

COPY

Scottish Legal Complaints Commission
The Stamp Office
10 – 14 Waterloo Place
Edinburgh, EH1 3EG
Tel 0131 528 5111
Fax 0131 528 5110
www.scottishlegalcomplaints.org.uk
Legal Post, 86, Edinburgh 2



Mr Austin Lafferty
President
Law Society of Scotland
LP 1 - EDINBURGH 1

31 January 2013

Dear Mr Lafferty

Consultation on the SLCC's budget for 2013/14

I'm writing to consult on the budget for the Scottish Legal Complaints Commission (SLCC) for the operating year from 1 July 2013 to 30 June 2014.

The SLCC is faced by increasing demand for its services. Complaints rose by 16% over the last operating year (to 30 June 2012). It was our first full operating year following the end of the transition arrangements, so we now have a clearer picture of the volumes and complexity of complaints which we are dealing with.

In our Annual Report, which was laid before the Scottish Parliament in December, I highlighted that there is a great deal of work for us to do in tackling backlogs, speeding up our processes and becoming more efficient and effective in our operations. We also need to do more to prevent complaints by working better with the profession and with consumer groups to improve standards of complaint handling. The Operating Plan which I have enclosed with this letter sets out the main strands of our work.

We know that the year ahead will also see new business structures coming into place with the regime of approved regulators and licensed service providers which the 2010 Legal Services Act sets out. As our workload has increased, our headcount has finally reached the levels which were forecast in our initial budget back in 2008. To tackle growth in workload and complexity, our headcount is growing, but we are acutely aware of the pressures which other public bodies and the legal profession face. Our budget reflects the steps that we're taking to meet that challenge as effectively as we can, so we're able to restrict the increase in the levy to under 2%.

We are budgeting for an increase in staff costs of nearly 21% which reflects how our work has grown over our short lifetime as an organisation. We are not yet at a steady state stage of our operation - we have only been operating for one full year post-transition. However, we've taken steps to ensure that these costs aren't simply passed on. We are building a more efficient and effective organisation.

We've completed a job evaluation exercise to ensure that our salaries represent best value in the market. We're developing our preventative work by investing in capacity and capability in oversight and communications. In the longer term this will help to reduce the volume of work we have to deal with and create value for the public and the profession through improved standards and more trust and confidence in our legal system.

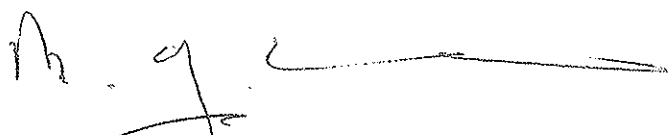
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Finally, we've also looked at our own reserves. Based on this proposal and our forecast for 2012/13, we will have invested more than £300,000 from our reserves over two years. This investment is allowing us to assess our IT platforms and to develop our management capability to underpin efficient working. As our reserves will reduce to less than three months' cover, we will not be able to maintain this level of investment in the future, so it's vital that our operating plan delivers the improvements we need in platforms, processes and capability which will make us more efficient. I plan to report on our progress in our Annual Report for 2012/13.

We welcome your comments and observations on the budget. It would be very helpful if you could let me have your formal response by Friday 22 March as we must publish all the responses received by 31 March 2013. I would be pleased to meet with you to discuss our plans and our work to improve our efficiency and effectiveness if you would find this useful.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely



Matthew Vickers
Chief Executive Officer

Enc. Draft Budget and Operational Plan

Cc. Phillip Yelland

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Richard Keen QC
Dean of The Faculty of Advocates
Parliament House
EDINBURGH
EH1 1RF

31 January 2013

Dear Mr Keen

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Yours sincerely



Matthew Vickers
Chief Executive Officer

Enc. Draft Budget and Operational Plan

Cc Iain Armstrong QC, Carole Ferguson-Walker

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Mr William Alexander
The Association of Commercial Attorneys
Huntershill Business Centre
25 Auchinairn Road
GLASGOW
G64 1RX

31 January 2013

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Ms Lorna Jack
CEO
Law Society of Scotland
LP 1 – EDINBURGH 1

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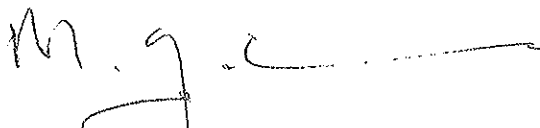
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Cc. Phillip Yelland

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Mr Kenny MacAskill MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Justice
Scottish Government
St Andrews House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

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Cc. Colin McKay, Robert Sandeman

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The Rt Hon Lord Gill
Lord President
Parliament House
Edinburgh
EH1 1RQ

31 January 2013

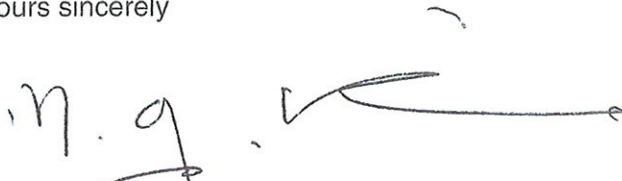
Dear Lord Gill

SLCC Proposed Budget 2013/14

Please find enclosed for information a copy of the draft budget and covering letters I sent to the Professional Bodies and the Cabinet Secretary for Justice, for consultation today.

Please contact me if you have any questions about it.

Yours sincerely



Matthew Vickers
Chief Executive Officer

Enc. Draft Budget and Operational Plan and copy letters