



Ministry
of Justice

Sarah Sackman KC MP
Minister of State for Courts
and Legal Services

The Rt Hon the Lord Foster of Bath
Chair of the Justice and Home Affairs Committee
House of Lords
London
SW1A 0PW

MoJ ref: SUB132865

24 March 2026

Dear Lord Foster,

LOCAL JUSTICE AREA REFORM CONSULTATION RESPONSE PUBLICATION

I am pleased to inform you that the Government and the Judiciary published a joint response to the Local Justice Areas (LJAs) consultation on the future administrative structures of the magistracy on 24 March.

Officials across the Ministry of Justice, HMCTS, Judicial Office and Judicial College worked closely to ensure magistrates' views were fully considered. The joint response reflects that collaborative approach and demonstrates how magistrates' feedback has informed the final policy positions.

We will retain the current 75 LJA boundaries by creating new administrative "Benches" aligned with the existing structure. Key aspects of the original proposals—including travel requirements, deployment, and training—have been revised to better support recruitment and retention, safeguard local knowledge, and promote flexibility and inclusivity.

As you will be aware, legislation enabling the abolition of LJAs has already been passed. Following publication of the consultation response, work will continue to take forward the provisions under section 45 of the Judicial Review and Courts Act 2022, supporting more flexible administration of magistrates' court work.

Yours sincerely,

SARAH SACKMAN KC MP
Minister of State