



A SUMMARY OF LEGAL ASSISTANCE IN 2015-16

In 2015-16, legal assistance was granted more than 220,000 times to help people up and down Scotland defend themselves, pursue their rights, or tackle a range of problems.

It was our job to manage the system by granting legal aid to those that were eligible and by paying the legal profession for the legal work that they did for their clients.

You can find more detailed statistics at <http://www.slab.org.uk/about-us/what-we-do/annual-report/>.

If you would like further explanation of legal aid trends, please contact us.

GRANTS OF LEGAL ASSISTANCE

There were 221,745 grants of legal assistance made, of which:

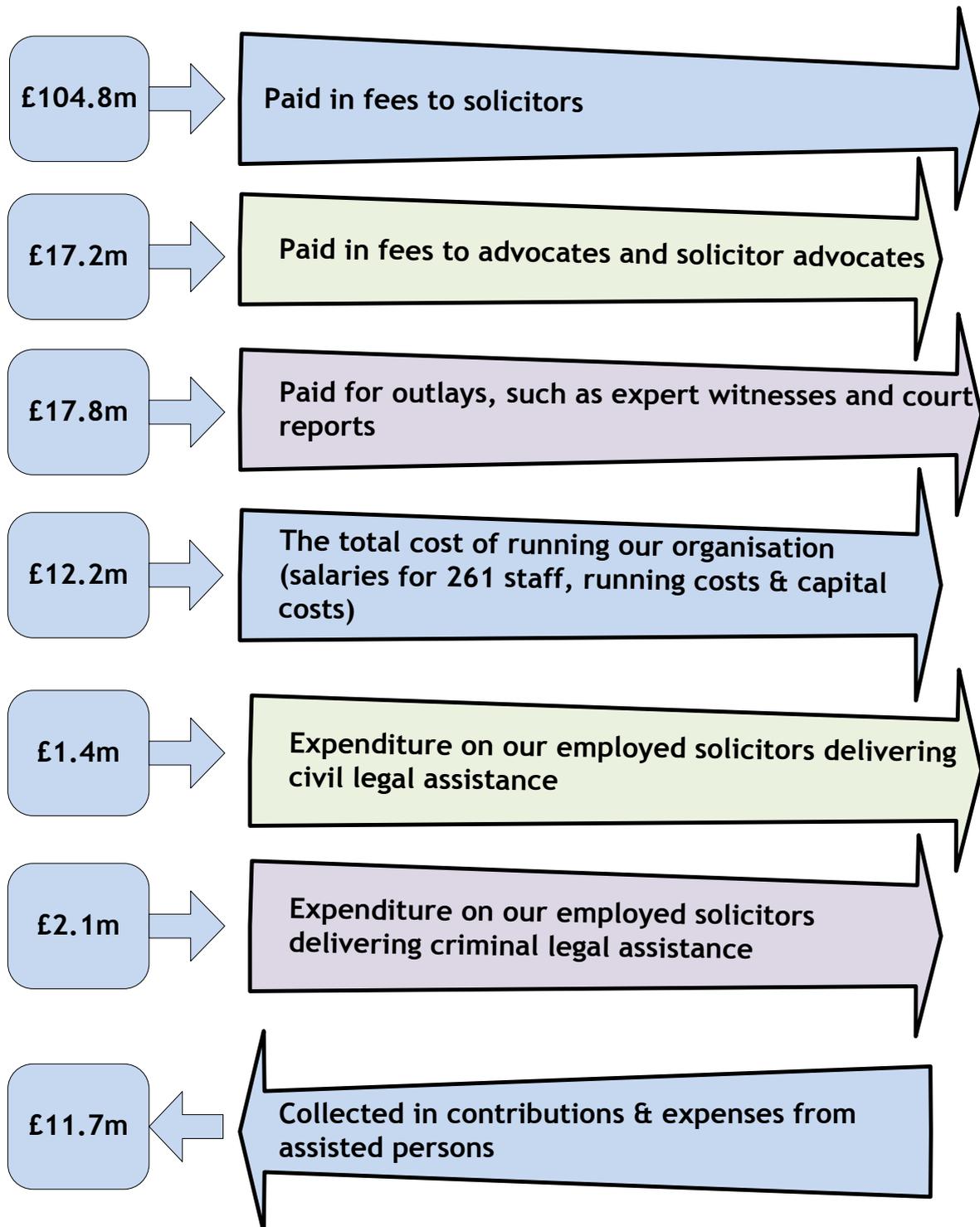


LEGAL ASSISTANCE EXPENDITURE - BY LEGAL AID TYPE

The total cost of legal assistance was £137.8m, of which:



