

Civil and Family Court Fee Increases

Consultation Paper

CP(L) 24/05

23 September 2005

This consultation will end on 18 November 2005

A consultation produced by Her Majesty's Courts Service, part of the Department for Constitutional Affairs.

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Executive Summary

Her Majesty's Courts Service (HMCS) needs to increase court fees in order to meet its cost recovery targets for the current financial year and beyond. This consultation is about whether the particular increases proposed are most apt to achieve this.

Court fees are set in line with the general principles of Government fee policy set out in the *Fees and Charges Guide* produced by HM Treasury. These require that fees should reflect a financial objective agreed by ministers, which should not exceed the total cost of providing the service. In the case of court fees, the objectives are set after discounting the cost of funding fee exemptions and remissions. Exemptions and remissions, together with legal aid, ensure that access to justice for the less well off is protected. The underlying fee policy and the need to cover costs are not in question in this consultation.

The package has four elements –

- (1) Magistrates' courts civil fees;
- (2) Civil proceedings (Supreme Court and county court) fees;
- (3) Family proceedings court fees (harmonisation with county court equivalents); and
- (4) Private law family fees in the higher courts.

The package will increase fee income by about £50m in a full year. In the higher courts, it would achieve our target of 100% cost recovery (discounting fee exemptions and remissions) for civil proceedings and move towards our target for family proceedings of 66% recovery (discounting exemptions and remissions) by 2007-08.

The fees orders that make these increases will also extend the scope of certain existing fees to cover new applications under the Adoption and Children Act 2002 and the Civil Partnership Act 2004, which are both due to be implemented in December 2005.

Introduction

This paper sets out proposed increases to certain civil and family court fees.

The purpose of the consultation is to:

- identify whether the package of proposed increases is the most apt to raise fee income and to cover costs; and
- seek views on whether a particular increase in an individual fee might have specific untoward consequences.

The underlying fee policy and need to cover costs is not in question in this consultation. The only issue is whether the particular increases proposed are most apt to meet the need to cover more of our costs. On this basis, the consultation is not intended as a full public consultation but is limited to statutory consultees and other key stakeholders. However, the consultation paper is available on the department's website and any other responses received will be considered

Specific questions for comment are summarised at page 17. Replies are sought by 18 November 2005.

An impact assessment is annexed. This concludes that the proposed increases are necessary to ensure that HMCS charges fees that reflect the cost of its services. They will not have a significant impact on any particular sector. Consequently, it is not proposed to produce a partial regulatory assessment. If you disagree with this conclusion, please send your reasons as part of your overall response to this paper.

In the main this consultation follows the Code of Practice on Consultation issued by the Cabinet Office. Baroness Ashton, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Constitutional Affairs, has authorised the following two departures:

- because the issues are limited to the detail of the proposed package and not the underlying policy, the consultation is targeted at a limited audience: the consultees required by statute (the Judicial Heads of Division and the Civil Justice Council) and other key stakeholders;
- because one of our objectives is to increase fee income to cover costs in the current financial year, the consultation period is 8 weeks.

Copies of the consultation paper are being sent to:

The Lord Chief Justice

The Master of the Rolls

The President of the Family Division

The Vice-Chancellor

The Deputy Head of Civil Justice

The Senior Presiding Judge

The Civil Justice Council

The Family Justice Council

Her Majesty's Council of Circuit Judges

The Association of District Judges

The Magistrates' Association

The Justices' Clerks' Society

The Law Society

The Bar Council

Citizens Advice

Courts Boards

HM Inspectorate of Court Administration

Other Government Departments

Others who responded to the 2004 fees consultation.

Background

Her Majesty's Courts Service (HMCS) needs to increase court fees as soon as possible in order to help meet its cost recovery objectives for the current financial year and beyond.

Our targets are:

- to recover 100% of the total cost, discounting fee exemptions and remissions, for civil proceedings in the county courts, High Court and Court of Appeal;
- to recover 66% of the cost (less exemptions and remissions) of family business in these courts by 2007-08; and
- to achieve equivalent recovery rates for the magistrates' courts, bringing them into compliance with the requirements of the *Fees and Charges Guide* for the first time.

The *Fees and Charges Guide* requires all fee charging services to have an agreed financial objective. The norm is full-cost recovery, but ministers can agree lower targets. That is the case here, because our targets discount the cost of fee exemptions and remissions.

