



# Legal Aid Agency

Birmingham Regional Office

Cannon House, 18, The Priory Queensway

Birmingham, B4 6BS

**To:** All Scheme Members of the Staffordshire CJS Scheme Areas

Dear Sir / Madam,

**Re: Consultation on changes to the Police Station Duty Rotas following the Staffordshire Police decision to close the Burton upon Trent Custody Suite permanently from Tuesday 15th January 2019.**

This letter constitutes formal notice, under paragraph 6.6 of the 2017 Standard Crime Contract Specification - Duty Solicitor Provisions, which states we may consult on a proposal to change the postcode boundaries in respect of a scheme following the closure of a police station.

Please note: there are no further amendments to Contract arrangements – remuneration for Police Station work will remain unchanged.

This letter will deal specifically with proposed changes to the schemes affected by the closure of Burton upon Trent Custody Suite. Staffordshire Police have confirmed that most of the prisoners previously taken to Burton will generally be taken to Watling Street, Cannock.

On a temporary basis the Legal Aid Agency and Staffordshire Police have agreed that the Burton and Tamworth police station rota will operate from Watling Street, Cannock until a consultation can be completed.

Scheme members from the Burton and Tamworth, Staffordshire North, (Stoke on Trent and Newcastle under Lyme), and Staffordshire South, (Stafford and Cannock), police station schemes are invited to respond.

Existing scheme arrangements will continue for the duration of the current duty rotas up to and including Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019. Thereafter, following the outcome of

this consultation, any new arrangements will be applied from Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019. Revised rotas for this period will be issued in advance.

You are invited to submit any comments regarding the proposals in writing, marked “**Burton Custody Suite Consultation**” in the subject box by email to:

jack.hunter@justice.gov.uk by **5pm on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2019.**

The timetable for this consultation exercise is as follows:

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Duration</b>	<b>Start/end date</b>
Consultation Period	2 weeks	<b>25<sup>th</sup> January 2019 to 8<sup>th</sup> February 2019</b>
Consideration of responses	1 week	<b>11<sup>th</sup> February 2019 to 15<sup>th</sup> February 2019.</b>
Notification of any changes	1 week	<b>18<sup>th</sup> February 2019 to 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2019.</b>
Issue of new rotas	<b>Latest 1<sup>st</sup> March 2019</b>	
Date changes would take effect	<b>1<sup>st</sup> April 2019</b>	

**Please note that given the short timescale to rota publication the Consultation Period is reduced to 2 weeks.**

### **Proposed Options**

Please find below proposed changes to the existing Staffordshire police station schemes.

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

Below are the options being proposed:

#### **Option A**

OPERATE TWO SEPARATE AND DISTINCT POLICE STATION ROTAS FOR SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE BASED AT WATLING STREET CUSTODY SUITE. ONE ROTA FOR STAFFORD AND CANNONCK AND A SEPARATE ROTA FOR BURTON AND TAMWORTH.

The proposal is that the temporary arrangements currently in place until the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019 would become a permanent arrangement from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019. Two separate schemes would operate from Watling Street, Custody Suite and deployment would be dependent on the police notifying the Duty Solicitor Call Centre from which scheme a Duty Solicitor should be deployed depending on the location of the arrest.

NB. The decision on which scheme to deploy a Duty Solicitor call from would be

based on the place of arrest, with detainees who would have previously been taken to Burton still being deployed to the Burton and Tamworth rota based at Watling Street. Detainees who would previously have been taken to the Watling Street Custody Suite, prior to the 16<sup>th</sup> January 2019, would have a Duty Solicitor deployed from the Cannock and Stafford Rota.

The Duty Solicitor arrangements would remain the same with 1 Duty Solicitor from the Burton and Tamworth scheme and 1 from the Cannock and Stafford scheme on 24-hour call from 1700 to 1700, 7 days a week, Monday to Sunday.

THE EXISTING COURT DUTY ROTAS WOULD REMAIN UNCHANGED AS THEY ARE ALREADY COMBINED FOR SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE.

### **Option B**

COMBINE THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE BURTON AND TAMWORTH AND STAFFORD AND CANNOCK POLICE STATION DUTY SCHEMES.

The proposal is that all the existing Burton and Tamworth and Stafford and Cannock Police Station scheme members would join a single combined Police Station Duty Rota for the South of the County.

The Duty Solicitor arrangements would stay the same with 2 Duty Solicitors being on 24hr call from the combined scheme from 1700 to 1700, 7 days a week, Monday to Sunday.

Or alternatively, the scheme arrangements could be amended to have 1 Duty Solicitor on call for the period 0600 to 1800 with a second Duty Solicitor on call from 1800 to 0600, 7 days a week, Monday to Sunday. If you specify Option B can you please also confirm which arrangements you are opting for.

THE EXISTING COURT DUTY ROTAS WOULD REMAIN UNCHANGED AS THEY ARE ALREADY COMBINED FOR SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE.

### **Option C**

COMBINE THE MEMBERSHIP OF ALL STAFFORDSHIRE POLICE STATION DUTY SCHEMES.

The proposal is that all the existing Staffordshire Police Station scheme members would join a single combined scheme covering the current CJS area of Staffordshire from the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019.

Scheme Members would have access to, and would be required to service all the police stations in the current Staffordshire CJS area.

The Duty Solicitor arrangements would be amended to rota 2 Duty Solicitors being on call for the period 0600 to 1800 with a second 2 Duty Solicitor on call from 1800 to 0600, 7 days a week, Monday to Sunday.

THE EXISTING COURT DUTY ROTAS WOULD REMAIN UNCHANGED WITH A COUNTY WIDE REMAND SCHEME AND SEPARATE COURT DUTY SCHEMES FOR NORTH STAFFORDSHIRE AND SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE

It may be the case that you consider different approaches appropriate for this scheme and if this is the case please make it clear in your response. Please explain in your response which Option(s) and scheme(s) you are referring to, or indicate your reasons for preferring any other alternative suggestion.