

Main Estimates memorandum (2020-21) for HM Procurator General and Treasury Solicitor

1 Overview

1.1 Objectives

The Estimate for HM Procurator General and Treasury Solicitor (HMPG&TS) provides for the expenditure and income of the Government Legal Department (GLD), the Attorney General's Office (AGO) and HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (HMCPSI).

GLD is a non-ministerial government department and its predecessor (the Treasury Solicitor's Department) was established as an Executive Agency on 1 April 1996. It has no policy responsibility. Ministerial responsibility lies with the Attorney General. GLD provides high quality legal services to most Whitehall Departments and to more than a hundred other government and public bodies. It applies its combined legal professional skills to provide consistently excellent legal services, drawing on its unique perspective of the law across the legal landscape of government.

The AGO is a specialist ministerial department serving the Attorney General and the Solicitor General (the Law Officers) across the full range of their functions. The Law Officers are the Government's chief legal advisers and help the Government to deliver policy in the context of upholding the rule of law and perform a visible and effective role as leaders in the domestic and international legal community. They also have superintendence responsibilities in relation to the public prosecutions conducted by the Crown Prosecution Service and the Serious Fraud Office.

The purpose of HMCPSI is to inspect the operation of the Crown Prosecution Service and the Serious Fraud Office and to provide independently assessed evidence to allow others to hold these agencies to account thereby encouraging improvement. The Chief Inspector, who also fulfils the role of Chief Executive, has been appointed as Accounting Officer for HMCPSI.

1.2 Spending controls

HMPG&TS's net spending is broken down into a several different spending totals, for which Parliament's approval is sought.

The spending totals which Parliament votes are:

- Resource Departmental Expenditure Limit (**Resource DEL**) - this limit is to fund the public interest casework of GLD and AGO both in terms of time spent and disbursements, the administration costs of AGO and HMCPSI, and the programme cost of the AGO's continuing work on EU Exit Transition. The balance of GLD's operating costs, including the cost of legal disbursements, are recovered from client departments.
- Capital Departmental Expenditure Limit (**Capital DEL**): - investment in capital equipment such as ICT and furniture and fittings.

In addition, Parliament votes a net cash requirement, designed to cover the elements of the above budgets which require HMPG&TS to pay out cash in year.

1.3 Comparison of net spending totals sought

The table below shows how the net spending totals sought for HMPG&TS compares with last year:

Spending total Amounts sought this year (Main Estimate 2020-21)		Compared to final budget last year (Supplementary Estimate 2019-20)		Compared to original budget last year (Main Estimate 2019-20)	
		£ m	%	£m	%
Resource DEL	10.880	14.655	-26%	16.871	-36%
Capital DEL	1.400	5.300	-74%	2.700	-48%
Resource AME	-	4,000	-	-	-

A breakdown of spending and income within the net total is shown in section 2.1.

1.4 Key drivers of spending changes since last year

The net Resource DEL has decreased from last year primarily because the 2019-20 amount included provision for lease overlap and other costs associated with the move to new office accommodation as part of the Government's Estates Strategy and the lease on GLD's principal building expiring in 2019-20.

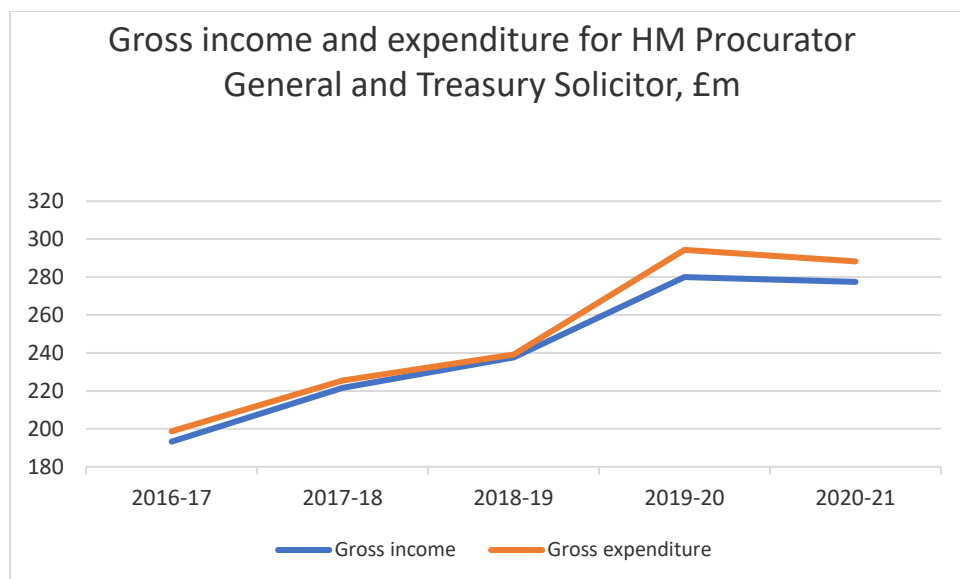
The net capital DEL proposed is 48% less than last year's original budget. Additional capital DEL was required for GLD in 2019-20 to support the fit-out of its new head office.