LEGAL ASSISTANCE EXPENDITURE - KEY COSTS AND INCOME

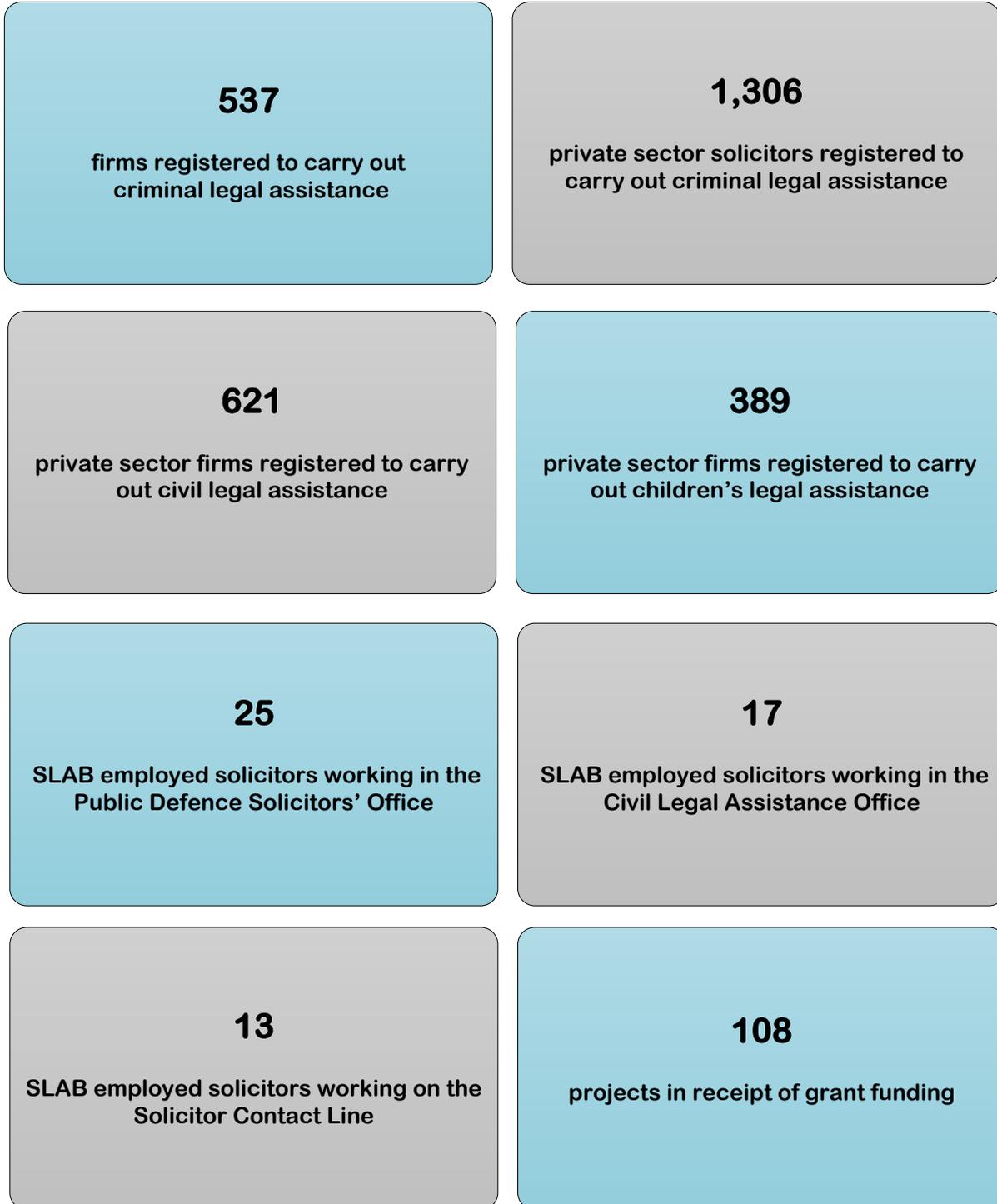




A SUMMARY OF LEGAL ASSISTANCE IN 2015-16

DELIVERY OF LEGAL ASSISTANCE IN NUMBERS

At the end of March 2016 there were:



OTHER ACTIVITY

The Scottish Women's Rights Centre was launched in Glasgow to ensure that women in Scotland experiencing gender based violence are able to access legal advice and information.



April 2015

National legal aid conference East Kilbride



May 2015

• Our new Chief Executive, Colin Lancaster, appointed



Double Jeopardy (Scotland) Act 2011
2011 asp 16

June 2015

• Legal aid was made available to cover criminal cases of 'Double Jeopardy'

We commissioned a survey to learn more about the impact of solicitors in the new system of children's hearings



July 2015

- We published findings of a survey of users of our Solicitor Contact Line
- Lindsay Montgomery retires after 16 years as chief executive



Aug 2015

Key parts of the Courts Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 were commenced, including the new criminal Sheriff Appeal Court



Sept 2015

- The Scottish government announced continued funding for 90 grant funded projects that SLAB is responsible for managing
- We published our plans to engage with the legal profession on how to simplify the legal aid system



Oct 2015

We signed a pledge to deliver our new statutory duties as a Corporate Parent



Nov 2015

We published guidance for solicitors on legal aid in child contact cases

Civil Legal Assistance Handbook

The Handbook contains guidance to the legal profession about advice and assistance an solicitor acting in a legal aid case.

It contains:

- guidance on negotiation, compliance and quality assurance
- all aspects of applying for advice and assistance and legal aid, and proceeds amended (November 2010) guidance on reasonableness and prob
- amended (November 2010) guidance on special urgency (part IV g
