LEGAL OMBUDSMAN

OFFICE FOR LEGAL COMPLAINTS

DRAFT STRATEGY 2027-30

DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET 2027/28

CONSULTATION

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About the Legal Ombudsman

The Office for Legal Complaints (OLC) established the Legal Ombudsman scheme (LeO) under the terms of the Legal Services Act 2007 (the Act).

The Act also established the Legal Services Board (LSB) to oversee the regulation of the legal profession in England and Wales. Both the OLC and the LSB are Arm's Length Bodies of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ). LeO's work supports and aligns with the regulatory objectives.

LeO covers the majority of legal services provided in England and Wales. The rules and limits about what complaints LeO can help with are set out on LeO's website.

About this consultation

What we are asking

We are asking for feedback on:

- The Office for Legal Complaints' draft 2027-30 Strategy for the Legal Ombudsman
- The draft 2027/28 Business Plan and Budget for the Legal Ombudsman

The draft strategy is summarised in this document, and is published in full on LeO's website.

This separate strategy document provides important additional detail about LeO's strategic objectives, delivery plans, and enabling functions. Please read it alongside this document to help inform your response.

How to respond

This consultation is open from 4 November 2026 until midday 23 December 2026. You can share your feedback before the deadline using this online form.

If you have any questions about the consultation, get in touch at consultations@legalombudsman.org.uk.

We encourage online responses wherever possible. If you need to write to us, send your response to Legal Ombudsman, PO Box 6167, Slough SL1 0EH.

We will publish responses to this consultation. Please indicate in your response if you think there's a reason that we shouldn't publish it. Our legal responsibilities around freedom of information mean we cannot guarantee responses can be kept confidential.

Consultation questions

OLC Strategy 2027-30: transforming LeO to meet Vision 2030

1. Do you support the OLC's draft strategic objective to maximise LeO's insights, expertise and tools to help strengthen trust and confidence in legal services?

2. Do you support the OLC's draft strategic objective to improve user experiences by delivering fair, timely and proportionate complaint resolution?

3. Do you support the OLC's draft strategic objective to create an ombudsman service fit for the future?

4. Do you have any comments on the enabling functions that support the delivery of the 2027-30 strategy, and their areas of focus?

5. Do you have any other comments on the draft OLC Strategy for 2027-30?

Projected demand in 2027/28

6. Do you agree with the projections for the number of new customer complaints LeO should expect to receive in 2027/28? If not, do you think the 'likely' and 'worst case' scenarios are too high, or too low?

7. What insight can you share on the complaint volumes and trends LeO should expect to see in 2027/28 in the following areas of law?

    a. Residential conveyancing
    b. Wills and probate
    c. Personal injury
    d. Litigation
    e. Family law
    f. Property
    g. Other areas of law (including immigration and asylum, employment, and criminal)

8. What issues are you currently seeing in complaints about legal services, or do you anticipate seeing, that LeO should take into account as it prepares its plans for 2027/28?

9. On which topics, complaint themes or areas of law could LeO most usefully share insights, expertise and tools to help service providers prevent potential drivers of demand at source?

Business plan activities for 2027/28

10. Do you support the proposed activities in 2027/28 for the strategic objective to maximise LeO's insights, expertise and tools to help strengthen trust and confidence in legal services?

11. Do you support the proposed activities in 2027/28 for the strategic objective to improve user experiences by delivering fair, timely and proportionate complaint resolution?

12. Do you support the proposed activities in 2027/28 for the strategic objective to create an ombudsman service fit for the future?

Budget for 2027/28

13. Do you support the budget required for LeO to deliver its 2027/28 business plan objectives?

14. Do you have suggestions for further efficiencies or smarter working that could be realised across the wider regulatory system for legal services that you think LeO should explore?

Other comments and feedback

15. Do you have any other comments or feedback on the draft Business Plan and Budget for 2027/28?

Next steps

The OLC will review the feedback shared in response to this consultation as part of finalising its 2027/28 Business Plan and Budget and its Strategy 2027-30.

The final Business Plan and Budget, and final Strategy 2027-30, will be published in spring 2027, following consideration by the Legal Services Board.

1. Introduction

Opportunity

Our vision is an independent Legal Ombudsman (LeO) whose work builds consumer confidence in legal services. By being a trusted and influential partner to the regulated legal sector, it strengthens the profession by advancing high-quality complaint resolution and sharing insight-led learning. It does so by being an effective service, resolving more cases faster, fairly and proportionately.

This vision is based on what we've heard both inside and outside LeO, from a wide range of people and organisations.

We've spent six months listening to colleagues, partners, regulators and professional bodies. Critically, we've also listened to our customers – both consumers and legal service providers – and those who represent their voices.

These conversations have confirmed the scale of the challenge facing the Legal Ombudsman, but also the size of the opportunity ahead.

We've seen first-hand the significant progress the service has made in recent years, and been impressed by the commitment of its people. But we have also seen the stark pressures it faces, and the opportunities for the service to make a broader contribution to improving trust and confidence in legal services. And we are clear about where LeO needs to go next, and what it needs to become.

A model reaching its limits

The Legal Ombudsman has improved its operational performance. It is resolving more complaints today than it has ever done before.

But a complex set of reasons means incoming demand has risen even faster. New complaints increased by 37% in 2025/26 alone, and are forecast to rise by a further 26% in 2026/27. We expect complaints to top 21,000 in 2027/28 – which would represent an overall increase of 102% in just three years.

With the current operating model capable of resolving around 15,000 complaints a year, incremental improvements in productivity will not close that gap. The solution cannot be repeatedly adding additional people and cost to the same model. The sustainable answer to rising demand is not an ever-larger ombudsman service.

Building the LeO of the future

Vision 2030 sits at the heart of the Office for Legal Complaints' new strategy to transform LeO in 2027-30. It describes an agile and effective Legal Ombudsman that can confidently meet what will be demanded of it. An ombudsman service that is proactive in preventing complaints, efficient in resolving complaints, systematic in learning from them, and influential in helping others address risk and root causes.

We have set three new strategic objectives for the next three years:

1. Maximising LeO's insights, expertise and tools to help strengthen trust and confidence in legal services

2. Improving user experiences by delivering fair, timely and proportionate complaint resolution

3. Creating an ombudsman service fit for the future

The ambition is stretching, but achievable. By 2030, people will see a LeO that:

- resolves more complaints, more quickly and proportionately, with simpler customer journeys and earlier resolution wherever possible

- maximises its learning and insight, turning individual complaints into evidence and data that providers and regulators can act on

- helps tackle avoidable demand at source, supporting better first-tier complaint handling and preventing more problems from escalating

- uses technology, data and AI intelligently, freeing people to focus their expertise, judgement and empathy where they add most value

- builds a high-trust, high-performance culture, with the skills and leadership to keep evolving

This is what transformation means. Not processing more complaints through the same system. Not technology for its own sake. A genuinely better service, built to deliver more impact and fit for the future.

