



Legal Aid
Agency

Merseyside Regional Office

6th Floor
The Capital
New Hall Place
Liverpool, L3 9AF

To all members of the Liverpool/Knowsley &
St Helens Court Duty Schemes

Date: 22nd May 2018

Dear Sir / Madam,

Response to the Consultation with scheme members following the decision by Merseyside Police to close the St Helens Police Station Custody Unit.

On 4th May 2018, the Legal Aid Agency issued a consultation regarding possible changes to the Liverpool/Knowsley & St Helens Police Station Duty Schemes.

The deadline for responses to the consultation was 15th May 2018 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. Therefore, this letter is intended as formal notification of the outcome of the consultation.

Summary of Responses

Two responses to the consultation on proposed changes to the above Duty Solicitor Schemes, as a result of the closure of St Helens Custody Unit, were received.

Both respondents suggested that the Duty Solicitor Schemes for all four Merseyside Schemes should be amalgamated and a County wide Merseyside Duty Solicitor Scheme created with Duty Slots allocated from members drawn from all four current schemes.

It was suggested that this would reflect the consolidation of court work that has taken place across the County in recent years. In addition, one respondent indicated that, as all three Custody Suites are located within 10 miles of each other, all Duty Solicitors would be able to cover these Custody Suites.

As the changes suggested by the respondents to the consultation would require a full consultation across all areas of Merseyside, the result of this current consultation is to proceed as suggested in the original proposal, this is due to the timing of the closure of the St Helens custody suite, meaning that the rota changes need to be made immediately and this would not provide time for a further consultation.

A further consultation with all Merseyside scheme members will be undertaken at a later date regarding the possible amalgamation of all Merseyside Duty schemes and the creation of a County wide Duty Scheme.

A decision has been made which provides the greatest fairness to all scheme members that are affected by this change.

Decision

The Legal Aid Agency have decided to proceed with the changes proposed in the Consultation Document.

The Liverpool & Knowsley and St Helens Police Duty Solicitor Schemes will merge.

The boundary for the Liverpool Duty Scheme will be amended to include the postcodes currently listed for the St Helens Scheme.

All work undertaken in the court is claimable under the rates set out in the Criminal Legal Aid (Remuneration) Regulations.

Next steps

- These changes will take effect from 1st July 2018
- New rotas will be issued to cover the period 1st July 2018 to 30th September 2018.

Yours faithfully,



Nicola Johanson
Area Contract Manager