HMCS has also developed a strategy for reviewing and reforming the court fee system to ensure it is sustainable in the longer term. The overall aim of the strategy is to ensure that the system can meet its cost recovery objectives while protecting access to justice.

The four key elements are:

- reform of the way in which fees are charged during a case so that the fees more closely match the costs as they arise, in particular by the introduction of trial fees in larger civil cases;
- a review of the system of fee exemptions and remissions to ensure that it is fit for its vital purpose of protecting access to justice and that it is applied consistently across all courts;
- taking forward any necessary increases in existing fees to meet our financial objectives; and
- a fundamental review of the information systems used to calculate cost, set fees and account for fee recovery.

The proposals

The package set out below would increase fee income by £50m in a full year. In the higher courts, it would achieve our target of recovering 100% of the cost net of exemptions and remissions for civil proceedings, and move most of the way towards our target for family proceedings of 66% recovery by 2007-08. It would raise an additional £12m this financial year if implemented at the end of December.

The package has four elements –

1. Magistrates' courts: civil proceedings

These proposals increase fees for civil (non-family) business in the magistrates' courts. The majority of these fees have been set at a level intended to reflect the estimated full cost of providing the service concerned (the 'full-cost price'). Of course, this price will not be paid where the applicant receives a fee exemption or remission; the cost of these cases will continue to be met by the taxpayer, not other fee payers.

The fees are mostly paid by authorities pursuing small debts and there is no justification for a continuing general subsidy from the taxpayer. The individual fee increases are designed to match, so far as practicable, the estimated cost of the processes concerned. Because magistrates' courts fees have historically been very low and have not been reviewed for 12 years, the percentage increases are high. Overall the increases would raise an additional £16.5m in a full year. This represents an increase of 155% on the annual income that would be achieved without the increases.

Civil & Family Fees Consultation Paper

Magistrates' courts: civil proceedings	Current Fee £	Proposed Fee £	Annual additional income £	Year of last increase
Every certificate not otherwise charged	8.00	25.00	204,580	1993
Council Tax orders – application for liability order	0.70	3.00	5,088,846	1993
Council Tax commitment – complaint	10.00	25.00	1,340,967	1993
Council Tax commitment – Warrant of Arrest	10.00	25.00	438,536	1993
Application for Warrant of Entry	2.25	3.00	153,928	1993
Complaint or Application	3.50	25.00	1,735,368	1993
Summons and copy	3.50	25.00	2,242,376	1993
Order and copy	16.50	25.00	430,715	1993
Warrant and Copy	6.50	25.00	419,818	1993
Child Support Act 1991:				
Liability Order per child	0.70	40.00	2,363,973	1993
Paternity per child	30.00	130.00	298,043	1993
Appeal against deduction from earnings	10.00	80.00	406,106	1993
Complaint or application and summons	10.00	95.00	1,463,706	1993
Warrant of Arrest	10.00	*	(16,051)	1993
Commitment order	40.00	*	(10,734)	1993
			16,560,175	

* Fee abolished – cost now covered by Complaint / Application fee

2. Civil proceedings — Supreme Court and county courts

These proposals would return this area to 100% recovery of costs discounting exemptions and remissions, and raise £11.9m in a full year. The fees that were increased in January 2005 are not being increased again; most of the affected fees were last increased in 2003.

There has been some doubt as to whether the amount of the fee taken on the commencement of a money claim should be determined according to the sum claimed inclusive or exclusive of any claim for interest. It is proposed to amend the wording for fee number 1 to provide expressly that a quantified claim for interest shall be taken into account in determining the commencement fee payable for the claim.

