments were brought before the Committee for consideration.
- 11.3 Officials sought the Committee's approval of proposals relating to the sharing of parties' confidential contact details and invited the Committee to consider the proposed amendments to PD36ZI. The Committee considered the proposals and approved them in principle.
- 11.4 Officials explained that commencement of the changes would be dependent upon associated amendments to Form C8 and amendments to the non-molestation order template. The Committee noted that officials would provide a further update regarding commencement arrangements once timings for the proposed C8 amendments and associated order template changes had been confirmed.
- 11.5 The Committee considered Recommendation 1, namely that parties' confidential contact details, including addresses where known, should be shared by HMCTS with the

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police and that PD36ZI should be amended accordingly. The Committee agreed Recommendation 1 and approved the proposed arrangements for the sharing of confidential contact information with the police. Officials confirmed that implementation would be dependent upon related amendments to Form C8 and the relevant non-molestation order templates.

- 11.6 The Committee then considered Recommendation 2 concerning proposed amendments to Form C8. The recommendation proposed that the form should make clear that, where the court makes a non-molestation order, confidential contact details provided on the form would be shared with the police for safeguarding and enforcement purposes and may be shared onwards with other agencies. District Judge Foss queried the proposed reference to "other agencies" and suggested that any onward disclosure should be expressly limited to safeguarding purposes. The Committee agreed that the wording should instead refer to "other safeguarding agencies".

Action Point [22]: Officials to amend the proposed Form C8 wording to refer to sharing with "other safeguarding agencies" where appropriate.

- 11.7 The Committee next considered Recommendation 3, namely whether it agreed the proposed amendments to PD36ZI. In discussing the draft amendments, the Chair queried the reference at paragraph 21 of the paper to information being used for "intelligence work", observing that this could be interpreted as referring to wider investigative activity beyond the intended purpose of the pilot. Members agreed that the purpose of the provision was safeguarding and awareness of previous orders and incidents. The Committee therefore agreed Recommendation 3. Noting that Officials are to ensure that "intelligence work" is not referred to in PD36ZI, or relevant forms, or amendments, but that the rationale is recorded as "safeguarding".

Action Point [23]: Officials to revise the PD36ZI drafting to remove references to "intelligence work" and retain safeguarding-related wording only.

- 11.8 In relation to Recommendation 4, concerning the process for judicial consideration of the revised court order templates, Mr Justice Peel requested that, once the court order templates have been revised, the documentation should first be shared with Mrs Justice Knowles before being provided to him in Word format with tracked changes for consideration as part of the standard orders process. The Committee agreed.

Action Point [24]: Officials to share the revised PD36ZI drafting with Mrs Justice Knowles and thereafter provide the tracked-change version to Mr Justice Peel for consideration as part of the standard orders process.

- 11.9 MoJ Legal also drew the Committee's attention to a consequential amendment which had been omitted from the draft Practice Direction amendments. Members noted that the pilot had previously been extended until July 2027 and that the relevant Practice Direction Update had been made. However, paragraphs 1.4, and 1.4(b), had not been

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updated to reflect the extended duration of the pilot. The Committee agreed in principle and approved the consequential amendment to PD36ZI.

Action Point [25]: Officials to prepare the consequential amendment to paragraph 1.4 of PD36ZI to reflect the extension of the pilot to July 2027.

PD11A: FGM PROTECTION ORDERS AND FORCED MARRIAGE PROTECTION ORDERS

11.10 MoJ Legal informed the Committee that, following the work undertaken in relation to non-molestation orders, similar issues had been identified in relation to Female Genital Mutilation Protection Orders and Forced Marriage Protection Orders. MoJ Legal noted that confidential contact details were already being shared by HMCTS with the police in such cases and suggested that the standard template orders could potentially incorporate equivalent provision to that proposed for non-molestation orders to expressly permit that sharing. MoJ Legal therefore sought the Committee's agreement for officials to undertake equivalent work in relation to the sharing of confidential contact details in FGM Protection Orders and Forced Marriage Protection Orders to that being undertaken in relation to non-molestation orders. The Committee agreed that work should be taken forward to amend the template orders and Form C8. Officials indicated that they would return to the October Committee meeting with proposed amendments to PD11A.

Action Point [26]: Officials to return to the October 2026 meeting with proposed amendments to PD11A, the template orders and Form C8.

PD36Z: CHILD FOCUSED COURTS

12.1 Officials updated the Committee on the proposal to amend PD36Z to include the courts in the following Designated Family Judge areas: Northamptonshire; Coventry and Warwickshire; Northumbria and North Durham; Cleveland and South Durham; Lancashire; Cumbria; York and North Yorkshire; and Cheshire and Merseyside.

12.2 The Committee considered the proposal and agreed in principle to the addition of courts in those Designated Family Judge areas to PD36Z and agreed that final implementation dates to be included in amendments to PD36Z could be approved by the President outside a full Committee meeting, where necessary.

12.3 The Committee agreed that, subject to the necessary approvals, a Practice Direction Update should be submitted to the President and then the Minister after the summer to support implementation from Autumn 2026. The Committee welcomed progress made under the programme and agreed the proposed approach.

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- 12.4 Officials noted that they will return to the Committee in late 2026 with other proposed amendments recommended by the Child Focused Courts Working Group (previously the Children's Working Group).

