

**MINUTES OF THE WEST YORKSHIRE CJS AREA DEFENCE**  
**SOLICITORS MEETING**  
**6 DECEMBER 2007 AT LEEDS MAGISTRATES COURT**

<b>Present:</b>	Julie Parkin	Regional CDS Manager (Chair)
	Mark Coles	First Assist
		John Holden & Jameson Fitzpatrick
		Stanley Hays
		Haddock & Co
		Inesons
		Sugare
		Clarion
		Baxendale Vanzie
		Chambers Solicitors
		Smithson Hinds Morris
		Roger Clapham Ltd
		Brimble & Co
		JPW
		Lester Morrill
		Tates
		Graham Stowe Bateson
		Qamar
		David Ake
		Jordans
		Switalskis
		Sugare & Co
		Harrison Bunday
		Chaudhury Sols
	Wendy Corbin	CDS Support (Minutes)

**ITEM 1 – INTRODUCTIONS**

Julie Parkin (JP) welcomed the solicitors and introduced the LSC staff present at the meeting.

Copies of the police station attendance figures and the Q & A's from the Police station events, in Leeds and Barnsley, were circulated. JP confirmed that the remaining questions would be answered when the full Q & A's are published on the LSC's website.

The aim in future is to distribute the agenda and publish key documents on the North East internet page.

**ITEM 2 – CRIMINAL LEGAL AID REFORM UPDATE**

JP drew attention to the Reforms in Brief handout in the agenda pack and discussed the latest position in the reforms programme. JP stated the Commission would shortly be launching three consultations including: Best Value Tendering and the July 2008 contract. BVT consultation events will take place in the first week in February.

### **ITEM 3 – OPERATIONAL UPDATE**

The latest police station figures were discussed. An increase in attendances in Pudsey and Weetwood and an increase in costs was noted.

JP asked those in attendance whether they would like her to arrange for the Head of Custody Services, to attend the next meeting to discuss police issues, such as the new builds. It was agreed that better liaison with custody staff would be beneficial.

JP confirmed she had briefed West Yorkshire police on the DSCC and CDS Direct expansion. JP confirmed she had also raised the other issues including bail backs and the lack of private facilities for telephone advice.

JP is to have a further meeting in February to raise these issues at Commander level.

Data Protection issues were raised. JP referred solicitors to Chief Superintendent John Robbins' letter regarding secure e-mail. Secure e-mail should address the issues raised. It is set to commence on the 14<sup>th</sup> January. JP said providers should look out for a further letter confirming the launch of secure e-mail, which would be despatched soon.

**Action: JP to invite police to attend next meeting**

### **ITEM 4 - REPORT FROM DEFENCE SOLICITORS ON SCHEME PERFORMANCE AND ANY ISSUES ARISING**

A general discussion followed regarding operational performance across the CJS including that of CDS Solicitors, the Police, the CPS and the Courts.

An issue was raised regarding clients who are self employed and obtaining cover for the 1<sup>st</sup> hearing. JP requested suggestions from suppliers on evidence requirements.

A supplier suggested passporting clients deprived of their liberty. JP said this was not possible as they may still have access to funds. Suppliers suggested a limited passport for clients in custody, limited to the time in detention only. Another supplier suggested we use the clients tax code.

**Action: JP to feedback any comments/suggestions received.**

### **ITEM 5 - DUTY SOLICITOR ARRANGEMENTS**

JP confirmed the new rota's would be issued soon and that they would be fixed for 6 months, until the new contract in July.

She confirmed that the Court of Appeal judgement would have no effect on the January start date.

### **ITEM 6 - CJS LIAISON (Police & Courts)**

Concern was expressed at the level of the new fixed fee for Dewsbury and Halifax. Concern was also expressed about the level of waiting time in Leeds and that fixed fees may mean suppliers are kept waiting longer. JP confirmed that she was looking at the cost drivers and liaising with the police.

**Action: JP will keep providers informed on progress.**

### **ITEM 8 - ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Mark Coles from First Assist (DSCC) introduced himself and explained why he had attended.

He offered to attend the next meeting. Those in attendance appreciated this.

He answered questions relating to:

Contact details:

The data on the CDS 12's would be added to their database.

Lack of facilities at police stations for clients to take advice calls:

MC stated advisors would confirm the position with the client and deal with the call accordingly.

JP stated she had already raised this with the police at Commander level and reminded them of their obligations.

**Action: JP to follow up with the police and John Sirodcar**

Own clients:

Clarification on the procedure was requested. MC confirmed the DSCC will contact the named solicitor as soon as the police inform them of the request for advice. The named advisor must accept the call within 2 hours or it will be referred to duty.

If the case is within the scope of CDS Direct, the DSCC will inform the own solicitor, that the client advised by CDS Direct, after the case has been closed.

Concern was expressed regarding cases where the clients own solicitor was aware of the removal of bail conditions. MC assured providers that the CDS Direct advisors would deal with these cases appropriately.

Solicitors were advised, if they require details of the advice given they should contact the call centre.

**Date of next meeting – End February – Early March**

There being no further business the meeting was closed.