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Response by email to: consult@scottishlegalcomplaints.org.uk

Dear Neil

SLCC BUDGET AND OPERATING STRATEGY CONSULTATION RESPONSE

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the SLCC's consultation on its Budget and Operating Strategy for the year 2024-25. I have set out in this letter Consumer Scotland's feedback on this, which I will hope will be of value to you as you finalise the Strategy. We note the truncated nature of this plan, given the significant uncertainties around both complaint numbers and the speed and extent of likely change to the legislative framework which the SLCC operates under.

Consumer Scotland has valued our engagement with the SLCC since our inception. In particular, we were pleased to work with the SLCC in relation to our shared aims of seeking to improve consumer outcomes under any reformed regulatory framework for legal services in Scotland. We have also been pleased to participate in meetings of the Consumer Panel which is supported by the SLCC.

We have found our bilateral discussions with the SLCC team useful and we look forward to continuing and building upon this positive relationship during the period 2024-27. We have also welcomed the SLCC's membership and participation in wider consumer matters as part of the Consumer Network for Scotland.

Consumer Scotland recently published our own Draft Work Programme for 2024-25. In this Programme we set out our planned work for the year across our three strategic objectives:

- Cost of living and affordability
- Consumers in vulnerable circumstances
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation

Our proposed workstreams include research, analysis, policy and advocacy activity, alongside our work on the Consumer Duty for public bodies in Scotland, the system for recall of goods and the development of our investigations function. We receive levy funding for our work in the gas, electricity, post and water sectors and we also undertake work across the wider consumer economy. We are grateful for the SLCC's response to the consultation on our Draft Programme.

Given the activities described in our work programme, and reviewing the SLCC's Draft Operating Plan, there are a number of areas where there are opportunities for us to work together, especially in relation to our specific plans to work to implement any new legal services legislation and the priority area of addressing vulnerability. We also welcome the SLCC's plan for the Panel to be involved in considering the SLCC's implementation of the Consumer Duty.

We would be keen to continue working with the SLCC to promote collaboration, share knowledge and stimulate debate regarding effective regulation which can meet consumer needs. In this regard we welcome the SLCC's plans to develop a statement setting out further detail on organisational purpose and the approach to be taken to the implementation of the SLCC's regulatory functions. As Consumer Scotland is a relatively new organisation there is much we can learn from working with partners in this space.

I hope these comments are helpful and we look forward to continuing to work with the SLCC during 2024-25.

Yours sincerely

Tracey Reilly

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Consumer Scotland