

**TO: ALL MEMBERS OF THE LIVERPOOL & KNOWSLEY AND ST
HELENS, POLICE STATION DUTY SCHEMES**

Introduction and Background

Duty Solicitor Schemes

This consultation is in response to the Merseyside Police decision to close the St Helens Police Station Custody Unit. This Police Station is currently served by the St Helens Duty Solicitor Scheme.

Following the temporary closure of St Helens Police Station custody unit in 2017, a decision has now been made that this custody unit will not re-open.

Defendants arrested across Merseyside are now taken to one of the three available custody units across Merseyside

We have tried to keep changes to schemes to a minimum, whilst taking into account the likely impact on levels of service to clients from solicitors whose offices will no longer be local to the court dealing with their matter.

This Consultation

This consultation paper comprises two sections:

Section 1 outlines the police station custody unit closure 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 2 weeks, from 4th May until 18th May 2018.

Responses should be sent by email to: liam.courtenaywilliams@justice.gov.uk

Section 1 – Police Station Closures and Duty Solicitor Schemes affected.

In the Merseyside region, the St Helens Police Station custody unit has been closed and will not re-open.

As a result of this closure, we are considering revisions to the following schemes:

Liverpool & Knowsley
St Helens

All postcode sectors are mapped into at least one Duty Scheme. Subject to the outcome of the Consultation, the boundary for the Liverpool scheme will be extended to include the Postcodes currently listed for the St Helens scheme.

Determining Eligibility for revised Schemes

To assist providers in determining which Scheme(s) they are eligible to join, the postcode sectors providing access to work within each scheme, which can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/duty-solicitors-rotas-information-and-guidance> will be updated in accordance with this consultation.

Section 2 – Proposed revisions to schemes in the Merseyside Region

Proposed Changes

Where significant revisions are required, we set out 2 Options reflecting two different general approaches, with explanations where appropriate, of how each of those approaches will affect the different schemes.

At the end we indicate the option we favour.

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.

Merseyside CJS Area

St Helens Police Station custody unit in this CJS area is now closed.

Our proposals are as follows:

Members of the St Helens Police Station Duty Scheme are amalgamated into the Liverpool/Knowsley Police Station Duty Scheme with members drawn from both scheme areas.

This would mirror the arrangements already in place for the Liverpool/Knowsley & St Helens Court Duty Rota.

No changes to the Sefton or Wirral Police Station Duty Schemes would be made.

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