

## Minutes

### Legal Services Consumer Panel Meeting

**Date:** 14 December 2011

**Time:** 11:00 – 17:00hrs

**Venue:** Victoria House, Southampton Row, London WC1B 4AD

#### Present:

Elisabeth Davies	Chair
Jeff Bell	Member
Graham Corbett	Member
Emma Harrison	Member
Paul Munden	Member
Neil Wightman	Member
Karin Woodley	Member
Steve Brooker	Consumer Panel Manager
Alanna Linn	Consumer Panel Associate
Chris Kenny	Legal Services Board (Item 7)
Julie Myers	Legal Services Board
Alex Roy	Legal Services Board (Item 6)
Sarah Horack	Opinion Leader Research (Item 6)
Patrick Meakin	Opinion Leader Research (Item 6)

#### Item 1 – Welcome and apologies

1. The Chair welcomed the Legal Services Consumer Panel ('the Panel'). The Chair noted that Jeff Bell was delayed due to transport problems.

#### Item 2 – Declarations of interests

2. Graham Corbett advised had a lunch meeting with Judith Gledhill of Thompsons on 1 November 2011.

#### Item 3 – Minutes of the 26 October 2011 meeting

3. The Chair presented the Draft Minutes for the 26 October 2011 meeting.

**The Panel approved the Minutes of 26 October 2011.**

#### **Item 4 - Matters Arising from the Minutes**

4. Item 5 – Emma Harrison, Karin Woodley and Graham Corbett would be visiting the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA)'s offices in Leamington Spa on 9 February 2012 to discuss future joint work.
5. Item 9 – YouGov has been appointed to undertake in-depth interviews and a quantitative survey of recent users of probate and estate administration services. The findings should be available in January and would inform the Panel's submission to the Legal Services Board (LSB).

**The Panel noted the matters arising.**

#### **Items 5 to 8 and 13 – Strategy session**

6. The Panel held a strategy session focusing on work over the past year, ways of working and future direction in 2012-13.

#### **Item 9 – Chair's report**

7. The Chair presented her report covering recent meetings.
8. In addition to the written report, the Chair noted:
  - that she would be attending a series of workshops as part of the Ministry of Justice's Triennial Reviews of the Legal Services Board and the Office for Legal Complaints; and
  - the Voluntary Quality Schemes report was presented to the LSB at the end of November and was well received. It was anticipated that the LSB would respond to the Panel's recommendations in February 2012.

**The Panel noted the Chair's report.**

#### **Item 10 – Members' updates**

9. Graham Corbett advised that he met with Elizabeth France and Adam Sampson from the Legal Ombudsman, as well as investigative staff, on 29 November, as summarised in the note circulated before the meeting. Graham also advised that that he had met with Judith Gledhill, Head of Personal Injury at Thompsons on 1 November and had scheduled a meeting with Fraser Whitehead from Russell Jones and Walker on 15 December.
10. Emma Harrison advised that the deaf consumers project was progressing well, with close to 50 interviews being undertaken and the final research report expected in late January 2012. Emma also noted that the project was likely to

result in a number of outputs, including guidance for solicitors, information for deaf consumers and a BSL video summary of the report.

11. Neil Wightman advised that he had attended a meeting of the Education and Training Review Consultative Steering Group on 10 November.

**The Panel noted the members' update.**

#### **Item 11– Comparison websites**

12. Graham Corbett and the Consumer Panel Manager presented the draft report on comparison websites.
13. The Panel members supported the report overall but suggested changes to the report structure. Key points raised in discussion included the interplay between best-practice and existing legislative requirements within the standards set for comparison websites, and the need to be explicit about why the Panel has undertaken this project.
14. Panel members were asked to provide any drafting comments to the Consumer Panel Manager directly.

**The Panel approved the draft report on comparison websites, subject to changes in line with comments made.**

#### **Item 12 – Consultation responses**

15. The Consumer Panel Associate presented a paper on recent and upcoming consultation responses.

**The Panel:**

- **agreed to provide comments electronically on the proposed response to the Legal Ombudsman's consultation on its Strategy (2012-1015) and Business Plan (2012-2013).**
- **agreed that a response should be made to the BSB consultation on public access rules.**

#### **Item 14 – Any other business**

16. None

#### **Item 15 – Draft agenda for next meeting: 8 February**

17. The Consumer Panel Manager presented the draft agenda for the 8 February 2012 meeting.

**The Panel agreed the draft agenda for the 8 February 2012 meeting.**