At its heart is the understanding that LeO creates public value by not operating, or being seen, in isolation. Complaints do not start with LeO and therefore it must help drive improvement in local complaint procedures. And complaints do not end with individual resolutions but in taking their collective learning to drive wider improvement. Complaints can expose recurring weaknesses and emerging risks and we want more of that evidence to flow back to providers and regulators – supporting earlier resolution, better services and stronger standards.

Business Plan and Budget

The 2027/28 Business Plan and Budget is the first annual delivery plan for our new strategy.

Our proposed budget of £22.8 million, an increase of 6.9% on 2026/27, is consistent with the expectation we set out in last year's business plan.

Our updated Scheme Rules, case fees, and approach to publishing decisions are being finalised and will be introduced to support earlier, more proportionate resolution and wider learning.

The 2027/28 plans will enable LeO to resolve up to 15,500 complaints, complete in-train efficiency improvements, and begin implementing a redesigned service. Customer journey times should be reduced.

We need to be clear about LeO's transition to the new vision. Demand is still forecast to significantly exceed the number of complaints LeO can resolve in the coming year, so the overall volume of work in the service will continue to grow.

As we set out last year, that is the simple reality. We will not disguise that or make promises the current model cannot deliver. It is why we must transform.

Shared purpose to improve customer experiences

LeO cannot achieve its Vision 2030 ambitions alone. It must transform its own service while giving others the insight and practical tools they can use to improve. In turn, legal service providers must make use of that learning. A healthy complaints culture is not about blame. It's about putting things right, understanding what went wrong, and using that knowledge to improve. Complaints are tools for learning, not accusations to resist.

LeO must also work more closely with regulators, sharing insight and intelligence so that collectively we can support higher standards, respond faster to emerging risks, and reduce unnecessary complexity for consumers. Our early conversations have demonstrated an encouragingly strong collaborative commitment here. That is how effective redress can help strengthen trust and confidence in legal services.

Shaping what comes next

This is your opportunity to help shape what comes next. Tell us what we need to get right, where you think we can go further, and how we can work differently together.

Ric Blakeway
Chair, Office for Legal Complaints

Phil Cain
Chief Ombudsman, Legal Ombudsman

LeO's 2027/28 plans: key numbers at a glance	
Total operational expenditure	£22.8 million
New customer complaints	21,210
Resolved complaints	15,000 – 15,500
Total caseload at March 2028	15,169
Cost per case	£2,072
Case fee per complaint resolved by early resolution*	£200
Case fee per complaint resolved by investigation*	£750
Case fee per complaint resolved by ombudsman decision*	£1,500
Full-time equivalent employees	324.1

* Subject to relevant approvals.

2. Office for Legal Complaints' draft strategy for 2027-30

2.1 Developing a new strategy for LeO

During 2026/27 the Office for Legal Complaints (OLC) and the Legal Ombudsman (LeO) created Vision 2030 – setting a clear direction for LeO's next strategy period and what success would look like.

To deliver that vision, the OLC has now developed a draft strategy for LeO for 2027-30. The strategy is summarised below and is published in full alongside this business plan and budget for 2027-28 – the first year of the new strategy period.

We are actively seeking stakeholders' thoughts and views on the strategy's scope, aims and enablers, and encourage all those with an interest in LeO's work to read it to help inform their responses to this consultation.

2.2 Context for the new strategy

Work under the strategy will ensure LeO is equipped to succeed in the years ahead. It addresses key changes and challenges in LeO's immediate environment and the wider societal context:

- Demand for LeO's service is systemically changing and increasing rapidly – significantly outpacing the operational gains LeO has made. Ongoing, incremental improvements to efficiency and short-term demand management remain both important and embedded in LeO's approach, but they're not enough on their own. The current operating model is stretched beyond sustainability. Whole-service transformation is required.
- Consumers' behaviour and expectations continue to shift as technology advances – including, more recently, artificial intelligence (AI). These advances represent opportunities to improve accessibility and inclusion to services and redress – but they can also influence, and create challenges around, the nature, complexity and volume of complaints.
- A renewed focus among sector regulators on collaboration and intelligence-sharing presents LeO with a significant opportunity to increase its impact beyond individual complaint resolution. This includes using its insights to improve first-tier complaint handling, prevent avoidable demand, and contribute to better outcomes for consumers. This involves collaborating with, and supporting the work of, the Legal Services Board and approved regulators.
- Stakeholder expectations are converging around sustainability, value for money, prevention and digital enablement. LeO must demonstrate a clear and evidence-based approach to value for money. This means balancing ambition with affordability, capacity and risk, while delivering outcomes for consumers and the legal services sector in a sustainable way.

- In a constrained funding environment, LeO must shift from a levy-dependent, scale-up model towards one that is digitally-enabled, preventative and proportionate.

2.3 Draft strategy

The 2027-30 strategy sets a clear direction of travel for the next three years, with delivery progressively phased through annual plans.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Office for Legal Complaints 2027-30 draft Strategy</th></tr>
<tr><th colspan="3">Purpose – why LeO exists</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">To deliver fair and impartial resolution of consumer service complaints against regulated legal service providers, and to use insight from our work to drive improvements in legal services and strengthen trust and confidence in the regulated legal sector.</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="3">Vision 2030 – what success looks like</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">The independent Legal Ombudsman will underpin consumer confidence in legal services. As a trusted and influential partner to the regulated legal sector, it strengthens the profession by advancing high-quality complaint resolution and sharing insight-led learning.

At the heart of a digitally-enabled, agile and innovative organisation, we will continue to deliver fair, impartial, proportionate and evidence-based outcomes.</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="3">Strategic objectives</th></tr>
<tr><td>Maximise LeO’s insights, expertise and tools to help strengthen trust and confidence in legal services</td><td>Improve user experiences through fair, timely and proportionate complaint resolution</td><td>Create an ombudsman service fit for the future</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="3">Enabling functions</th></tr>
<tr><td>People and culture</td><td>Relationships and partners</td><td>Data and intelligence</td></tr>
<tr><td>Digital systems</td><td>Governance</td><td>Transformation programme</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="3">Pathway to delivery</th></tr>
<tr><th>2027/28</th><th>2028/29</th><th>2029/30</th></tr>
<tr><td>Mobilise and deliver</td><td>Scale and embed</td><td>Deliver our vision</td></tr>
</table>

Questions

OLC Strategy 2027-30: transforming LeO to meet Vision 2030

1. Do you support the OLC's draft strategic objective to maximise LeO's insights, expertise and tools to help strengthen trust and confidence in legal services?

2. Do you support the OLC's draft strategic objective to improve user experiences by delivering fair, timely and proportionate complaint resolution?

3. Do you support the OLC's draft strategic objective to create an ombudsman service fit for the future?

4. Do you have any comments on the enabling functions that support the delivery of the 2027-30 strategy, and their areas of focus?

