



Asiantaeth Cymorth
Cyfreithiol

Legal Aid
Agency

Introduction and Background

Mold & Hawarden and Wrexham Duty Solicitor Schemes

This consultation is in response to imminent changes to custody arrangements concerning Wrexham magistrates court and the pending closure of Wrexham police station.

This Consultation

This consultation paper comprises two sections:

Section 1 outlines the Duty Solicitor Schemes affected by the change of custody arrangements.

Section 2 outlines the options identified to change the Duty Solicitor Schemes affected within your local region.

We are consulting on these proposals for 4 weeks, from 23/7/18 to 20/8/18.

Responses should be sent by email to lisa.gill1@justice.gov.uk, titled 'Mold & Hawarden and Wrexham Consultation'.

Section 1 – Duty Solicitor Schemes affected.

We have been informed of imminent changes to custody arrangements concerning Wrexham magistrates court and the pending closure of Wrexham police station.

As a result of this, we would need to revise the following schemes:

- Mold & Hawarden Duty Scheme
- Wrexham Duty Scheme

All postcode sectors are mapped into at least one Duty Scheme. The changes proposed here will not affect this.

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 the outcome of this consultation.

Section 2 – Proposed revisions to schemes in Mold & Hawarden and Wrexham

Proposed Changes

As a result of the change in custody arrangements at Wrexham magistrates court and the closure of Wrexham police station it is proposed to replace the current Mold & Hawarden and Wrexham schemes with one merged duty scheme.

Option 1

To support these changes, we propose that the Mold & Hawarden and Wrexham duty schemes are merged both for court duty work and police station matters.

This approach would support the merged bench and the merged sitting patterns in the court. It will result in one police station duty solicitor covering the wider geographical area, avoiding the need for the police and call centre to determine which duty solicitor would be required for each client.

Option 2

To support these changes, we propose that the Mold & Hawarden and Wrexham court duty rotas are merged so that duty slots for the court are shared across all providers that qualify for the two schemes.

As part of this option, the police station rotas of Mold Police station and Wrexham Police Station will continue to remain separate, meaning police station duty qualification remains as currently set.

This approach recognises that the requirement to merge the court rota to reflect the merged sitting patterns but allows for separate police station duties to remain. As it is expected that the clients from both schemes will be attending the same police stations, this option relies on the police and call centre to identify which duty list to employ for each client.

Preferred option

Option 1 is preferred; to merge Mold & Hawarden and Wrexham court schemes as well as merging the police station schemes. This option provides the solution that best fits the working practice of the courts and police without prejudicing the client and mirrors the combined North-East Wales justice area.

Respondents are invited to comment on these proposals and, if not in support of the proposal, to offer an alternative suggestion. A non-response is deemed an acceptance of the preferred option.