

13 December 2017

**To all Duty Solicitors on Berwick & Alnwick Magistrates' Court and Police
Station Duty Schemes**

Dear Duty Solicitor

Duty Solicitor Schemes

This consultation is in response to a decrease in available Duty Solicitors on the above scheme(s).

We have tried to keep changes to schemes to a minimum whilst taking into account the likely impact on levels of service to clients and available work to providers.

This Consultation

This consultation paper comprises two sections:

Section 1 outlines the 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 3 weeks, from Wednesday 13th December 2017 to Wednesday 3rd January 2018.

Responses should be sent by email to CMCrimeQuery@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk with the heading marked *Berwick & Alnwick Consultation Response*.

Section 1 – Duty Solicitor Schemes affected.

In the Berwick & Alnwick Region, the Court and Police Station Duty Rotas will experience a shortfall in available Duty Solicitors following the withdrawal of a scheme member.

Section 2 – Proposed Changes

Option 1 – The current Duty Solicitor rota be converted to a panel scheme.

Option 2 – The postcode boundaries of the Scheme are consulted upon to widen access to the Alnwick & Berwick scheme. If this option is selected then this would give rise to a further and separate consultation on the detail.

Our preferred option is Option 1 to allow clients continued access to a duty solicitor and to allow providers access to duty work.

In addition if you have any other suggested options that you feel we should consider, we would be grateful for your views.

Please note, subject to the outcome of this consultation, it is our intention to re-issue the affected rotas with effect from **3rd January 2017** to include Duty Solicitor applicants who have already submitted CRM12s for membership of the affected Schemes. Please see paragraphs 6.56 and 6.60 of the 2017 Standard Crime Contract Specification.

Please ensure your final response is sent to CMCrimeQuery@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk by 5pm on Wednesday 3rd January 2018 and marked *Berwick & Alnwick Consultation Response*. We will aim to confirm the outcome of the consultation by Monday 7th January 2018.

Kind Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jamie Butt', followed by a period.

**Jamie Butt
Contract Manager**