5. Do you have any other comments on the draft OLC Strategy for 2027-30?

3. LeO's work in 2026/27

LeO's work so far in 2026/27 is essential context for the OLC's new strategy and future business plans – laying the foundations for LeO's transformation.

This chapter gives an update on LeO's progress delivering its 2026/27 plans, in the final year of the OLC's 2024-27 strategy. It explains trends in demand for LeO's service over time, sets out the current picture, and highlights factors that could contribute to demand trends both in the remainder of 2026/27 and into 2027/28.

LeO's plans for 2027/28, the first year of the new strategy, are set out in the next chapter.

3.1 Delivering the 2026/27 Business Plan

Strategic objective for LeO's service
So far in 2026/27 LeO has…
• Maintained its focus on resolving complaints. As a result of these efforts, it expects to resolve more than 15,000 complaints by the end of the year – 20% more than in 2025/26. • Continued to see increasing demand, outpacing these operational gains. There is more detail about this challenge, and trends in demand, in the next section. • Consulted on changes to LeO's Scheme Rules, case fees and approach to publishing decisions. Together, the proposals represent a balanced package of reforms designed to support a complaints system that is fairer, more proportionate and more sustainable. The next chapter explains the arrangements the OLC proposes to take forward in 2027/28, following extensive engagement with stakeholders. • Delivered an agile and proportionate approach to customer satisfaction and quality, integrating a new survey provider and revised approach to quality control and assurance. • Implemented the outputs of its lean efficiencies review, improving end-to end-visibility of demand, workflow management, and opportunities for earlier resolution. This model will continue to deliver efficiencies in 2027/28. • Refreshed and improved its strategic scorecard. This enhanced line-of-sight enables informed decisions about where transformation efforts should be focused, and where changes will have the greatest impact on service delivery and customer outcomes.

Strategic objective for LeO's impact
So far in 2026/27 LeO has…
• Designed, piloted and launched its Model Complaints Resolution Procedure (MCRP) – which will help improve first tier complaint handling, reduce demand for LeO's service and increase the proportion of complaints suitable for early resolution. • Published further Public Interest Decisions, helping set expectations of what needs to improve by showing the impact on consumers when legal service standards fall short. • Published its 2025/26 Annual Complaints Data and Insight report, highlighting the significant increase in demand for LeO's help as well as opportunities to improve legal services and complaint handling. • Shared learning and insight through a broad programme of support, guidance, strategic communication and research – including a significant research briefing on the impact of AI on complaints. • Delivered an ongoing programme of proactive engagement with priority stakeholders, including legal regulators and professional bodies. • Significantly increased LeO's external engagement and profile through conferences and webinars to share learning and insight.

3.2 Demand for LeO's service

LeO's forecasts for 2026/27 were finalised following the business plan consultation in November and December 2025, and have been revised during the year in light of emerging trends.

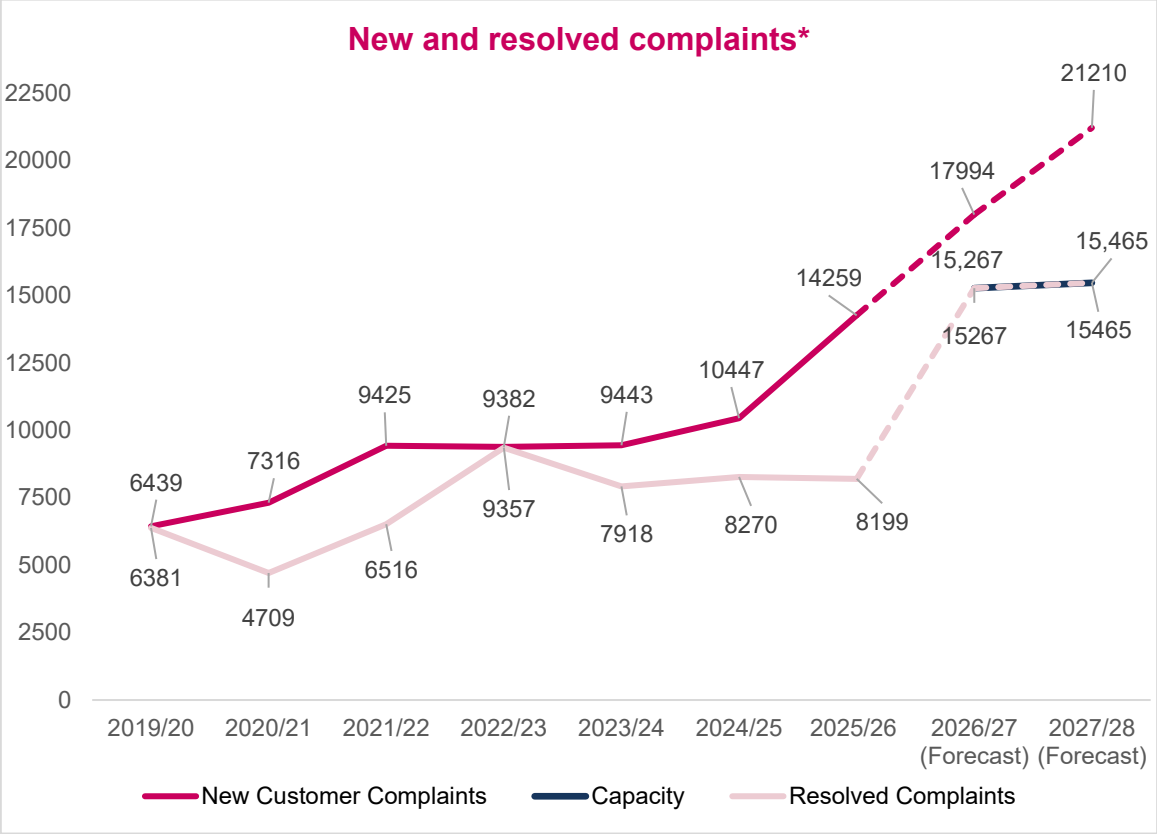
In its final business plan for 2026/27 published in April 2026, LeO forecast it would receive 17,675 new customer complaints this year. So far in 2026/27, LeO has received 8,769 complaints in the first half of 2026/27, in line with forecast expectations.

On the basis of the latest data, LeO has increased its year-end forecast for new customer complaints to 17,994. This would represent an annual increase of 26% compared to 2025/26 (14,259 complaints), which was itself 37% higher than the volume of new complaints in 2024/25 (10,447).

Overall, by the end of the 2026/27 demand for LeO's service is expected to have increased by 91% in just three years.

During 2026/27, LeO has continued to make progress in reducing the number of people waiting for an in-depth investigation. As the next chapter explains, LeO expects to have completely eradicated its legacy queue by the end of 2027/28.

