



## Minutes

### Legal Services Consumer Panel meeting

**Date:** 26 April 2017

**Time:** 13:00-16:15

**Venue:** One Kemble Street, London WC2B 4AN

#### Present:

Jane Martin	Chair
Andy Foster	Member
Michelle Goddard	Member
Frances Harrison	Member
Mark McLaren	Member
Marlene Winfield	Member
Lola Bello	Consumer Panel Manager
Laurentiu Ciocan	Consumer Panel Associate
Ramandeep Bhatti	Legal Services Board (Minutes)
Julie Myers	Legal Services Board
Puja Vadgama	Legal Services Board (Observing)
Karen Naya	Legal Services Board (Item 6 only)
Bryony Sheldon	Legal Services Board (Item 6 only)

#### Item 1 – Welcome and apologies

1. The Chair welcomed the Legal Services Consumer Panel ('The Panel') and Puja Vadgama, Regulatory Associate at the Legal Services Board.
2. Apologies had been received from Cathy Gallagher.

#### Item 2 – Declaration of interests

3. None.

#### Item 3 – Minutes of 1 March 2017 meeting

4. The Chair presented the minutes from 1 March 2017, which had been agreed via electronic correspondence.

**The Panel noted the minutes from 1 March 2017.**

#### **Item 4 – Matters arising**

5. Item 6 – the Chair advised the Work Programme 2017/18 had been not been published because of the upcoming general election and subsequent purdah period and would be published after 8 June.
6. Item 8 – the Segmentation paper has now been published.

**The Panel noted the matters arising.**

#### **Item 5 – LSCP draft annual report 2016/17**

7. The Panel Manager presented the Panel's draft annual report 2016/17 and invited Panel Members to provide amendments and comments. The report is going to be presented at the LSB's Board meeting in May.
8. Overall the Panel agreed the report was well written. The Panel suggested some minor amendments and also suggested more consistency and clarity was required throughout the report. The work of the Panel needed to be highlighted more in certain sections of the report.
9. The Chair asked Panel Members to inform the Panel secretariat of important meetings and activities that should be noted. If the Panel have any other comments, these should be sent to the Panel secretariat in the next week.

**The report would be amended in line with comments made and submitted to the Chair for final approval.**

#### **Item 6 – LSB presentation on vulnerability research**

10. The Panel Chair welcomed Karen Naya, Regulatory Associate and Bryony Sheldon, Regulatory Project Manager from the Legal Services Board. They presented a paper explaining the LSB's research on vulnerable consumers. A short video clip from the research was also shown to the Panel.
11. The LSB said it would welcome the Panel's support in advocating the research findings among stakeholders in the legal sector and relevant charities. The LSB are also interested to understand what opportunities the Panel may have to do this and, additionally, how the Panel might use the results of this research.
12. Points raised by the Panel in the following discussion include:
  - Endorsement from key stakeholders would give the research more weight and any guidelines or standards that are produced from this research could feature stakeholder logos.
  - As well as empowering vulnerable consumers, the research should also empower legal services providers.
  - The Panel highlighted the importance of the LSB using their regulatory powers to address the issues around the delivery of legal services to vulnerable consumers.
  - Other organisations to reach out to if they have not already been approached are Carers UK and Association of Care Homes.

- As the legal services that were analysed were mostly provided by solicitors, there is a risk that legal practitioners may see the research as solicitors focus. However, the Panel noted that the findings could be applied to a range of legal services providers.
  - This information could be included as part of staff information guides used by advisory organisations such as Citizens Advice.
13. There are synergies with the Panel's work on vulnerability and this research will have broader applicability to all vulnerable consumers.
14. The Panel would consider incorporating the findings of this research into its vulnerability training. This research would also be ideal for the Panel to use as case studies of two specific types of vulnerability as they affect ability to use legal services and the implications for service provision.
15. The Panel discussed how best to work with the LSB going forward and concluded to meet with LSB colleagues when they are ready. It was agreed that Panel Members that have vulnerable consumers allocated as their project would liaise with LSB on this work.

**The Panel noted the presentation from the LSB.**

**Item 7 – Chair's report and Members' update**

16. The Chair presented her report on recent meetings.
17. In addition to her report, the Chair highlighted the importance of developing a relationship with the Legal Ombudsman. The Chair advised she has been invited to attend a Board meeting of the Office for Legal Complaints.
18. The Chair reminded Panel Members about their responsibilities and accountabilities under Managing Public Money, in particular claiming any expenses on a regular monthly basis – and no longer than three months.
19. The Chair welcomed the Panel Associate Laurentiu Ciocan to his first Panel meeting.
20. Michelle Goddard and the Panel Associate attended the SRA's Innovation Conference just before the Panel meeting. The discussions were constructive and they were generally interested in what the tracker research showed.
21. Marlene Winfield informed the group that she attended the Law Society President's dinner on public legal education (PLE) and training. The discussion focused on the PLE's strategy and coordination efforts. The Panel Associate advised he will be circulating an email with the notes from this meeting.
22. The Chair advised going forward she is happy to incorporate Panel Member updates into her written report. It was agreed that the secretariat would incorporate the Panel members notes post a meeting or event into the meeting pack.

**The Panel noted the Chair's report and Members update.**

**Item 8 – Projects update**

23. The Panel Associate presented the projects update.

24. In addition to the paper, the Panel Associate advised he will be circulating an email with the Annual Tracker Survey and would welcome comments from the Panel within one week. The tracker survey would be discussed at the June meeting.

**The Panel noted the projects update.**

#### **Item 9 – Consultation responses**

25. The Panel Associate presented a paper on consultation responses. No responses have been submitted since the last Panel meeting.

26. The Chair welcomed the Panel Associate's consultation draft in relation to the CMA consultation on digital comparison tools.

27. The Chair invited Panel Members to send their feedback on the LSB regulatory approach by no later than 4 May.

**The Panel noted the consultation paper.**

#### **Item 10 – Draft agenda for June**

28. The Chair presented the draft agenda for the June meeting.

29. The Chair noted the tracker survey would be added to the June agenda, which would fit in with the strategy item. The meeting time would also be extended to 5pm to allow time for discussion.

**The Panel agreed the draft agenda.**

#### **Item 11 – Any other business**

30. The Chair advised if Panel Members had any questions on purdah guidance, they should contact the Panel Manager and Julie Myers would advise.