Fee no.	Civil Proceedings Fee	Current Fee £	Proposed Fee £	Annual additional income £	Year of last increase
1.1(a)	On the commencement of originating proceedings in the High Court to recover a sum of money where the sum claimed does not exceed £50,000	400	420	113,226	2000
1.2	On the commencement of originating proceedings in a county court to recover a sum of money, except in (CPC) cases				
1.2(a)	does not exceed £300	30.00	35.00	738,516	2003
1.2(b)	Exceeds £300 but not £500	50.00	55.00	292,052	2003
1.2(c)	Exceeds £500 but not £1,000	80.00	85.00	430,528	2003
1.2(d)	Exceeds £1,000 but not £5,000	120.00	125.00	1,051,516	2003
1.2(e)	Exceeds £5,000 but not £15,000	250.00	260.00	963,354	2003
1.2(f)	Exceeds £15,000 but not £50,000	400.00	420.00	686,531	2003
1.5	On the filing of proceedings against a party or parties not named in the originating proceedings	30.00	35.00	15,844	1999
1.7(a)	On an application for leave to issue originating proceedings	30.00	35.00	*	1999
1.7(b)	On an application for an order for the assessment of costs payable to a solicitor by his client or on the commencement of costs-only proceedings	30.00	35.00	*	1999

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Fee no.	Civil Proceedings Fee	Current Fee £	Proposed Fee £	Annual additional income £	Year of last increase
2.5(a)	On filing an appellants notice in relation to claims allocated to the small claims track	80.00	100.00	*	1999
2.5(b)	On filing an appellants in relation to other claims	100.00	120.00	*	1999
2.6	On an application on notice where no other fee is specified	60.00	65.00	1,341,928	2000
2.7	On an application by consent or without notice for a judgment or order where no other fee is specified	30.00	35.00	2,697,788	2000
2.8	On an application for a summons or order for a witness to attend court to be examined on oath or an order for evidence to be taken by deposition	30.00	35.00	133,464	1999
2.9	On an application to vary a judgment or suspend enforcement	30.00	35.00	629,879	2000
5.1	On the filing of a request for detailed assessment where the party filing the request is legally aided or is funded by the LSC	100.00	105.00	23,814	2000
5.3	On a request for the issue of a default costs certificate	40.00	45.00	17,358	1999
5.4	On an appeal against a decision made in detailed assessment proceedings	100.00	105.00	16,796	2000
5.5	On applying for the court's approval of a certificate of costs payable from the Community Legal Service Fund	30.00	35.00	19,304	2003
5.6	On a request or application to set aside a default costs certificate	60.00	65.00	*	2003
7.1 (a)	Issue of a warrant where the amount does not exceed £125	30.00	35.00	124,381	2000
7.1 (b)	Issue of a warrant where the amount exceeds £125	50.00	55.00	327,168	2000
7.2	On a request for a further attempt at execution of a warrant at a new address	20.00	25.00	348,438	1999
7.3	On an application for an order requiring a judgment debtor or other person to attend court to provide information	40.00	45.00	158,373	1999

Fee no.	Civil Proceedings Fee	Current Fee £	Proposed Fee £	Annual additional income £	Year of last increase
7.4(a)	On an application for a third party debt order or the appointment of a receiver by way of equitable execution	50.00	55.00	29,345	1999
7.4(b)	On an application for a charging order	50.00	55.00	227,583	1999
7.5	On an application for a judgment summons	90.00	95.00	1,242	2000
7.6	On the issue of a warrant of possession or a warrant of delivery	90.00	95.00	560,425	2003
7.7	On an application for an attachment of earnings order	60.00	65.00	371,653	2003
7.9	On the application for the recovery of a tribunal award	30.00	35.00	130,031	1999
13.1	On a request for the issue of a certificate of satisfaction or on a request for cancellation of the entry of a judgment in the Register	10.00	15.00	472,072	1999
Total				11,922,609	

* No volume data available. There will be additional income generated from these fees but this will not significantly alter the overall total income.

3. Family proceedings court fees (harmonisation with county court equivalents)

These proposals would, wherever appropriate, harmonise family fees in the family proceedings courts with equivalent fees in the county courts. This is an important change that will support our proposals to develop a more streamlined and unified service across all family courts.

The unified family service will be based on integrated administration across all the family courts focused around specialist family centres. A key objective, which is supported by harmonising the fees, is to enable the more effective allocation of cases to the lowest appropriate level of judiciary. This in turn will benefit court users by enabling many cases to be dealt with more quickly.

Until now, family fees in the magistrates' courts have been extremely low in relation to the cost. The proposals will raise £4m in a full year and represent very high percentage increase – about 650% overall.

