'In the consultation the question was asked ‘should the maximum debt threshold should be £17,000’? The majority of respondents who provided a yes/no answer to this question said no.

The next question in the consultation asked, if the answer is no to a level of £17,000 what should the level be, giving the respondents the option of a level less than £17,000 that is £10,000, a level around £17,000 that is £15,000 and a level higher than the £17,000, that is £20,000? As is the convention, we used round numbers in these options.

Respondents to the consultation who provided a yes/no answer to this question favoured a debt level of £10,000.

Committee may wish to note that our most up-to-date analysis of current LILA cases shows that, in 2012-13, the median value for the total debt in a LILA case was just over £10,000. The median is the middle debt value in the table of all debts for LILA bankruptcies awarded in 2012-13 and is therefore the point at which half the debts are above and half below. AiB believe that the median debt provides a more accurate value for the average debt as it is less sensitive to extreme outliers.'