



Legal Aid  
Agency

**Liverpool Office**  
Capital Building, 6 Union Street  
New Hall Place  
Liverpool, L3 9AF

To: Scheme Members of the South  
& East Cheshire and Stockport  
schemes

Date: 11<sup>th</sup> August 2016

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Response to Consultation with South & East Cheshire and Stockport scheme members following HMCTS announcement to close Macclesfield Magistrates' Court**

On 25<sup>th</sup> July 2016, the Legal Aid Agency issued a consultation under paragraph 6.5 of the 2010 Standard Crime Contract Specification. The consultation was regarding possible changes to the eligibility rules for membership of duty solicitor schemes affected by the HMCTS decision to close Macclesfield Magistrates' Court.

The deadline for responses to the consultation was 8<sup>th</sup> August 2016 and the timetable for the consultation exercise indicated that following consideration of any responses, all affected parties would be notified of the outcome of the consultation no later than 24<sup>th</sup> August 2016. Therefore, this letter is intended as formal notification of the outcome of the consultation.

Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to feedback on the consultation to make changes to the South & East Cheshire and Stockport Court Duty Schemes in readiness for the closure of Macclesfield Magistrates Court.

There is no decision that can meet the needs of all those that have fed back on the scheme changes and a decision has been made which provides the greatest fairness to all scheme members that are affected by this change. It has been decided that the arrangements below will be implemented.

Arrangements for 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016 Court Duty Rotas:

Duty Solicitors who are currently members of South & East Cheshire (Crewe & Nantwich/Macclesfield) Court Duty Solicitor scheme become members of Crewe & Nantwich/Macclesfield **or** Stockport Court Duty Solicitor scheme. Firms will be able to select which scheme they wish to join, it will not be possible for a firm to split their duty solicitors between the two rotas – a firm is eligible for one rota only.

All scheme members currently on the Crewe & Nantwich/Macclesfield Scheme should now notify the Duty Solicitor Team by the 1<sup>st</sup> September which rota they wish to join: [dutysolqueries@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:dutysolqueries@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk) .

Firms may join either Crewe & Nantwich/Macclesfield or Stockport Court Duty Scheme but not both.

All scheme members should be aware the duty solicitor rota team will be re-issuing new rotas for the Crewe & Nantwich/Macclesfield and Stockport schemes beginning from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016.

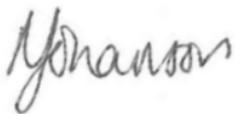
Please ensure that you work from the updated rotas when they arrive.

There will be no changes to the police station schemes in these areas, meaning police station duty eligibility will remain as currently defined.

Next steps

- The changes detailed above will take effect on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016.
- New rotas will be issued to cover the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.

Yours faithfully



Nicola Johanson  
Area Contract Manager