



REDACTED

VIA EMAIL

6 December 2024

Dear REDACTED

### **Freedom of Information request – Spend on Legal Aid for Solemn Cases**

I am writing in response to your email received 12 November 2024 where you asked these three questions:

1. In each year since 2019-20, including the current financial year to date, how much has been spent on legal aid for 'solemn cases'?
2. In each year since 2019-20, including the current financial year to date, how many defendants were given legal aid?
3. In relation to Q2, what was the outcome of each case? E.g. acquitted, convicted, case ongoing etc. Please also break this down by crime e.g. 18 murderers convicted, 7 rapists acquitted etc

The answers to your questions are as follows.

Q.1 The total spent on legal aid for solemn cases, including VAT, in each financial year is shown in Table 1 below. Please note 2024-25 is a partial year figure – this was calculated for 1/4/24 to 12/11/24 inclusive. I have shown you the exact figure we have recorded in the first column, and then this figure rounded to a value in millions in the second column – as I think this might be more useful for you.

**Table 1: Legal Aid Spend on Solemn Cases by Financial Year**

Financial year	Recorded spend (£)	Spend (£millions)
2019-20	33,101,878.68	33.1
2020-21	19,590,337.09	19.6
2021-22	29,162,594.46	29.2
2022-23	33,779,410.19	33.8
2023-24	44,018,832.32	44.0
2024-25*	31,014,924.47	31.0

Q.2 The number of defendants who were given legal aid is shown in Table 2 below. Again please note 2024-25 is a partial year figure – this was calculated for 1/4/24 to 12/11/24 inclusive.

**Table 2: Number of defendants given solemn legal aid**

Financial year	Number of defendants
2019-20	10,281
2020-21	6,935
2021-22	8,945
2022-23	10,117
2023-24	12,208
2024-25	8,105

Defendants have been counted on the basis that their main case has finished and that their main solicitor account has been paid.

Q.3 The case outcome by the type of crime with which they were charged, for the number of defendants who were given legal aid, is shown in Table 3 below. Again please note 2024-25 is a partial year figure – this was calculated for 1/4/24 to 12/11/24 inclusive.

Deserted outcomes include both simpliciter and pro loco et tempore.

Other outcomes include no outcome recorded and cases transferred.

**Table 3: Defendant outcomes by charged crime type**

Table 3: Defendant outcomes by charged crime type

Crime type	Case outcome								Total
	Guilty	Pled guilty to a lesser charge	Not Guilty	Not proven	Deserted	Reduced to summary	Other		
<b>Assault</b>									
2019/20	1,270	434	345	93	241	429	539	3,351	
2020/21	909	273	126	17	132	397	500	2,354	
2021/22	1,319	435	233	48	262	394	618	3,309	
2022/23	1,559	497	306	62	314	577	680	3,995	
2023/24	1,658	826	390	82	450	682	714	4,802	
2024/25	1,010	549	225	46	359	412	388	2,989	
<b>Bail (including breach of bail)</b>									
2019/20	98	27	21	0	26	31	273	476	
2020/21	78	11	12	1	36	25	224	387	
2021/22	77	17	13	1	20	41	243	412	
2022/23	71	8	10	0	38	49	267	443	
2023/24	75	16	17	2	52	71	344	577	
2024/25	58	11	12	1	42	33	172	329	
<b>Drugs related matter</b>									
2019/20	510	119	138	11	66	77	227	1,148	
2020/21	290	62	61	4	58	65	160	700	
2021/22	343	96	85	8	77	50	175	833	
2022/23	379	74	117	10	106	40	221	947	
2023/24	427	160	146	20	102	54	202	1,111	
2024/25	340	121	100	10	115	29	148	863	
<b>Embezzlement/fraud</b>									
2019/20	82	35	9	0	11	4	31	172	
2020/21	47	14	2	1	7	3	33	107	
2021/22	64	10	13	0	6	13	35	141	
2022/23	66	14	13	4	4	16	24	141	
2023/24	64	30	11	3	9	9	30	156	
2024/25	46	15	6	2	10	11	23	113	
<b>Murder/attempted murder/culpable homicide</b>									
2019/20	169	41	50	12	22	1	33	328	
2020/21	77	13	19	4	12	3	34	162	
2021/22	102	29	24	6	21	0	25	207	
2022/23	133	30	40	13	12	1	24	253	
2023/24	145	52	24	15	16	0	38	290	
2024/25	102	36	29	14	18	0	18	217	
<b>Offensive behaviour (incl vandalism, offensive weapons, breach of the peace)</b>									
2019/20	491	105	76	10	56	106	174	1,018	
2020/21	348	93	36	6	61	111	204	859	
2021/22	499	129	77	12	61	132	232	1,142	
2022/23	489	132	91	23	79	179	251	1,244	