Action Point [27]: Final PD amendments with settled commencement dates to be submitted to the President for approval once readiness assessments have been completed.

CONTESTED FINANCIAL REMEDY ONLINE: PROVISION FOR LITIGANTS IN PERSON (PD41H)

- 13.1 Officials updated the Committee on proposals for a pilot Practice Direction to underpin the use of the contested financial remedy online digital service by litigants in person, to enable them to upload documents to the service. This would be an interim stage pending the development of an end to end service for litigants in person. Officials sought the Committee's approval in principle for the proposal in relation to uploading of documents to the service. The Committee approved the proposal in principle.
- 13.2 Officials noted that, if HMCTS functionality and the revised Form C were ready before the Committee next met in October, officials may seek the President's approval of the associated pilot Practice Direction before the next Committee meeting.
- 13.3 The Committee noted that a further update should be provided in October 2026.

Action Point [28]: Officials to bring an update to the October 2026 meeting.

- 13.4 Rhys Taylor welcomed the proposal and recognised the significant difficulties currently experienced by litigants in person who were required to rely upon paper filing and bulk scanning arrangements.
- 13.5 During discussion, Graeme Fraser highlighted concerns raised by practitioners regarding the operational performance of the existing financial remedies portal, including delays in processing documents and difficulties obtaining assistance. Officials acknowledged the issues raised and noted ongoing work to improve both functionality and operational support.

Action Point [29]: HMCTS officials to continue engagement with stakeholder groups and consider examples of operational issues raised during discussion.

SECRETARIAT ITEMS

Priorities Table

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- 14.1 The Secretariat updated the Priorities Table following the previous meeting. The Committee considered the updated Priorities Table and agreed that it should be published.
- 14.2 Graeme Fraser noted the resource implications of several ongoing and developing projects, including wider family justice reform activity. Members agreed about the importance of maintaining a realistic and deliverable programme of work given the volume of issues under consideration.
- 14.3 The Committee agreed that priorities would continue to be monitored and updated in light of new responsibilities and emerging policy developments.

OTHER PROCEDURE RULE COMMITTEES

Online Procedure Rule Committee (OPRC)

- 15.1 The Committee was informed that the OPRC's Online Procedure (Rules and Practice Directions) Rules 2026 were laid before Parliament on 26 June 2026 and were due to come into force on 7 September 2026. The Committee noted that initial implementation would be limited to possession claims and that a supporting Practice Direction for possession proceedings was expected shortly after the Rules came into force.

Criminal Procedure Rules Committee (CrimPRC)

- 15.2 The Committee noted that, at its meeting on 12 June 2026, the CrimPRC welcomed proposals for future consultation on changes to the 2024 Disclosure Protocol but noted the need for improved arrangements to inform criminal courts of reporting directions made by the family court. The Committee further noted that this had been relayed to the Disclosure Working Group.
- 15.3 The Committee was also informed that the CrimPRC had considered whether expert reports should include reference to professional regulation. While noting that admissibility remained a matter for the courts, the CrimPRC had agreed in principle that requiring experts to state any applicable regulation, or its absence, could be helpful and had deferred a final decision pending the outcome of the FPRC's work in this area.
- 15.4 The Committee noted that the CrimPRC was due to consider further cross-jurisdictional issues at its meeting on 24 July 2026, including contempt of court, open justice, the overriding objective and provision for the use of the Welsh language in proceedings in Wales.

Civil Procedure Rule Committee (CPRC)

- 15.5 The Committee noted that the CPRC continued to engage in cross-jurisdictional work, including arrangements for a meeting of all Rule Committees on Artificial Intelligence led by the Master of the Rolls' Private Office.

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- 15.6 The Committee was also informed that the CPRC was developing proposals relating to Open Justice, including possible amendments to the overriding objective, with future liaison with the FPRC anticipated. Members further noted that, in relation to contempt of court, the CPRC lead member continued to report directly to the judicial working group following steers from the CPRC.

AOB

Disclosure Of Information Between Family and Criminal Agencies and Jurisdictions: 2024 Protocol

- 15.7 Mr Justice Peel noted that the Disclosure Working Group had been due to consider the matter on 2 July 2026. He queried whether the revised Annex 5 order had now been finalised such that it should be added to the compendium of standard orders. The Committee agreed that the Secretariat should follow up with the Steering Group and provide a further update in due course.

Action Point [30]: Secretariat to follow up with the Disclosure Working Group regarding the 2024 Protocol and provide a further update to the Committee.

FPRC Recruitment

- 15.8 Officials confirmed that engagement was continuing with the Public Appointments Team regarding the next stages of the recruitment process around the upcoming vacancies.
- 15.9 Poonam Bhari noted that the Family Law Bar Association was interested in reviewing the operation of the Child Focused Courts pilot and asked whether the Committee could receive an overview from officials at a future meeting on progress to date, including any emerging issues and lessons learned. The Committee agreed that an update on the Child Focused Courts programme should be included on the agenda for a future meeting.

Action Point [31]: Policy Leads to consider including an update on the Child Focused Courts programme, including progress, emerging issues and lessons learned, on a future Committee agenda.

Draft October 2026 Agenda

16. The agenda will be updated to reflect developments in this meeting.

Date of Next meeting: Monday 5 October 2026 at 11:00am, Hybrid, in person at the Royal Courts of Justice and online via Teams.