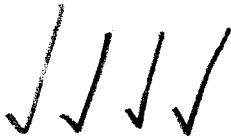


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ACCOUNTANT IN BANKRUPTCY
Scotland's Insolvency Service



The Accountant in Bankruptcy

Glynis McKeand
Secretary to the Sheriff Court Rules Council
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Your ref:

Our ref:

Date: 11 December 2004

Dear Glynis,

Sheriff Court Rules Council Consultation Paper.

I was unable to track down an electronic version of this consultation document so please accept this as the response from Accountant and Bankruptcy (AiB) to your consultation. Direct answers to the Consultation questions are on pages 2 and 3.

AiB very much welcomes the proposed increased use of IT by the Courts. AiB is currently moving down this route and we have identified evidence for savings in both time and money through improved use of IT.

We would very much like to be involved at the early stages of your work with regards to the development of document formats, to ensure format compatibility with our own system. We are already considerably down the road with regards direct inputting of data, reducing the need for any manual keying.

I will be grateful if you could keep me informed with regards progress in this area.

Many thanks.

Graeme Perry
Head of Operational Policy Unit.

graeme.perry@aib.gov.uk



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

10- RESPONSE-ACC IN BANK

Sheriff Court Rules Council Consultation Paper.

Recommendation	Response
1.1	Yes
1.2	Improve speed and consistency of documents being transmitted. Reduce manual input time and postal and paper costs. More environmentally friendly.
1.3	Making the system compatible with customers' IT systems. Ensuring security. The logistics of rollout, including training. Ensuring electronically transmitted documents accepted in law
1.4	All parties should receive documents at same time. Improve communications, reduce paper work.
1.5	No
2.1	Yes.
2.2 - 2.3 - 2.4	as 1.2-1.3 and `4
2.5	No.
3.1	Yes.
3.2	Easily accessible to all with minimal or nil cost implication.
3.3	May need to educate some individuals how to use the system.
3.4	No
4.1	Yes.
4.2	Consistency and uniformity across Scotland. Improves communication links with remote areas.
4.3	Needs robust firewall security. Need to ensure all customers are educated and can access before shutting down old system.
4.4	No
5.1	Yes.
5.2	Gives time to assess advantages, disadvantages and to make changes. History of public service new software has demonstrated never switch off old system until satisfied new system both works and achieves desired results. Gives time for customers to learn new system and to purchase and install any new software/hardware.
5.3	Reluctance of customers to change their systems until last minute
5.4	2 years is OK but final switch over date should not be fixed in stone but made variable dependent on progress and responses from customers.
5.5	Problems with customers being unable to switch their systems to the Courts timetable for changeover. Where requested, the Courts should be able to provide hard copies of papers for a charge (which can be waived in exceptions).



- 5.6 No
- 6.1 Yes
- 6.2 Removal for the need for any hardcopy documents.
- 6.3 Constant change of staff requiring need to approve, add and delete authorised secured signatories. Need to ensure updates on who is deemed an authorised signatory.
- 6.4 No
- 6.5 N/K
- 7.1 The same information which is already automatically available to the public. Other information being made available as appropriate if requested in writing under FOI Act and DP Act.
- 7.2 Assessment must be made as to what information can be accessed and security in place to ensure confidentiality where required.
- 7.3 No
- 8.1 No. This should be an option offered but not enforced.
- 8.2 Reduced costs and possibly time spent on administration of cases. The system may encourage people to make claims if there will be no requirement to attend in person and reduction in cost and time in travel and cases can be actioned outwith core work time.
- 8.3 People uncomfortable with, or not having access to, IT equipment may be reluctant to use, or may not understand, the system.
- 8.4 Any virtual court must satisfy litigants that they are receiving a fair hearing and that their case is being heard and actioned by the appropriate people and it is not just a means to reduce court costs. There should be the option to change from a virtual court back to current system, if either litigant is unhappy with the "virtual system".
- 9 No comments on this.
- 10 No comment on this.