At the same time, the rapidly increasing demand for LeO's help outpaces the operational gains it has made. Even with an ongoing focus on efficiency and continued improvement through an improved delivery model, LeO's current output ceiling is around 15,000-15,500 complaints a year, as reflected in the chart below. The sustained pressure of rapidly-increasing demand is reflected in the OLC's strategic emphasis on transforming the LeO scheme.



* Resolved complaints data from 2026/27 includes complaints resolved by LeO's General Enquiries Team, not captured in previous reporting.

3.3 Revised forecasts for 2026/27

The table below gives a fuller picture of LeO's revised forecasts for the complaints it expects to receive and resolve by the end of 2026/27. The likely number is shown first, followed by LeO's worst-case scenario.

LeO has only recently enhanced its reporting by breaking it down in this way, so forecast variances aren't available for all areas in the current year.

Area of LeO's work	Total year-end forecast (2026/27)*	2025/26 actual
Contacts	121,203	119,619
New customer complaints	17,994	14,259
Complaints resolved: General Enquiries Team	4,931 - 4,783	*N/a: new reporting methodology*
Complaints resolved: Early Resolution	5,846 - 5,671	4,218
Complaints resolved: Scope and Prepare	1,662 - 1,612	*N/a: new reporting methodology*
Complaints resolved: Review and Conclude	768 - 745	*N/a: New reporting methodology*
Complaints resolved: Legacy	2,061 - 1,999	3,981
Total complaints resolved (excluding General Enquiries Team)	10,645 - 10,026	8,199
Total complaints resolved	**15,267 - 14,809**	***N/a: new reporting methodology***

* Ranges presented in this table, and other tables in this business plan, show the 'likely' scenario number first, and 'worst case' scenario number second.

This table shows how many complaints will be waiting to be allocated at the different stages of LeO's process, or remaining in its legacy backlog.

Area of LeO's work	Complaints in queues or in legacy backlog at March 2027
General enquiries	5,784
Early resolution	2,628
Scope and prepare	1,262
Review and conclude	1,787
Legacy	799
Total	**12,260**

3.4 Drivers of demand

Like other ombudsman schemes, the level and types of resources LeO needs each year are fundamentally linked to the both the number and nature of complaints it receives. LeO relies on insights from stakeholders – including those representing consumers, legal providers and regulators – to help anticipate what it needs to prepare for.

The table below outlines live and emerging issues that could influence demand for LeO in the remainder of 2026/27 and into 2027/28. Once again, a primary driver of referrals to LeO is the quality of legal providers' response to customer concerns – something which LeO is committed to supporting through its investment in learning and insight.

Issue	Potential impact on demand
The quality of service providers' first-tier complaint handling	In 2025/26, LeO found evidence of poor service in 72% of complaints with investigative outcomes, and evidence of poor complaints handling in 46%. These are unacceptably high rates, and key drivers of demand for LeO.
The legal sector's culture towards complaints and LeO's insights	LeO has been expanding its learning and insight programme, and will continue this momentum this year and into 2027/28. But this will only positively influence demand if the sector engages with it; a significant shift in complaint culture, led by regulators and the profession, is required to address the unnecessary escalation of complaints.
Consumer sentiment and propensity to complain	Legal Services Consumer Panel data suggests that while overall consumer satisfaction with legal services is high (90%), there are significant continuing issues with complaints processes, with almost half (49%) unsure how to make a complaint. LeO's own 2026 survey research found that 7% of adults in England and Wales had made a formal complaint about a regulated service in the last 12 months, and a further 15% had considered it. Given the millions of legal transactions that take place each year, even small changes in consumer complaint behaviour could generate significant additional demand for LeO. Consumers may be more likely to complain given ongoing economic and cost-of-living challenges, and by the removal of 'friction' in the complaints process by increasing use of AI.

The development and use of generative AI in complaints	LeO's analysis shows consumers are using generative AI tools to draft and refine complaints, often producing more detailed submissions and engaging more extensively throughout the complaints process. While AI may help improve access to redress, it may also increase both the volume and complexity of complaints received, with a bearing on the time required to resolve them.
High-volume complaint issues	LeO hears from consumers unhappy with both the advertising of and service received from legal providers relating to unfair car finance commission. While volumes are low, they have increased during 2026/27, and LeO has also begun receiving complaints relating to exit fees and multiple representation arrangements. The scale of potential consumer detriment and the upward trend could suggest this area will be a significant driver of future demand.
Developments in the legal services market, legal need and wider justice system	LeO is sensitive to developments in the wider legal services market: growth could result in more complaints, simply by volume of transactions. Complaint volumes in areas representing large proportions of LeO's casework (such as residential conveyancing) are particularly influential in determining overall demand levels. Regulatory and government policy change may also influence future demand. For example, in 2025/26 LeO saw increases in landlord and tenant complaints following the introduction of the Renters' Rights Bill. Recent and further planned reforms in areas such as wills and probate, employment law and residential conveyancing may create similar fluctuations in demand.

4. LeO's casework in 2027/28

This chapter outlines the complaints LeO expects to receive and resolve in 2027/28, together with an update on the OLC's scheme rules, case fee and decision publication consultation undertaken in the summer, and how that is expected to shape LeO's work in the coming year.

4.1 New and resolved complaints in 2027/28

LeO expects to further increase its output in 2027/28 compared with its longer-term performance and 2026/27 forecast. It will do so without any increase in operational resource – building on the gains achieved through its 'lean' efficiencies review, redesigning its processes, and introducing a new operating model following its Scheme Transformation Review.

At the same time, LeO currently expects that new complaints will increase by approximately 20% – continuing a significant and unsustainable trend. The fact that this rate of growth – whilst still high – is lower than that experienced in previous years reflects the anticipated impact of LeO's focus on preventative learning and insight work.

LeO's forecasts assume that legal service providers engage with, and act on, the insight, learning and tools LeO shares with the sector. If they do not, demand could increase even further, in line with previous years – and will remain on that trajectory unless there is a fundamental cultural shift towards the use of complaints as tools for learning.

LeO will also deliver the second pillar of the changes consulted on in the 2026/27 Business Plan and Budget. This includes revised case fee arrangements, changes to Scheme Rules and significant scheme transformation designed to improve customer outcomes and support long-term sustainability. There is more detail about these changes in the section below.

By the end of 2027/28, LeO expects to have eradicated its legacy backlog. While overall queues and 'work in progress' will grow while incoming complaints exceed LeO's capacity to resolve them, their composition will be fundamentally different.

Customers will experience shorter journey times, with more than 80% of cases expected to be resolved within 365 days, and more than 70% concluded within six months. The result will be a more responsive, efficient and sustainable service, better equipped to manage rising demand while continuing to improve outcomes for consumers and the legal sector.

The table below shows how many complaints LeO expects to receive and resolve in 2027/28, compared to its 'likely' forecast scenario for 2026/27.

