



**TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE SLOUGH (EAST BERKSHIRE) AND  
READING MAGISTRATES' COURT DUTY SCHEMES**

## **Introduction and Background**

### **Duty Solicitor Schemes**

This consultation is in response to HMCTS holding a county wide remand court at Reading Magistrates' Court every Wednesday.

### **This Consultation**

This consultation paper comprises two sections:

Section 1 outlines the **court sitting pattern** and Duty Solicitor Schemes affected.

Section 2 outlines the options identified to change the Duty Solicitor Schemes affected within your local region.

We are consulting on these proposals for **four** weeks, from **1 August 2017**.

Responses should be sent by email to:  
**[louise.hebblethwaite@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:louise.hebblethwaite@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk)**

**Section 1 – Court Siting Pattern and Duty Solicitor Schemes affected.**

In the Berkshire region, the following Magistrates' Court Siting Pattern is:

- Slough Magistrates' Court - The listing pattern at Slough on Wednesdays provides for one court which is a video link court and pre-booked custody cases are listed therein. As there is no capacity for overnight prisoners at Slough on Wednesdays, there is a county remand court at Reading Magistrates' Court every Wednesday.

In addition:

- Currently the court duty solicitor on the Reading Rota is dealing with all cases at Reading Magistrates' Court on Wednesdays.

As a result of this, we need to revise the following scheme:

- Slough (East Berkshire) Court Duty Scheme.

## **Section 2 – Proposed revisions to schemes in the Berkshire Region**

### **Proposed Changes**

Where revisions are required, we set out two options reflecting two different general approaches, with explanations where appropriate, of how each of those approaches will affect the different schemes.

Where schemes only require minor adjustments, we set these out and invite any comments or feedback you may have on these changes.

It may be the case that you consider different approaches appropriate for different schemes. Please make it clear in your response which Option(s) and scheme(s) you are referring to, and indicate your reasons for preferring these alternatives.

### **Thames Valley CJS Area**

**Slough Magistrates' Court** in this CJS area does not deal with remands on Wednesdays and these are dealt with at Reading Magistrates' Court.

Our proposals are as follows:

**Option 1:** Amend the Slough (East Berkshire) Rota – add a second court duty solicitor on Wednesdays who will attend Reading Magistrates' Court to deal with Slough (East Berkshire) custody cases.

**Option 2:** No change to current arrangements – the Reading court duty solicitor to continue to deal with all cases at Reading Magistrates' Court on Wednesdays.

Respondents are invited to comment on these proposals and, if not in support of the proposals, to offer an alternative suggestion.