

Press release: Increased fees for criminal defence advocates

- government publishes response to AGFS consultation
- spending on fees to increase by £23 million
- money to be targeted at junior advocates

Announcing the move, Lord Chancellor David Gauke also today (24 November 2018) committed to bring forward a 1% increase on all fees to come into effect alongside the new scheme.

The announcement follows a consultation on proposals to increase spending on the revised Advocates Graduated Fee Scheme (AGFS) by £15 million, announced in August.

After carefully considering the responses, the government will now spend an additional £8 million, bringing the total increase to £23 million. The money will be specifically targeted at junior advocates to support continued investment in the profession.

Lord Chancellor, David Gauke said:

Criminal defence advocates play a crucial role in upholding the rule of law, and it is vital that their pay adequately reflects the work they do in a fair and sustainable way.

We have acted on the views we have heard during our engagement with the Bar and will increase spending on criminal advocates' fees by £8 million, bringing the total increase to £23 million.

Alongside this, we are looking at how we can best enable people to resolve their problems in a modern justice system and are spending £1bn to modernise and reform our courts and tribunals system. This will make it more straightforward, accessible, and provide better value for the taxpayer.

The government is committed to working closely with the legal professions to ensure that criminal defence advocacy is fit for the modern age and open to all.

The revised scheme will be reviewed after 18 months.

Notes to editors

- the scheme will come into effect via an SI, scheduled to be laid in December
- the projected increase is based on overall spend on the Advocates Graduated Fee Scheme in 2016 to 2017