	Total year-end forecast for 2027/28	2026/27 likely scenario forecast
Contacts	120,000	120,000
New customer complaints: Total	21,210	17,675
Complaints resolved: General Enquiries Team	4,795 - 4,651	4,931 - 4,783
Complaints resolved: Early Resolution	6,151 - 5,966	5,846 - 5,671
Complaints resolved: Scope and Prepare	2,460 - 2,386	1,662 - 1,612
Complaints resolved: Review and Conclude	1,562 - 1,515	768 - 745
Complaints resolved: Legacy	497 - 482	2,061 – 1,999
Complaints resolved: Total	**15,465 - 15,002**	**15,267 - 14,809**

This table shows how many complaints will either be categorised in LeO's total work-in-progress by the end of 2027/28 or in a queue waiting to be worked on.

Area of work	Complaints at March 2028
General enquiries	8,406
Early resolution	1,357
Scope and prepare	2,106
Review and conclude	3,300
Legacy	0
Total	**15,169**

Questions

Projected demand in 2027/28

6. Do you agree with the projections for the number of new customer complaints LeO should expect to receive in 2027/28? If not, do you think the 'likely' and 'worst case' scenarios are too high, or too low?

7. What insight can you share on the complaint volumes and trends LeO should expect to see in 2027/28 in the following areas of law?

    a. Residential conveyancing
    b. Wills and probate
    c. Personal injury
    d. Litigation
    e. Family law
    f. Property
    g. Other areas of law (including immigration and asylum, employment, and criminal)

8. What issues are you currently seeing in complaints about legal services, or do you anticipate seeing, that LeO should take into account as it prepares its plans for 2027/28

9. On which topics, complaint themes or areas of law could LeO most usefully share insights, expertise and tools to help service providers prevent potential drivers of demand at source?

4.2 Scheme Rules, case fees and publishing decisions consultation

In the summer of 2026/27 the OLC consulted in 2026/27 on a complementary package of changes designed to improve consumers' experience, encourage better complaint handling, and ensure LeO remains effective, responsive and sustainable.

The package included:

- Proposed Scheme Rules changes to help LeO focus on complaints involving real impact or detriment, reduce unnecessary escalation, and provide clearer expectations for consumers and providers.
- Proposed case fee changes to create stronger incentives for legal providers to respond to complaints, engage earlier, and resolve issues before they require more formal intervention from LeO.
- Proposals around publishing ombudsman decisions to support greater transparency, informed consumer choice and wider learning across the sector.

The OLC and LeO have now carefully considered stakeholders' feedback to these proposals. The following sections set out the OLC and LeO's response to the consultation and the changes proposed in 2027/28.

Scheme Rules

The proposed changes to the Scheme Rules were designed to:

- Emphasise the importance of first tier complaint handling
- Enable LeO to focus on complaints where it can make a difference
- Encourage all parties to a complaint to be open to engaging with early resolution as a means of achieving the right outcome at the most appropriate opportunity
- Ensure that LeO's processes are fair, effective and proportionate

Having considered the consultation responses, the OLC and LeO remain confident that the proposed changes can deliver the anticipated improvements in customer service and process efficiency. Subject to some minor amendments, it is our intention to proceed with the proposed package of changes and we will be working to implement them from 1 April 2027.

Key themes in responses

Two core themes emerged across a number of consultation responses:

- The need to ensure that Scheme Rule changes would not put inappropriate barriers in front of consumers' access to justice.
- The importance of ensuring that vulnerable consumers are given the support they need to be able to access LeO's service.

The OLC and LeO are committed to both of these key principles and will ensure that any changes introduced balance operational efficiency with access to justice and accessibility.

Benefits of the changes

The new rules will ensure that complaints raised with LeO are ones that LeO can assist with, and clearly identify the underlying issues and what needs to be done – if the case is upheld – to put things right.

Managing the levels of complaints where LeO *cannot* make a difference will enable it to focus on those cases where a clear loss can be seen and where, if the complaint is upheld, there is scope for the sector to learn and improve the service it provides.

The new rules will also provide LeO with increased scope to ensure that complaints are resolved at the earliest possible opportunity, ensuring all parties can move forwards as quickly as possible. The new measures will provide LeO with greater scope to dismiss complaints where it is no longer possible or appropriate for the

investigation to progress or to prevent the situation where one party wishes to pursue or protract a complaint to the deliberate detriment of the other.

LeO has extended an existing power to say that a complaint does not need to be escalated for an ombudsman final decision if the resolution that has already been proposed is the right one. Ensuring that ombudsman resource is deployed where it is needed to provide a resolution to complex cases, or where enforcement of a remedy is likely to be required, will support the OLC and LeO's ambition to deliver a proportionate service that resolves complaints at the earliest opportunity.

Changes reflecting consultation feedback

Following the consultation, the OLC and LeO are revising some of the proposed rule change:

- LeO is withdrawing the proposed amendment to Scheme Rule 4.3 which would have enabled customers to bring a complaint to LeO without exhausting the first-tier complaint process. This change could have unintentionally undermined the importance of first-tier complaint handling.

- LeO is also revising the proposed application of Scheme Rule 5.1, which had intended to mandate the use of an online complaint form, to reflect concerns raised about potential impacts on access to justice and digital inclusion. LeO will still expect consumers to use its online complaint form where possible, but will ensure that other means of accessing the scheme are available to those who need them.

The table sets out the decisions made and the changes to be taken forward in 2027/28.

Rule	Proposed change	Outcome and plans for 2027/28
Substantive changes consulted on		
Rule 1.6	Requiring consumers to explain the impact of the alleged service failing for jurisdictional purposes	This rule will be complemented by a range of support for vulnerable customers who might struggle explain the impact on them
Rule 4.3	Enabling customers to bring complaints to LeO before first-tier process is exhausted	Proposal withdrawn
Rule 4.5	Introduction of 12-year long-stop date on complaints	Pursue proposal
Rule 5.1	Requiring complainants to complete LeO's complaint form	Revise application to encourage use of online complaint form but not to mandate
Rule 5.7 (b)	Discretion to dismiss a complaint where the impact or disadvantage is trivial, inconsequential or purely theoretical	Pursue proposal
Rule 5.7 (r)	Discretion to dismiss complaint if complainant's behaviour is	Pursue proposal

	unreasonable or prevents a fair investigation	
Rule 5.19	A Final Decision will only be issued if an ombudsman considers it necessary and proportionate	Pursue proposal
Rule 5.20	Ombudsman can treat a case as resolved by an investigator's findings if neither party has raised substantive objections	Pursue proposal
Rule 5.21	Provides clarification on what constitutes substantive objections under 5.20	Pursue proposal
Non-substantive changes consulted on		
Rules: 2.1, 2.3, 2.10, 2.11, 4.4, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.7(a), (c), (d), (e), (f), (i), (j), (l), (n), (o), (p), (q), 5.55	Addressing historic drafting errors, simplifying or clarifying unclear wording, removing obstacles to resolving complaints efficiently and proportionately, and reordering certain provisions for ease of reading and understanding.	Pursue proposals

Case fees

The second key focus of the consultation was the application of LeO's case fees.