Nevertheless, the fees will still be set at significantly less than full-cost price levels. The proportion of costs recovered is difficult to estimate, but is likely to be lower than that for family cases in the higher courts because of the different case mix. We believe this large increase is justified in order to ensure the same fee is charged for the same type of case (requiring broadly the same level of cost to administer) in both the magistrates' and county courts. This is important because many cases will be transferred from one type of court to the other in order to be heard as soon as possible before the most appropriate level of judiciary.

The Magistrates' Courts Fees Order will also be extended to cover applications for financial relief under Schedule 6 of the Civil Partnership Act 2004, which is being implemented in December 2005. Provision will be made to make reference to the Adoption and Children Act 2002, which is also due to be implemented in December 2005.

Magistrates' courts family fees	Current Fee £	Proposed Fee £	Annual additional income £	Year of last increase
Children Act 1989:				
Applications under Parts I & II	30.00	175.00	1,105,820	1993
Section 31 Care and Supervision Order	50.00	150.00	1,494,407	1993
Section 36 Education Supervision Order	50.00	150.00	62,896	1993
Section 43 Child Assessment Order	50.00	150.00	3,690	1993
Part XA (registration of child minder)	50.00	150.00	18,114	1993
Schedule 8 – appeal concerning foster parenting	50.00	150.00	25,829	1993
Applications to vary, extend or discharge order	20.00	150.00	282,797	1993

Magistrates' courts family fees	Current Fee £	Proposed Fee £	Annual additional income £	Year of last increase
Applications for contact or refusal of contact – child in care	20.00	150.00	55,818	1993
Domestic Proceedings & Magistrates' Courts Act 1978 (to be extended to cover applications under the Civil Partnership Act 2004):				
Application for financial relief	30.00	175.00	372,579	1993
Adoption and Children Act 2002 (previously Adoption Act 1976):				
Previously – applications under section 21 of the 1976 Act	20.00	N/A	(169,266)	1993
Previously – applications (except section 21 of the 1976 Act)	30.00	N/A	(276,927)	1993
Applications for commencing proceedings	-	140.00	446,193	-
Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990:				
Application	30.00	175.00	120,140	1993
Total			4,088,479	

4. Private law family fees in the higher courts

Our target is to increase cost recovery in family proceedings in the higher courts from about 45% to 66% by 2007/08. This target assumes that fees for private law family cases will be increased to full-cost price levels, but that fees for domestic violence, adoption and public law child care cases will remain at lower levels because of the particular sensitivities of these types of case.

So these proposals increase most private law family fees to levels that equate to the full cost of the services provided. Of course, many individual applicants will not be required to pay the fees because they will qualify for legal aid or fee exemption or be granted remission. Exemptions and remissions accounted for 13% of the total cost of family cases in 2004-05. The proposed changes will raise an additional £18m in a full year, a 43% increase overall, and will bring cost recovery for family cases in the higher courts to around 62% of cost (after discounting for exemptions and remissions).

The Family Proceeding Fees Order will also be extended to cover applications for the dissolution or annulment of a civil partnership or for the legal separation of civil partners under the Civil Partnership Act 2004 (fee numbers 1.2, 1.4, 4.1, 4.2, 6.1 and 6.3 below).

Provision will also be made to the new Adoption and Children Act 2002 (fee numbers 3.1 and 3.3 are not listed below, because no increase is proposed).

Fee no	Family Proceedings fee	Current Fee £	Proposed Fee £	Annual additional income £	Year of last increase
1.1	On filing originating proceedings where no other fee is specified	130.00	200.00	89,962	2003
1.2	On presenting any petition, other than a second petition	210.00	300.00	6,919,885	2005
1.4	On amending a petition or presenting a second or subsequent petition with leave	50.00	80.00	259,746	1999
1.5	On filing an answer to a petition or a cross-petition	150.00	200.00	67,499	2005
2.1 (a) – (c)	Parental responsibility, guardians, section 8 orders etc.	120.00	175.00	2,401,436	2005
2.2 (a) & (b)	Financial provision for children	120.00	175.00	Included in 2.1 above	2005
2.12(a) (i)	On commencing an appeal under section 94 relating to provisions to which the following fees apply – fees 2.1(a) – (c), 2.2(a) – (b)	120.00	175.00	Included in 2.1 above	2005
4.1	On an application for an order without notice or by consent except where separately listed in this schedule	30.00	40.00	2,681,913	1999
4.2	On a request for directions for trial except where separately listed in this schedule	30.00	40.00	19,759	1999
4.4	On an application on notice for ancillary relief or on filing a notice of intention to proceed	210.00	380.00	3,611,596	2005
6.1	On making a search in the central index of decrees absolute and final dissolution orders kept at the Principal Registry of the Family Division	20.00	25.00	163,014	1999