2023/24	587	212	120	24	133	217	305	1,598
2024/25	412	148	59	16	94	152	136	1,017
<b>Other</b>								
2019/20	318	77	64	11	54	54	148	726
2020/21	183	37	11	1	32	46	109	419
2021/22	214	48	35	5	49	57	145	553
2022/23	211	57	58	10	55	45	149	585
2023/24	276	78	54	10	66	74	152	710
2024/25	204	57	31	6	59	40	89	486
<b>Road traffic</b>								
2019/20	63	13	3	3	6	8	27	123
2020/21	40	14	3	0	1	12	16	86
2021/22	62	14	3	4	3	3	11	100
2022/23	59	16	4	1	8	17	15	120
2023/24	74	15	4	4	8	16	17	138
2024/25	59	19	2	1	2	8	13	104
<b>Robbery</b>								
2019/20	288	70	79	18	70	42	97	664
2020/21	196	55	40	3	44	33	97	468
2021/22	218	79	46	9	55	32	95	534
2022/23	235	63	80	5	90	35	109	617
2023/24	219	106	68	14	99	48	120	674
2024/25	161	99	52	10	65	32	68	487
<b>Sexual offences</b>								
2019/20	571	84	118	76	93	62	241	1,245
2020/21	353	61	35	33	57	51	189	779
2021/22	546	68	80	71	63	54	201	1,083
2022/23	606	85	89	91	64	55	214	1,204
2023/24	692	136	98	91	106	73	262	1,458
2024/25	513	91	65	74	71	53	180	1,047
<b>Theft/housebreaking</b>								
2019/20	478	105	71	9	57	112	198	1,030
2020/21	276	53	30	0	37	69	149	614
2021/22	270	65	34	3	47	72	140	631
2022/23	250	54	35	4	43	58	124	568
2023/24	271	105	51	2	54	96	115	684
2024/25	171	71	26	3	38	46	98	453

I have appended below details about your rights to request a review of this response.

Yours sincerely,

REDACTED  
Manager of Analytics

If you would like me to send this letter or email to you in a different format or language, you can make a request by responding to the email. Where possible we will try and do this within five working days of receiving your request.

Your right to request a review of decision

If you are dissatisfied with the way in which we have handled your request for information, you may ask us to review our decision. A request that we review our decision should be made in writing within 40 working days of the date of this letter or, if we have not responded to your request, within 40 days of

the date by which we should have responded (that would normally be 20 days after receiving your request).

We will review our decision and tell you the outcome within 20 working days of receiving your request.

If, having done so, you remain dissatisfied, you may ask the Scottish Information Commissioner to review our decision. You must submit your request in writing to the Commissioner within 6 months of first receiving notice about the matter you are complaining about.

The Commissioner will not deal with an application unless SLAB's review process has been used and exhausted – in other words, until you have asked us to review our decision and you are not satisfied with our response or have not received a response within 20 working days of your request.

The Commissioner's contact details are:

The Scottish Information Commissioner

Kinburn Castle

Doubledykes Road

St Andrews

Fife

KY16 9DS

Telephone: 01334 464610

Fax: 01334 464611

Website [www.itspublicknowledge.info](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info)

E-mail: [enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info](mailto:enquiries@itspublicknowledge.info)

Your appeal can also be dealt with online. The Commissioner has an online appeal service which is available 24/7 and offers requesters real time help and advice about their appeal. This can be accessed at: [www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal](http://www.itspublicknowledge.info/Appeal)