



Legal Aid  
Agency

**Birmingham Regional Office**  
**Cannon House, 18, The Priory Queensway**  
**Birmingham, B4 6BS**

To: All Scheme Members of the  
Birmingham and Black Country Duty  
Solicitor Schemes

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Response to Consultation on changes to the membership of the Birmingham and Black Country Police Station and Court Duty Schemes resulting from a consultation held on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2016 regarding the decision of HMCTS to close Sandwell Magistrates Court and list cases on a Black Country wide basis and to close local Police Stations in favour of a centralised Custody Suite at Oldbury. This Consultation, which seeks to change the postcode boundaries of the two schemes, was not possible at the point at which these changes originally took place.**

On 20<sup>th</sup> January 2021, the Legal Aid Agency issued a consultation under paragraph 6.60 of the 2017 Standard Crime Contract Specification. The consultation was regarding possible changes to the postcode boundaries of the Birmingham and Black Country Duty Solicitor Schemes.

The deadline for responses to the consultation was 13<sup>th</sup> February 2021 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 no later than 19<sup>th</sup> February 2021. Therefore, this letter is intended as formal notification of the outcome of the consultation.

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

11 responses were received. The majority of responses favoured Option 1 with the rest preferring Option 2. We received 1 response which did not select an option or provide an alternative approach. No responses were received that favoured Option 3 and no alternative suggestions were proposed. Two of the 11 responses stated that keeping the status quo would be their preferred option, however, they did then go on to select a preferred option from those provided and that preferred option has been included within the analysis above. It has therefore been decided that the arrangements below will be implemented within the next Standard Crime Contract.

Please note: The changes proposed will not impact arrangements under the existing 2017 Standard Crime Contract.

**Arrangements for Black Country and Birmingham Duty Solicitor Rota for the next Standard Crime Contract:**

The B42 1xx and B20 3xx postcodes are to be allocated to the Birmingham Duty Solicitor Rota only.

The Postcode Tool will be amended to show that firms located in B42 1xx and B20 3xx are eligible for the Birmingham Duty Solicitor rota only

Next steps

The changes detailed above will take effect at the start of the next Standard Crime Contract.

Yours faithfully

**Claire Jan**  
**Area Contract Manager**