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Fee no	Family Proceedings fee	Current Fee £	Proposed Fee £	Annual additional income £	Year of last increase
6.2	On making a search in the central index of parental responsibility agreements kept at the Principal Registry of the Family Division	20.00	25.00	48,077	1999
6.3	On making a search in the index of decrees absolute and final dissolution order kept at any designated court	5.00	10.00	*	1999
8.1	On the filing of a request for a detailed assessment where the party filing the request is legally aided or is funded by the LSC	100.00	140.00	1,147,517	2003
8.3	On a request for the issue of a default costs certificate	40.00	60.00	562,954	2000
9.1	Registered under the Maintenance Orders Acts 1950 or 1958	30.00	35.00	5,402	1999
9.2	sent abroad for enforcement under the Maintenance Orders (Reciprocal Enforcement) Act 1972	30.00	35.00	839	1999
11.1(a)	Where the amount for which the warrant does not exceed £125	30.00	35.00	**	2003
11.1(b)	Where the amount for which the warrant exceeds £125	50.00	55.00	**	2003
11.2	On a request for a further attempt at execution of a warrant at a new address following a notice of the reason for non-execution	20.00	25.00	**	1999
11.3	On an application to question a judgment debtor or other person	40.00	45.00	**	1999
11.4	On an application for a garnishee order nisi or a charging order nisi	50.00	55.00	74	1999
11.5	On an application for a judgment summons	90.00	95.00	389	2003
11.6	On the issue of a warrant of possession or a warrant of delivery	90.00	95.00	**	2003
11.7	On an application for an attachment of earnings order to secure money due under an order made in family proceedings	60.00	65.00	1062	2003
Total				17,980,168	

- * No volume data available. There will be additional income generated from these fees but this will not significantly alter the total.
- ** Income included in Civil Proceedings total.

Questionnaire

We would welcome responses to the following questions.

Q1 Given the underlying fee policy objectives and the need to cover costs, do you consider any of the individual fee increases proposed to be inappropriate?

If so please explain why and what alternative changes you would recommend instead to raise the necessary income?

Jurisdiction/ Name of fee	Level advocated and Reason

Q2 Are there any other fees that should be changed and why?

Jurisdiction/ New Fee	Reason

Q3 Do you agree that it is appropriate to harmonise family fees in the magistrates' courts with those in the county courts?

Do you agree that the proposals achieve this objective?

If you do not, please state reasons?

Thank you for participating in this consultation exercise

About you

Please use this section to tell us about yourself

Full name	
Job title or capacity in which you are responding to this consultation exercise	
Date	
Company name / organisation (if applicable):	
Address	
Postcode	
If you would like us to acknowledge receipt of your response.	(please tick box)
Address to which the acknowledgement should be sent, if different from above	

If you are a representative of a group, please tell us the name of the group and give a summary of the people or organisations that it represents.

How to respond

Please send your response by 18 November 2005 to:

Andrew Lee
Civil Law & Justice Division – HMCS

Department for Constitutional Affairs
1 st. Floor Southside
105 Victoria Street
London SW1E 6QT

Tel: 020 7210 1507

Fax: 020 7201 1988

Email: andrew.lee@hmcourts-service.gsi.gov.uk

Extra copies

Further paper copies of this consultation can be obtained from this address and it is also available on-line at

<http://www.dca.gov.uk/consult/civilfam/civilfam.htm>

Publication of response

A paper summarising the responses to this consultation will be published in due course and if possible within three months of the closing date of the consultation. The response paper will be available on-line at

<http://www.dca.gov.uk/consult/civilfam/civilfam.htm>

Representative groups

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent when they respond.

Confidentiality

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department will process your personal data in accordance with the DPA and in the majority of circumstances, this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.

Impact Assessment

Her Majesty's Courts Service (HMCS) needs to increase court fees in order to meet its cost recovery targets for the current financial year and beyond.