The core underpinning principles were to:

- Encourage better first-tier complaint handling
- Encourage parties towards the earlier resolution of complaints
- Ensure a fairer distribution of the costs of delivering the LeO scheme

The proposals included a fee payable by providers not engaging with a consumer's complaint within the expected eight-week window, and the introduction of a three-tiered case fee regime, reflecting the stage at which complaints were resolved.

Feedback received

Many legal service providers and their representatives responding to the consultation understood the need to improve first tier complaint handling but were less supportive of the proposed tiered approach to case fees, and the OLC and LeO reflected carefully on the concerns expressed.

We remain of the view that the underlying premise of the changes – that the case charged for a complaint should reflect the amount of work LeO is required to undertake to resolve it – is sound. The new approach to case fees will actively encourage the earlier resolution of complaints and complements the tools being introduced under the general scheme rules changes.

It is also important to remember some key mitigations. First and foremost, it remains true that the tiered case fee will typically only be charged if a complaint is upheld and the provider did not take all reasonable steps to try to resolve the complaint themselves. Complaints that are not upheld are unlikely to attract a tiered case fee.

Alongside this, LeO will continue to work to help providers handle complaints well and resolve them at the earliest opportunity, reducing the risk of complaints requiring an ombudsman's final decision or attracting higher-level case fees. LeO's active learning and insight programme, and the Model Complaints Resolution Procedure it has developed and launched, aim squarely at this.

Changes reflecting consultation feedback

In nearly a quarter of new complaints, customers tell LeO that they have not received a final response to their complaint from their service provider. This is an unacceptably high proportion.

The OLC and LeO believe that a proportionate financial incentive should encourage service providers to engage with, and try to resolve, complaints. Better first tier complaint handling would reduce the demand for LeO's service or, if escalation cannot be avoided, a considered first-tier response significantly increases the possibility of early resolution, saving service providers time and money.

However, having reflected on the consultation responses received, the OLC and LeO understand some of the reservations and concerns articulated about the application of the proposed new rules. As a result, LeO has revised its approach to the £400 fee payable by service providers that fail to deal with a complaint within eight weeks. There may be circumstances where it is simply not possible to issue a considered final response within that time period. As set out in the table, LeO is changing its proposed approach from a binary outcome to one where the circumstances of a case can be considered.

Rule	Proposed change	Outcome and plans for 2027/28
Rule 6.1	All cases that are within LeO jurisdiction are potentially case fee chargeable	Pursue proposal
Rule 6.3	Case fee waiver test - now extended to include cases that have been dismissed under SR 5.7	Pursue proposal
Rule 6.4	Introduce a tiered case fee: **£200** at Early Resolution **£750** at Investigation **£1,500** at Final Decision	Pursue proposal
Rule 6.5	**£400** case fee for failure to issue final response to customer's complaint within eight weeks	Pursue proposal, but revise application to reflect individual circumstances

The next chapter on LeO's draft 2027/28 budget explains the impact these changes will have on LeO's amount and sources of income.

Publishing ombudsman final decisions

The OLC and LeO also consulted on a change in policy relating to the publication of ombudsman final decisions in full.

Responses to the consultation differed significantly in their views on this subject. Some respondents acknowledged that publication could help inform consumer choice and support improvement across the sector. Others felt that the proposal was unfair, particularly to smaller providers who trade on reputation and recommendation.

The OLC and LeO are committed to using the insights from LeO's casework to improve standards across the sector and to help inform consumer choice. Our view remains that LeO's ombudsman final decisions are a rich vein of insight to share, and we intend to work towards full publication in 2027/28.

Equally, we have heard the concerns of some respondents to the consultation proposal and will undertake further work to understand how potential risks can be mitigated through a considered approach to what is actually published, how it is published, and the additional contextual information that can be provided.

Next steps

LeO's pathway to implementing this package of proposals is reflected in its draft 2027/28 Business Plan activities. Changes to Scheme Rules and case fee arrangements require approval from the Legal Services Board and, where applicable, the Lord Chancellor. LeO will continue to engage with stakeholders as the picture develops before the final Business Plan and Budget is published in spring 2027.

Because the OLC has already carried out a significant amount of engagement with stakeholders about the changes to scheme rules, case fees and approach to decision publication, and isn't seeking further feedback on their merits in this consultation. Instead, it would welcome feedback on how LeO's business plan in the round will support the delivery of the new strategy and the shared objective of consumer confidence in the legal services sector and the redress system that supports it.

5. LeO's draft Business Plan for 2027/28

To meet both current and future challenges, LeO will transform its service.

This chapter sets out how LeO will work to prevent demand at source, and the steps it will make toward transformation. Its plans for 2027/28 – the first year of the OLC's new strategy – bring together service improvement, insight and prevention, and organisational transformation as connected parts of a single pathway towards the 2030 vision.

The specific activities LeO plans to deliver under each strategic objective are set out in the table below. The budget LeO needs to deliver this programme is outlined in the next chapter.

Strategic objective	In 2027/28 (mobilise and deliver)	What we will do
Maximising LeO's insights, expertise and tools to help strengthen trust and confidence in legal services	LeO will implement its new learning and insight operating model, enabling it to enhance the data and intelligence it shares with both regulators and the profession, and advance high-quality complaint resolution across the sector.	• **Undertake targeted engagement** with regulators, representative bodies and priority provider groups to support early adoption of the Model Complaints Resolution Procedure. • **Strengthen data quality, systems and analytical capability** to enable identification of root causes of complaints, systemic issues and emerging risks. • **Define and launch a clear learning and insight offer** and underpinning operating model, including the expanded publication of ombudsman decisions. • **Establish structured intelligence-sharing arrangements** with key regulators and oversight bodies. • **Use an evidence-led approach to engage with service providers** to focus support and improvement activity where it is most needed. • **Begin to promote a sector narrative** that positions complaints as a source of learning and service improvement.

