

IMPROVING TRUST AND CONFIDENCE IN SCOTTISH LEGAL SERVICES

Part 4 – Consultation questions...

2016 – 2020

Independent | Fair | Impartial



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1 Introduction

- 1.1 In this document we set out some questions that will assist stakeholders in responding to this consultation and will help ensure we know your views on key issues.
- 1.2 **The deadline for responses is Friday 11th March**
- 1.3 You should read this operating plan alongside the other key documents which form part of this consultation: our draft strategy, our draft operating plan for 2016/17, and our draft budget for 2016/17. Full details of the consultation are at: <https://www.scottishlegalcomplaints.org.uk/consultation>

2 Summary

- 2.1 13 questions are listed (A to M), divided into sections for the three elements (strategy, operating plan and budget) and with a further section for general questions.
- 2.2 We welcome all comments, feedback and observations. We'd value you providing a response to each of our core questions in this document, but you may wish to also submit further material on the papers provided or related matters and such additional comments will also be considered by our Board in making their final planning decisions.

3 Approach

- 3.1 The SLCC have a statutory duty to consult on an annual plan and budget each year, starting in January (s 29(4) of the 2007 Act).
- 3.2 We also have a duty to publish responses by 31st March (s29(8) of the 2007 Act), so those responding must be aware that a .pdf version of their response will be displayed on our website.
- 3.3 Where appropriate and reasonable, we are happy to provide any further information or detail you may need to inform your response.
- 3.4 We can accept feedback in all forms, but where possible a Word document, sent by email, is the preferred format.
- 3.5 Responses, and requests for information, should be sent to: consult@scottishlegalcomplaints.org.uk

4 Questions on the draft strategy – 2016/20

- A. Are the five strategic priorities (page 3) the correct focus for the organisation?**
Is anything missing? Should anything be removed? Do they correctly set the focus of the organisation?
- B. Does the strategy appropriately balance consumer interest and the legitimate needs of the sector?**
In determining individual cases our role is to be independent, impartial, and fair, favouring no party. However, in other areas of work we may support one group or another to achieve a particular outcome. For example, we may support lawyers by sharing trends and issues in complaints to help them avoid future issues, or we may support consumers by enhancing the advice we provide on how to make an effective complaint.
- C. Do you think our values and customer service focus are appropriate?**
We would welcome your input not just on what work we plan, but the values and behaviours we will apply to that work.
- D. Is there anything from your strategy and planning work we should take account of?**
We are keen to work efficiently and effectively with other bodies in the sector, and would welcome input on any areas of your own work that might inform, support, or duplicate areas of activity we have planned.

5 Questions on the draft operating plan – 2016/17

- E. What do you think are the most important projects for us to pursue?**
We'd value your views on those projects you think are most important to start in year one of our strategy, and those projects which you think might be less important and could be pursued later.
- F. Where may you be able to work with us?**
We'd value your views on which projects you may wish input into or to assist with to ensure the most effective outcomes for consumers and lawyers.
- G. Does our operating plan for 2016/17 set out an appropriate first year of activity, helping us work towards our longer term strategic goals?**
Our aim is to achieve our strategic priorities over the next four years? Does the operating plan for 16/17 go far enough for the first year? Or might work currently considered for that period be better phased over a longer timescale?

6 Questions on the draft budget – 2016/17

- H. Are the proposed levy fees appropriate to allow delivery of our statutory role?**
Your comments on the level of levy, generally or for each category, would be welcomed?
- I. Do you agree that it is appropriate to keep in-house and advocates fees static?**
Fewer complaints originate from these sources, and we have previously sought to hold or reduce these fees. Do you feel this approach continues to be appropriate?
- J. Are the fees around the new 'Approved Regulators' and 'Licensed Providers' appropriate?**
The SLCC will have set up costs and other resource needs to ensure these new regulatory models are understood, and processes and staff are in place. Little data is available on the potential market or levels of complaints. Our approach is that these should 'self-fund' from the new business models and Approved Regulators, rather than be subsidised by funding from individual lawyers, but views are welcomed.
- K. Do you have any other comments on the budget?**
We'd value any other comments or observations you wish to share.

7 General questions

- L. What equality, diversity and inclusivity issues might arise?**
In our strategy we set out our commitment to equality and diversity, and around broader issues of social and circumstantial exclusion. Is anything in our approach likely to create a negative impact on equality and diversity? Are there positive opportunities to improve equality and diversity in the work laid out? Should we be adding additional work to tackle specific issues or improve particular aspects of what we do?
- M. Do you have any other comments to add?**
We would welcome your views on any issues related to our plans...