The proposed package would increase fee income by £50m in a full year. An additional £12m would be recovered during the current financial year (2005-06) if the increases were implemented at the end of December 2005.

Court fees are set in line with general Government fees and charges policy, and the specific cost recovery targets for the next few years were agreed as part of the 2004 spending review. If it failed to meet its targets, HMCS would need instead to reduce spending, which would be bound to have a harmful impact on court performance and service to customers. Therefore, this assessment does not consider any alternative options to the proposed package.

All the increases proposed are to existing fees. There are no new fees or changes to systems or procedures involved. So the only impact is the additional cost to fee payers. The following sections identify this total cost and whether some fees fall in particular on business or the public sector.

Proposal 1 — Magistrates' courts: civil proceedings

Fees charged for civil proceedings in the Magistrates' Courts have been increased to bring the majority of them into line with the estimated cost of the work involved. The increases are worth about £16.5m a year.

Many of these fees are paid by public authorities enforcing debts such as Council Tax and Child Support. The warrant of entry fee falls in particular on utility companies. However, the cost of these fees can be passed on, in turn, to the debtor.

Proposal 2 — Civil proceedings – Supreme Court and county courts

These increases are to fees that were not increased in January 2005. The percentage increases involved are no more than the level of general inflation since the fees affected were last raised. The increases are worth about £11.9m a year.

These fees are mainly paid by businesses and other institutions recovering debts, and are recoverable from the debtor.

Proposal 3 — Family proceedings court fees: (harmonisation with county court equivalents)

The fees have been increased to align with those for the same type of case in the County Courts. The increases are worth about £4m a year.

Family fees, by definition, are not paid by business, charities or the voluntary sector. Most are paid by individuals (who do not qualify for legal aid or fee exemption or remission).

Fees in public law child care cases are paid by local authorities. The increases here are worth about an extra £1.4m per year, spread across 199 local authorities. The fees in these cases will remain well below the cost of providing the service.

Proposal 4 — Private law family fees in the higher courts

These increases will bring the fees to a level that equates to the full cost of the services provided. The increases are worth about £18m a year.

A significant number of litigants will not be required to pay the fees because they qualify for legal aid or fee exemption or will be granted a fee remission. Exemptions and remissions account for 13% of the total cost of family cases in 2004-05.

None of these fees fall on business or the public sector (except in so far as paid under legal aid.) We estimate that approximately £800k of the proposed increases will fall on legal aid, mainly in the public and private law family work.

Conclusion

The proposed increases will have a negligible impact on business. The only significant percentage increase in a fee that mainly affects business is that for utility company warrants of entry. The increase is worth £15,000 a year across the whole industry. There will be an increase in fees payable by public authorities, but most of this will, in principle, be recoverable from individual debtors. There will be a total increase of about £1m in the fees paid (collectively) by local authorities in child care cases, although these fees will remain well below full-cost price levels.

The proposed increased are necessary to ensure that HMCS changes fees that reflect the cost of its services. They will not have a significant impact on any particular sector.

The Consultation Criteria

The six consultation criteria are as follows:

Consult widely throughout the process, allowing a minimum of 12 weeks for written consultation at least once during the development of the policy.

Be clear about what your proposals are who may be affected, what questions are being asked and the time scale for responses.

Ensure that your consultation is clear, concise and widely accessible.

Give feedback regarding the responses received and how the consultation process influenced the policy.

Monitor your department's effectiveness at consultation, including through the use of a designated consultation co-ordinator.

Ensure your consultation follows better regulation best practice, including carrying out a Regulatory Impact Assessment if appropriate.

These criteria must be reproduced within all consultation documents.

Consultation Co-ordinator contact details

If you have any complaints or comments about the consultation **process** rather than about the topic covered by this paper, you should contact the Department for Constitutional Affairs Consultation Co-ordinator, Laurence Fiddler, on 020 7210 2622, or email him at: consultation@dca.gsi.gov.uk.

Alternatively, you may wish to write to the address below:

**Laurence Fiddler
Consultation Co-ordinator
Department for Constitutional Affairs
5th Floor Selborne House
54-60 Victoria Street
London
SW1E 6QW**

If your complaints or comments refer to the topic covered by this paper rather than the consultation process, please direct them to the contact given under **the How to respond** section of this paper at page19.

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