Improving user experiences by delivering fair, timely and proportionate complaint resolution	LeO will resolve complaints, fairly, promptly and proportionately, while responding to changing demand, risk and complexity. It will implement scheme rule and case fee changes, improved digital services, and other process improvements and frameworks focused on ensuring fairness and quality.	• **Implement the new Scheme Rules** to ensure LeO can take a proportionate approach to its casework, focusing on resolving complaints at the earliest appropriate opportunity. • **Adopt LeO's new case fee regime,** incentivising providers to proactively engage with LeO to resolve escalated complaints at the earliest possible opportunity. • **Use feedback and insights** derived from customer satisfaction surveys and service complaints to ensure LeO's service is high-quality, accessible, fair and robust. • **Use learning from internal reviews** to reduce "failure demand" and rework, ensuring that consumers get the right outcome at the earliest possible opportunity. • **Continue the transition to the Lean operating efficiencies** across assessment, early resolution, investigation and decision-making, simplifying processes to reduce delays, duplication and complexity. • **Strengthen risk-based prioritisation** so that resource is focused where need, risk or potential impact is greatest. • **Begin to develop improved digital services** to support how users access, navigate and interact with LeO. • **Establish clearer measures** of service outcomes and impact for consumers and providers. • **Continue developing a consistent approach to decision writing**, supported by the proportionate and well-governed use of technology and AI.
Creating an ombudsman service fit for the future	LeO will build on the findings from STR discovery, moving through design and implementation planning towards phased delivery of a redesigned operating model.	• **Begin phased implementation** of the redesigned operating model, translating the transformation design work into practical changes across assessment, early resolution, investigation and decision-making. • **Mobilise and work with a specialist delivery partner** to provide the capacity, capability and expertise required to

	This will build the organisational capability, governance, workforce and digital foundations required to deliver a more sustainable, proportionate and future-ready ombudsman service.	translate the Scheme Transformation Review design into controlled implementation, supporting knowledge transfer and the development of LeO's internal delivery capability. • **Introduce priority transformation initiatives** that support earlier resolution, clearer prioritisation, improved user journeys and more consistent ways of working. • **Strengthen the digital, data, automation and AI foundations** needed to improve efficiency, insight, accessibility and service quality, while ensuring changes are proportionate, ethical and well governed. • **Implement the organisational, governance, people and cultural changes** needed to support new ways of working, including clearer ownership, stronger accountability and improved change capability. • **Maintain strong delivery discipline through benefits tracking, roadmap assurance and risk management**, ensuring transformation remains aligned to strategy, value for money and business-as-usual service delivery. • **Protect service quality during transition**, balancing ambition with deliverability so that transformation activity supports operational performance rather than adding unnecessary complexity.
Enabling functions		**What we will do**
Digital systems		Strengthen secure, resilient and integrated platforms designed around user need, efficiency and long-term sustainability.
Data and intelligence		Improve data quality, accessibility and analytical capability to support evidence-based decisions, automation and organisational learning.

People and culture	Strengthen the leadership, organisational capability and culture needed to transform how we work and sustainably deliver Vision 2030.
Governance	Establish clear accountability, delivery oversight, benefits tracking and risk management.
Relationships and partnerships	Build strong partnerships so that LeO's insight improves complaint handling, supports sector learning and strengthens trust and confidence.
Transformation	Drive coordinated, organisation-wide change to deliver strategic priorities, realise benefits and embed sustainable improvements.

Building a high-trust, high-performance culture

Underpinning all of our ambitious plans for 2027/28 and the 2027-30 strategy period is the commitment, skill and knowledge of our people.

Our focus is on creating the conditions for a **high-trust, high-performance culture**, where colleagues are clear about what is expected of them, feel valued for their contribution, and have the support and opportunity to grow.

Central to this will be our new **Contribution & Growth Framework**, creating a more consistent approach to performance, development and regular, quality conversations. Alongside this, we will strengthen collective leadership, inclusion, belonging and wellbeing, and develop our approaches to colleague voice and early resolution. Together, these will help build greater trust, accountability and shared ownership for delivering our organisational ambitions.

At the same time, we are building the **people capability and infrastructure needed for the future**. This includes developing the skills, confidence and resilience to lead and respond to change; strengthening our colleague offer to attract, retain, recognise and motivate the people we need; and providing leaders with better people insights to support evidence-led decision making. New HR, payroll and learning management systems will underpin this by simplifying the colleague experience, improving access to high-quality people data and enabling more flexible, collaborative and responsive learning and development.

Questions

Business plan activities for 2027/28

10. Do you support the proposed activities in 2027/28 for the strategic objective to maximise LeO's insights, expertise and tools to help strengthen trust and confidence in legal services?

11. Do you support the proposed activities in 2027/28 for the strategic objective to improve user experiences by delivering fair, timely and proportionate complaint resolution?

12. Do you support the proposed activities in 2027/28 for the strategic objective to create an ombudsman service fit for the future?

6. LeO's budget and resourcing for 2027/28

6.1 LeO's 2027/28 budget

The budget for the first year of the new strategy period, 2027/28, will support LeO to deliver on the plans outlined in the previous chapter – equipping the service to resolve between 15,000 and 15,500 new complaints, while making the investment it needs to take tangible steps along the transformation pathway.

The OLC previously highlighted that limiting the increase in LeO's budget in 2026/27 to 6.5% would mean a similar-sized increase for 2027/28. The draft budget presented below aligns with this expectation.

OLC budget for LeO			
	2026/27	**2027/28**	**% increase**
Operational expenditure	£21,309,262	£22,773,119	6.9%

In summary:

- The 2027/28 budget proposes total operational expenditure of £22.8m: an increase of £1.46m (6.9%) year-on-year.
- The principal driver of this increase is staff costs, which increase by £1.15m (6.7%). This includes provision for an estimated 3.5% Civil Service pay award, together with investment in 9 additional FTE to support digital enablement, strengthen insight capability, and address demand at source through learning and early intervention.
- Other increases relate to depreciation (+24.3%), reflecting the full-year impact of recent and planned asset investment. This includes transformation-related assets and replacement IT hardware; premises and facilities (+10.0%), primarily due to increased business rates; and accommodation, travel and subsistence (+71.9%), reflecting increased travel associated with national hub working arrangements and external stakeholder engagement.
- The proposed budget also reflects a strong focus on efficiency and value for money. Identified efficiencies increase from £498,660 in 2026/27 to £594,486 in 2027/28, equivalent to 2.6% of the budget. These savings have been used to offset cost pressures and investment requirements, meaning the funding increase sought is lower than it would otherwise have been. Combined with increased income from case fees, the efficiencies reduce the levy requirement for the sector while enabling LeO to maintain service delivery and progress critical transformation activity.

LeO's full budget and resourcing proposals are presented in the tables below.

Area	2026/27 budget £	2027/28 budget £	Variance £	Variance %
Staff costs	**17,240,731**	**18,400,404**	**1,153,481**	**6.7%**
Other staff expenditure	353,408	376,164	22,756	6.4%
Premises and facilities	638,592	702,444	63,852	10%
Accommodation, travel and subsistence	33,633	57,828	24,195	71.9%
IT and telecoms	1,771,495	1,775,795	4,300	0.2%
Other costs	801,205	822,245	21,040	2.6%
Depreciation	690,329	858,373	168,044	24.3%
Net interest receivable after tax	-220,134	-220,134	-	-
Total expenditure	**21,309,262**	**22,773,119**	**1,463,860**	**6.9%**
Operational model transformation development phase	979,121	972,996*	-6,125	-0.6%
Total expenditure including operational model transformation development phase	**22,288,380**	**23,746,115**	**1,457,735**	**6.5%**

* Indicative whilst awaiting estimate.