1.5 New policies and programmes; ambit changes

There have been no changes to the ambit bar the removal of references to vote funding which was allocated in 2019-20 to cover GLD's moving costs.

1.6 Spending and income trends

The charts below show overall Resource DEL spending and income trends for the last five years, and plans presented in Estimates for 2020-21. The increase in profile over that period has resulted from the onboarding of previously devolved legal teams into GLD under the Sharing Legal Services programme, and more recent growth in demand for GLD's legal services from client departments.



1.7 Administration costs and efficiency plans

Administration costs are set to decrease by 26% in 2020-21 compared to last year's final budget.

Spending total Amounts sought this year (Main Estimate 2020-21)		Compared to final budget last year. (Supplementary Estimate 2019-20)		Compared to original budget last year (Main Estimate 2019-20)	
		£ m	%	£m	%
Administration costs	10.580	14.355	-26%	16.571	-36%
<i>Of which</i>					
GLD	2.090	6.783	-69%	9.383	-78%
AGO	5.350	5.009	+7%	4.625	+16%
HMCPST	3.140	2.563	+23%	2.563	+23%

1.8 Funding: Spending Review and Budgets

Most of GLD's funding is from income from client departments.

1.9 Other funding announcements

The AGO has received an allocation of £0.3m programme RDEL funding to support EU Exit. This funding is ring-fenced.

2 Spending and income detail

2.1 Explanations of changes in spending and income

Resource DEL

The table below shows how spending plans for Resource DEL in 2020-21 compare with 2019-20.

	Resource	DEL			Is the change significant? see explanation, note number
	<i>This year (2020-21 Main Estimates budget sought)</i>	<i>Last year (2019-20 Supplementary Estimates budget approved)</i>	Change from last year		
subhead	£ million			%	
A GLD Administration Expenditure	279.520	286.746	-7.226	-3%	
A GLD Administration Income	-277.430	-279.963	-2.533	-1%	
A GLD Administration Net	2.090	6.783	-4.693	-69%	1
B AGO Administration Expenditure	5.350	5.046	+0.304	+6%	
B AGO Administration Income	-	-0.037	-0.037	-	
B AGO Administration Net	5.350	5.009	+0.341	+7%	2
B AGO Programme Gross	0.300	0.300	-	-	
C HMCPSI Administration Expenditure	3.140	2.563	+0.577	+23%	
C HMCPSI Administration Income	-	-	-	-	
C HMCPSI Administration Net	3.140	2.563	+0.577	+23%	3

Note 1. Most of GLD's costs are recovered from clients, but there is a small element of funding from the Vote for public interest work. Net RDEL funding for GLD was higher in 2019-20 to cover costs associated with GLD's Head Office move, including the cost of the lease overlap.

Note 2. The increase in funding for the AGO reflects increasing demand for legal advice on complex international and domestic matters and an increase in casework including Unduly Lenient Sentence referrals and contempt cases.

Note 3. The HMCPSI has been allocated additional RDEL funding for 2020-21 to support its work on cross Criminal Justice System joint inspections.

2.3 Ring fenced budgets

Within the totals, the following elements are ring fenced, i.e. savings in these budgets may not be used to fund pressures on other budgets:

Resource DEL

Ring fenced budgets Amounts sought this year (Main Estimate 2020-21)		Compared to final budget last year. (Supplementary Estimate 2019-20)		Compared to original budget last year (Main Estimate 2019-20)	
		£ m	%	£m	%
Depreciation	3.310	3.310	-	3.310	-
AGO EU Exit work	0.300	0.300	-	0.300	-

3. Priorities and performance

3.1 How spending relates to objectives

Expenditure in each subhead supports the objectives of the relevant entity (GLD, AGO, HMCPSI). These may be found in the published statements and Business Plans on each entity's website.

3.2 Measures of performance

GLD's performance measures, agreed with HM Treasury for 2020-21, reflect its continued commitment to maintain its high professional standards as well as delivering excellent client satisfaction.

The measures are:

- to improve its client satisfaction rating(s)
- to maintain Lexcel (the Law Society's Practice Standard) accreditation
- to recover from clients the full operating costs of chargeable services