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16/05/25

LAPG Member Update

Issue 15 of 2025

Welcome to our latest member update with news and events from across the legal aid sector and beyond. A more concise Update today just summarising five key issues:

- **Crime consultation - Criminal Legal Aid: Proposals for Solicitor Fee Scheme Reform**
- **CCMS Outage this weekend**
- **2024 Standard Civil Contract Extension**
- **APPG on Access to Justice – Parliamentary event on Justice in the Digital Era**
- **House of Lords Constitution Committee – Rule of Law Inquiry**

News & Events

Crime consultation - Criminal Legal Aid: Proposals for Solicitor Fee Scheme Reform

On 9th May 2025, the Government published a consultation on proposed changes to the criminal legal aid fee schemes, including prison law. The consultation is due to run for eight weeks and closes on the 4th of July 2025.

The announcement with [summary details is here](#), whilst the consultation itself is [hosted separately here](#).

The consultation follows the announcement in December 2024 that the Government intended to invest up to £92 million per year more in funding for criminal legal aid fees. The consultation seeks views on uplifting fees in most criminal legal aid fee schemes, meaning work in police stations, magistrates' courts, the Crown Court, and prison law work.

We have provided a brief summary below of each proposal:

Police Station Fee Scheme

The proposal is to fully harmonise police station fees by uplifting all schemes to a fixed fee of £320 excluding VAT. The proposal delivers an increase to all fees in the police station scheme, including the highest paid fee scheme which is Heathrow at £316.86 excluding VAT. The escape fee threshold will increase to £960 excluding VAT.

Magistrates Court

The proposal is a 10% uplift on all fees for magistrates' court and youth court work.

Litigators' Graduated Fee Scheme

The consultation proposes two amendments to the LGFS:

- A fixed ratio between outcomes - The proposal is to implement a fixed ratio of 65:75:100 for basic fees in the LGFS.
- Uplifting the lowest paid basic fees - The proposal is to raise the trial basic fee for Offence Types E, F, G, H, and I by around one third.

Prison Law

The proposal is to increase prison law fees by 24%.

Over the coming weeks we'll be consulting LAPG's Advisory Committee to help us prepare our consultation response. We will also be discussing the proposals with our partner organisations such as The Law Society, Association of Prison Lawyers, CLSA and LCCSA. If you would like to feed your views into the LAPG response please get in touch with our [Director of Legal Aid Policy, Kate Pasfield](#).

CCMS Outage this weekend

The LAA issued the following announcement yesterday about access to CCMS:

*'In order to continue to bolster the security of our systems we will be taking the Portal offline over the weekend **from Friday, 16 May at 21:00 to Monday, 19 May at 06:00**. As confirmed in Lucy Jones' message of 13 May, whilst we continue with this programme of work we will be taking Portal offline each weekday evening from 9pm to 6am until further notice. We will continue to keep you updated as to any changes of system availability. We apologise for any inconvenience caused by the ongoing works.'*

2024 Standard Civil Contract Extension

The LAA **announced this week** that the current Civil Contract will be extended to 30 June 2027:

'Next steps

There is no action needed for existing 2024 Standard Civil Contract holders. Contract schedules will be updated in due course.

Why is this happening?

The LAA is committed to the provision of Civil Legal Aid and the provision of certainty to the market that encourages wider growth.

This is part of the LAA's ongoing commitment to do all we can to enable suitably qualified providers to offer legal aid funded services. It offers the ability for existing providers to expand their services as well as encouraging new providers to join.

Further information

Below is a link to the 2024 Standard Civil Contract and details of the procurement process which you can download and review:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/standard-civil-contract-2024>

APPG on Access to Justice – Parliamentary event on Justice in the Digital Era

Monday 19 May 2025, 15.00-16.30



After years of cuts, the justice system of England and Wales is in desperate need of investment and innovation if it is to meet public demand in the years to come.

With financial uncertainty and further cuts on the horizon, AI and technology holds the potential to meet some of this need.

Between the MoJ's Legal Support Strategy, the AI Opportunities Plan and the AI Bill which is

currently going through its second reading in the Lords, it is essential that we understand how to best use this innovation as a tool in improving access to justice for our clients.

The panel will be exploring these innovations and new technologies in the justice workplace, the risks and concerns associated with them, the need for safeguards to be put in place, and their wider impact in society.

If you're interested in discussing these innovations and what this might mean for the access to justice sector, this is the event for you.

Speakers: [Peter Chamberlin](#) (Public Digital), [Ellen Lefley](#) (JUSTICE), [Mia Leslie](#) (Institute for the Future of Work), [Martha de la Roche](#) (Access to Justice Foundation), @Jasleen Chaggar (Big Brother Watch), MoJ Spokesperson (tbc).

Email: APPGA2J@lapg.co.uk for further details or to book your tickets

House of Lords Constitution Committee – Rule of Law Inquiry

As part of their [inquiry into the rule of law](#), the House of Lords Constitution Committee has launched an expression of interest for legal professionals to take part in a series of private roundtables to discuss the rule of law.

The Committee is keen to hear from a wide range of viewpoints, including all levels of experience and types of legal practice, and from across the UK.

The roundtables will explore what the rule of law means in practice, how the legal profession upholds it, and what, if anything, should be done to improve it.

Further details, and the expression of interest can be found here:

<https://forms.office.com/e/Wh49E6SL0s>

The deadline for the expression of interest is **5pm on 13 June 2025**.

LAPG gave oral evidence to the Inquiry on 14 May 2025. Director of Legal Aid, Kate Pasfield, appeared before the Committee to press home key messages about the vital role that legal aid plays in protecting and promoting the rule of law. If you would like to view the session [you can do so on the Committee website here](#).

And finally, look out *very soon* for our announcement of the finalists for this year's **Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year awards....**

Take care and Happy Friday one and all,

Chris Minnoch, CEO [@ChrisLAPG](#)

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