- new (October 2010) chapter on financial verification in advice and i
- they are eligible for advice and assistance or ADWOS - includes a li
- new (September 2010) guidance on applications for civil legal aid t
- paragraph 4.114-4.115)
- increased limit for Hunter v Hanley reports in medical negligence ad
- accounts, including advice and assistance accounts guidance
- lawback and expenses
- consent of court
- contacting us, and complaints
- relative to civil advice and assistance, legal aid and consumer of court

Dec 2015

We launched phase 2 of our online accounts pilot, trialling Solemn, Criminal Appeals, Solemn & Summary time and line, and A&A hardship applications



Jan 2016

A project commenced to test the use of video links between our Solicitor Contact Line and a police station



Feb 2016

Iain Robertson leaves SLAB after 10 years as Chairman to be replaced by Ray Macfarlane



Mar 2016

Iain Robertson Ray Macfarlane



A SUMMARY OF LEGAL ASSISTANCE IN 2015-16

OUR PERFORMANCE

- **Key Performance Indicators**
 - All application and account types met or exceeded our headline performance indicator for the year.
- **Processing times**
 - We significantly shortened our service standards for processing accounts. For Criminal ABWOR fixed fees we shortened our service standard from 30 working days to 15 working days, and we shortened the service standard for all other account types from 30 working days to 20 working days.
 - We reduced the average time to process the payment of an account (excluding negotiated accounts) from 16 working days to 11 working days.
- **Transparency**
 - We responded to 91% of requests under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act within 20 working days.
 - We fully or partially released information requested in 85% of requests.
- **Complaints**
 - We responded to 90% of complaints within the relevant five or 20 working day service standard.