

Minutes

Legal Services Consumer Panel Meeting

Date: 27 February 2012

Time: 15:00 – 17:00hrs

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

Present:

Elisabeth Davies	Chair
Jeff Bell	Member
Paul Munden	Member
Neil Wightman	Member (Items 1-6)
Karin Woodley	Member
Steve Brooker	Consumer Panel Manager
Julie Myers	Legal Services Board (Item 5)
Abigail Plenty	Ministry of Justice (Item 5)

Item 1 – Welcome and apologies

1. The Chair welcomed the Legal Services Consumer Panel ('the Panel') and Abigail Plenty. The Chair noted apologies from Graham Corbett and Emma Harrison.

Item 2 – Declarations of interests

2. No declarations.

Item 3 – Minutes of the 14 December 2011 meeting

3. The Chair presented the Draft Minutes for the 8 February 2012 meeting.

The Panel approved the Minutes of 8 February 2012 subject to a minor drafting amendment.

Item 4 – Matters Arising from the Minutes

4. Item 9 - The Chair advised that the Panel's response to the LSB's call for evidence on will-writing, probate and estate administration had been submitted.

5. Item 11 – Karin Woodley advised that she, Graham Corbett and the Consumer Panel Manager had visited the Solicitors Regulation Authority on 9 March.
6. Item 12 – The Chair advised that a new Consumer Panel Associate had been appointed and would start work in May.

The Panel noted the matters arising.

Item 5 – Triennial Reviews

7. Abigail Plenty, Director of Civil Justice and Legal Services at the Ministry of Justice, briefed the Panel on the emerging findings of the Triennial Reviews of the LSB and Office for Legal Complaints.
8. The Panel members expressed their disappointment that discussions at the four stakeholder workshops to support the Triennial Reviews had seen little focus on outcomes for consumers. This was seen to confirm other evidence of weak consumer engagement by the approved regulators and to highlight the continued importance of maintaining a dedicated statutory consumer representative body in the sector.

The Panel noted the presentation and agreed to make a written submission to the Ministry of Justice by the end of March 2012.

Item 6 – Draft work programme for 2012-13

9. The Consumer Panel Manager presented the draft work programme document, which was the culmination of discussions at previous meetings.
10. The Chair invited Panel members to discuss the three narrative statements underpinning the 2012-13 work programme and the proposed projects.
11. The Panel endorsed all three of the narrative strands.
12. The Panel endorsed the proposed projects.
13. The Panel made some suggestions to reorder parts of the work programme document with the aim to increase the prominence of its key messages.

The Panel approved the work programme, subject to reordering parts of the document, for submission to the LSB Board on 28 March.

Item 7 – Ways of working: role of Panel members

14. The Chair presented a paper which took forward the Panel's previous discussions on ways of working, including the outcome of a skills review and preferred working styles; making the best use of Panel members' skills; allocation of Panel leads to topic areas; and the role of project leads/sponsors.
15. The Panel noted the need to manage resources carefully, especially in the next period until the Consumer Panel Associate started work.

16. The Panel members discussed various ways in which they might work together on projects and agreed the allocation of leads as a basis for going forwards.

The Panel noted the paper.

Item 12 – AOB

17. None.