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Colin Lancaster
Chief Executive
Scottish Legal Aid Board
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1 April 2026

Dear Colin,

Grant under section 4A of the Legal Aid (Scotland) Act 1986

Directions from the Scottish Ministers

The Scottish Ministers give the following directions under section 4A (11) of the Legal Aid (Scotland) Act 1986 (“the Act”), in relation to a plan as to grant criteria to be prepared by the Scottish Legal Aid Board (“the Board”) and submitted to Ministers for approval in accordance with section 4A (7) of the Act.

The Board must include in such a plan that a grant may be made for the provision of the Early Resolution and Advice Programme. The key aspects for which grant funding can be provided and which should feature in such a plan are as follows:

Stream 1 – Project Objectives

Projects are funded to work towards the objectives under Stream 1 of the Early Resolution and Advice Programme (ERAP) to provide direct assistance and representation for people at risk of or facing court action related to debt in respect of mortgage or tenancy repossession. Projects also provide direct assistance to tackle the multiple and serious debt issues underlying these court actions.

- Project objective 1: The project provides representation and other advice services to people from all communities who are facing court action for mortgage repossession or repossession of a tenancy
- Project objective 2: The project provides sustainable resolutions for people from all communities with debt – where these debts have or will put them at risk of losing their homes
- Project objective 3: The project provides a co-ordinated service, in conjunction with other services, to people facing problems related to a presenting or potential court action for mortgage repossession/eviction/debt

- Project objective 4: The project provides a service which continuously improves both client outcomes and standards of service throughout the project's duration.

Specified limits

In accordance with section 4A (4) and (5) of the Act, the Scottish Ministers specify that the maximum amount that may be paid out of the Scottish Legal Aid Fund for a grant under the plan referred to above is £61 million. The period in relation to which this limit applies is 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027.

I look forward to receiving the Board's plan in accordance with the terms of this direction within 3 months of this letter.

Yours sincerely,



DENISE SWANSON
Deputy Director
Civil Law and Legal System
Justice Directorate