Function	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	2026/27 FTE	2027/28 FTE
Corporate	**4,139,904**	**5,253,951**	**60.2**	**74.1**
Business Intelligence	328,080	194,352	4.9	3.0
Corporate (Executive Team)	976,844	1,057,224	7.7	8.0
Exec and Board Support Team	158,004	163,908	3.0	3.0
Communications, Engagement and Impact	578,412	918,612	9.6	14.6
Facilities	47,088	48,936	1.0	1.0
Finance	327,888	344,388	6.0	6.0
People and Culture (HR)	592,764	772,164	10.0	12.5
IT	561,480	1,003,347	9.0	15.0
Legal	243,952	460,536	4.0	7.0
Programme Management and Assurance	325,392	284,292	5.0	4.0
Operations	**13,295,383**	**12,934,792**	**254.9**	**250.0**
General Enquiries Team	1,391,692	1,278,751	38.4	34.0
Early Resolutions Team	862,812	1,533,508	17.3	30.3
Operations Management	358,491	425,443	4.0	5.0
Ombudsman	2,419,948	1,987,680	35.7	29.8
Investigations	7,268,060	-	150.7	-
Legacy	-	2,810,235	-	55.6
Scope and Prepare	-	2,662,257	-	53.0
Review and Conclude	-	1,449,250	-	30.3
Service Improvement and Quality	605,268	787,668	8.8	12.0
Other	**£194,556**	**£211,661**	**-**	**-**

Staff awards	151,692	158,513		
Apprentice levy	42,864	53,148		
Total salary expenditure	**17,629,843**	**18,400,404**	**315.1**	**324.1**

6.2 LeO's income

Assuming the proposed changes to LeO's case fees are approved, the 2027/28 income model will reflect a significant rebalancing of LeO's funding mix – reducing reliance on levy funding, and increasing the proportion of costs recovered through other income streams. Overall, although LeO's overall total operating costs are forecast to rise by 6.9%, the levy contribution could reduce by up to 10%.

Without historical data, forecasts around the impact of LeO's proposed changes are subject to considerable uncertainty. However, LeO currently estimates case fee income could fund 20% of LeO's operational expenditure in 2027/28, compared with 5% in 2026/27.

As a result, the levy requirement reduces from 94% to 79% of operational expenditure – strengthening the sustainability of the funding model and reducing costs to the sector.

Sundry income is also expected to increase by 58% in 2027/28, primarily driven by improved utilisation of LeO's Birmingham office – including leasing to other organisations. This creates a recurring income stream, and further reduces the funding required from the levy.

These forecast figures also reflect higher volumes of chargeable cases. While total case fee income increases significantly, the average fee per case reduces by 20%, from £400 to £320, supporting a more balanced and proportionate approach to cost recovery.

Level of case fees

Type of resolution	Level of case fee per complaint
Early resolution	£200
Investigation	£750
Ombudsman decision	£1,500
No final response (additional fee)	£400

Sources of income

Source	2026/27 £	2027/28 £	Variance £	Variance %
Case fees	1,136,000	4,562,172	3,426,172	302%
Sundry income	180,000	284,316	104,316	58%
Levy income	19,993,262	17,926,631	-2,066,631	-10%
Total income	**21,309,262**	**22,773,119**	**1,463,857**	**6.9%**

6.3 Value for money

The OLC and LeO remain committed to working efficiently and providing value for money – recognising both the public sector context and the impact of LeO's funding on the legal services sector.

In 2027/28, LeO will maintain the robust approach it has taken in previous years to ensure efficiency and value are embedded, measured and delivered, including assessing spending against the principles of the National Audit Office's 4 Es model.

Value for money area	LeO's approach
Economy Lowest sustainable whole-life cost	• Prioritise statutory need • Optimise existing resources and estate • Control external recruitment • Rebalance income through case fees and cost recovery • Build a robust STR evidence base for future investment • Strengthen workforce planning and grow internal capability to reduce reliance on external recruitment and contingent resource • Develop skills and career pathways that support retention and make best use of our existing workforce
Efficiency Better use of people, data and systems	• Use automation and AI • Simplify processes, reduce avoidable effort and rework • Make spending efficiencies to release funds for priority areas • Scheme Transformation Review • Earlier resolution of casework through Scheme Rules and case fees • Complete roll-out of operating efficiencies changes following 'lean' review • Use insight to anticipate demand • Align workforce capacity and capability to changing organisational priorities and demand • Build the leadership, skills and confidence needed to adopt new technology and new ways of working • Create a culture of continuous improvement, empowerment and accountability
Effectiveness Improved outcomes, quality and resilience	• Align investment to strategic priorities and demand • Strengthen complaint resolution, and learning and insight work • Learning from customer feedback • Use MCRP and casework data to support sector performance • Improve first tier complaint handling • Improve sector engagement and intelligence sharing • Strengthen leadership capability and accountability for organisational performance • Build critical skills, knowledge and organisational capability for the future • Create a high-performance culture focused on learning, collaboration and continuous improvement • Support colleague wellbeing, engagement and resilience through change

Equity Fair, accessible and inclusive services	• Maintain accessible support for all customers • Maintain the use of multi-disciplinary team for complex needs and reasonable adjustments • Publish more decisions and insight • Balance efficiency with fairness and accessibility • Embed fairness, inclusion and accessibility throughout the colleague experience and LeO's policy, projects and governance • Ensure our employment, reward, progression and development approaches support equity and opportunity • Build a diverse, inclusive culture where colleagues feel valued, supported and able to contribute • Use workforce insight and equality impact assessment to understand and address differential impacts of change

6.4 Unit cost

LeO continues to monitor and report on its unit cost – or 'cost per case' – for historical context, whilst acknowledging that this metric doesn't adequately reflect the depth and breadth of an ombudsman scheme's work.

The table below shows recent and projected cost per case, broken down by type of resolution. The higher cost per case for 2027/28 reflects the expected Cabinet Office-led pay awards and other inflationary cost pressures.

	2026/27 forecast	2027/28 budget
Budget	£21.3m	£22.8m
Cases resolved	10,026 - 10,645	10,350 - 10,990
Cost per case resolved	£2,002	£2,072
Cases resolved including General Enquiries Team	15,724	15,928
Cost per case resolved including General Enquiries Team	£1,355	£1,430
Cases resolved by early resolution	6,021	6,335
Cases resolved by investigation	4,624	4,654
Cost per early resolution	£366	£419
Cost per investigation	£1,886	£1,755
Number of contacts	121,203	120,000
Cost per contact	£176	£190

Questions

Budget for 2027/28

13. Do you support the proposed budget for LeO in 2027/28?

14. Do you have suggestions for further efficiencies or smarter working that could be realised across the wider regulatory system for legal services that you think LeO should explore?

Other comments and feedback

15. Do you have any other comments or feedback on the draft Business Plan and Budget for 2027/28?