



# 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,

**Response to Consultation with scheme members of all of the Staffordshire CJS Scheme Areas following the Staffordshire Police decision to close Burton upon Trent Police Station Custody Suite permanently from Tuesday 15th January 2019.**

On Friday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2019, the Legal Aid Agency issued a second consultation paper 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/custody suite. Burton upon Trent Police Station Custody Suite has been closed permanently and so a consultation was deemed appropriate given the significant impact on the current Burton upon Trent and Tamworth Police Station rota.

The consultation was regarding possible changes to the membership of the Duty Solicitor schemes affected by the closure of Burton upon Trent Police Station Custody Suite.

A second consultation was deemed appropriate given the number of complaints submitted regarding the combination of all Staffordshire Police Station Duty Schemes following the first consultation in January /February 2019. It also became known that one firm affected had not received notification of the first consultation paper. Subsequent to the first consultation, Staffordshire Police have provided more clarification in respect of deployment within the County.

A meeting was held at Staffordshire Police Head Quarters on the 30<sup>th</sup> April to listen to all concerned parties and following this meeting, all firms were invited to submit alternative or additional options to the original options detailed in the first consultation paper. Only 1 response was received and a 4<sup>th</sup> option, Option D, (detailed below), was added to the second consultation paper.

The deadline for responses to the second consultation was Friday 26<sup>th</sup> July 2019 and the timetable for the consultation exercise indicated that following consideration of responses, all

affected parties would be notified of the outcome of the consultation in the week commencing 5<sup>th</sup> August 2019. This letter is therefore intended as formal notification of the outcome of the consultation.

Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to respond to the consultation.

The responses from 14 firms were received and counted. The majority, (8/14), of respondents ultimately favoured **Option D** over any other option. No firms elected for Options A & B. Based on the majority vote the Legal Aid Agency will implement Option D from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019. As detailed in Option D, the LAA now intend to create two separate North and South schemes for the County, with the firms from the Burton and Uttoxeter postcode areas joining the Northern Scheme and the firms from the Tamworth and Lichfield postcodes areas joining the Southern Scheme.

The postcode tool will be amended accordingly. This decision is binding and no further changes will be considered unless there is a fundamental change which would affect the effective operation of one or both of the new schemes.

No decision can meet the expressed desires of all those who provided feedback to the consultation, whilst also meeting the needs of clients and the LAA. A decision has therefore been made which will provide rationalised, efficient and effective Duty provision across the schemes under review, having given due consideration to the feedback received.

The following arrangements will be implemented:

From Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 the membership of the existing combined Staffordshire Police Station Duty Scheme will be split into two separate North and South schemes.

There are no amendments to Remuneration Regulations or Contract arrangements and remuneration for Police Station Duty work and Own Client attendances within the CJS area will remain unchanged.

Please ensure that you work from the updated rotas when they arrive.

Next steps

- A new Staffordshire North Police Station rota will be issued shortly to cover the rota period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.
- A new Staffordshire South Police Station rota will be issued shortly to cover the rota period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.