

Andy Slaughter MP
Chair of the Justice Select Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

MoJ ref: Sub 135995

15 July 2026

Dear Andy,

CRIMINAL LEGAL AID ADVOCATE FEES CONSULTATION LAUNCH

In December 2025, we announced our intention to invest an additional up to £34 million per year in criminal legal aid advocate fees, in steady state, once the proposals are fully implemented, subject to consultation.

I wrote to you on Friday 3 July outlining that £3.5m of this investment has already been allocated to enhancing fees for preparatory work. We will now consult on how the remaining funding should be allocated.

I am pleased to inform you that we are launching the consultation today. The consultation will help us gather valuable feedback and perspectives from stakeholders to inform our final decisions.

The consultation sets out proposals for distributing the additional funding across the Advocates' Graduates Fee Scheme (AGFS), the scheme by which advocates who represent legally aided defendants in the Crown Court are remunerated for their work.

The specific consultation proposals are:

- a 6% uplift across all AGFS fees, excluding Daily Attendance Fees;
- amending the 'guilty plea to trial brief fee ratio' from 50:100 to 65:100;
- increasing the basic fees for particular offences;
- uplifting the Plea and Trial Preparation Hearing (PTPH) fee by 25%;
- increasing fees for appeals from magistrates' courts and appeals to the Court of Appeal by 10%;
- increasing committal for sentence hearing fee by 25%;
- uplifting fees for post-Crown Court trial sentencing hearings by 20%;
- targeted uplifts of some pre-trial hearings; and
- widening criteria for bands 1.2 and 1.3 to include cases where the victim or defendant is aged 17 years.

The proposed fee scheme changes will apply to new cases only, to cases that begin after the fee uplifts come into force, and they will not be applied retrospectively.

The proposals set out in the consultation are designed to: support the sustainability of the criminal advocate sector; support the Government's wider reform objectives for the criminal courts and to recognise the changing nature of criminal advocacy; and to help ensure that fees more accurately represent the complexity, skill, and preparation required in criminal proceedings.

The consultation will run for six weeks. We will publish a response to the consultation as soon as possible this year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Sarah Sackman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sarah" and the last name "Sackman" clearly distinguishable.

SARAH SACKMAN KC MP
Minister Of State