



Minutes

Legal Services Consumer Panel meeting

Date: 1 July 2015

Time: 13:00-16:00

Venue: One Kemble Street, London WC2B 4AN

Present:

Elisabeth Davies	Chair
Cathy Gallagher	Member
Michelle Goddard	Member
Frances Harrison	Member
Philip Marsden	Member
Marlene Winfield	Member
Catherine Wolthuizen	Member
Stephanie Chapman	Consumer Panel Associate
Ramandeep Bhatti	Legal Services Board
Julie Myers	Legal Services Board
Caroline Wallace	Legal Services Board (Item 6 only)

Item 1 – Welcome and apologies

1. The Chair welcomed the Legal Services Consumer Panel ('The Panel'). The Chair advised that Andy Foster had sent his apologies.
2. The Chair reminded Panel Members to feedback on the proposed 2015 Panel meeting dates.

Item 2 – Declaration of interests

3. The Chair advised on 14 May 2015 she had attended a dinner hosted by the President of the Law Society at his Carey Street residence to discuss the themes from the Panel's 2020 Report.

Item 3 – Minutes of 29 April 2015

4. The Chair presented the draft minutes for the 29 April 2015 meeting.

The Panel approved the minutes of 29 April 2015.

Item 4 – Matters arising

5. Item 7 – the Chair advised that later in the meeting Cathy Gallagher would give an update on unbundling.

The Panel noted the matters arising.

Item 5 – Transparency

6. The Panel Associate presented a paper on transparency. In light of recent changes to the Legal Services Board's (LSB's) publication scheme, the Panel had decided to review whether any changes are required to the Panel's current approach to transparency.
7. The Panel discussed the recommendations outlined in the paper.

The Panel agreed:

- **to publish minutes no later than two weeks after each Panel meeting.**
- **to run one public event each year – in tandem with the LSB or alone.**
- **to update its website and clearly set out the Panel's ongoing commitment to transparency and approach towards the timeliness of publication.**

Item 6 – LSCP work programme and LSB research

8. The Chair welcomed Caroline Wallace (LSB Strategy Director) and presented a paper on the Panel's work programme and LSB research.
9. Caroline Wallace gave a short presentation about the LSB's commissions for the Panel this year, which are:
 - what kind of information regulators could collect from firms to aid consumer choice.
 - which areas of law should be priorities for the LSB's work on enabling the demand for legal services to be met.
10. In the course of the discussion the Panel discussed timings for each of the commissions, resource constraints and key issues to consider for each of the commissions.
11. The Chair advised that Michelle Goddard would be taking over from Frances Harrison and would represent the Panel at the LSB Research Strategy Group meetings, and thanked Frances for her representation so far.
12. It was noted that Caroline Wallace is supportive of the Panel's approach to the relationship between Panel leads and LSB Project Managers. However, it was recognised that there is some more work that needs to be done around this.

13. The Panel discussed how to work with the LSB on specific research projects and agreed it was best to be clear what to do at key decision points for projects and judge on a case by case basis.
14. The Panel also discussed how to ensure LSB staff understand the work of the Panel given the changes to both LSB and Panel staff. As a start, the Panel are to hold a 'lunch and learn' session for LSB staff, where they can meet the Panel. More generally, when thinking of external engagement, the Panel should also think of LSB engagement.

The Panel noted the paper and agreed to work on a joint working arrangement.

Item 7 – Chair's report and members update

15. The Chair presented her report on her recent activities.
16. Frances Harrison advised that she and the Panel Associate are delivering a consumer principles and consumer vulnerability training session at the Bar Standards Board (BSB) on 17 July 2015. Frances also advised that she visited the Law Clinic at Bristol University and met with the Clinic's Director, John Peake.
17. Cathy Gallagher advised that she and the Panel Associate attended a meeting at the BSB to discuss a consultation on new professional status for barristers.
18. Cathy also advised that publication of the unbundling report has been delayed, however work is still progressing and plans are being developed to hold a meeting with those that are active and interested in engaging.
19. Marlene Winfield advised that The Low Commission had recently published an interesting report entitled 'The Role of Advice Services in Health Outcomes'.

The Panel noted the Chair's report and updates from Panel Members.

Item 8 – Projects update

20. The Panel Associate advised that the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) had published its report on online reviews and endorsements. It was noted in the trade press that the Panel had commented on this area and a quote was issued.
21. Queen Mary University have given the Panel a draft proposal on the joint research project about complaints data, but still require an economist for the work.

The Panel noted the projects update and additional updates mentioned.

Item 9 – Consultation responses

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

The Panel noted:

- **Responses have been submitted to the SRA's consultation on *Improving Regulation; proportionate and targeted measures*; the BSB's consultation on *the Future Bar Training Consultation: The Professional Statement*.**
- **Since the paper was written the SRA have published a consultation on consumer credit regulation and have also invited comments on guidance around use of the separate business rule.**

Item 10 – Draft agenda for 30 September meeting

23. The Chair presented the proposed agenda for 30 September 2015 meeting.

The Panel agreed the proposed agenda for 30 September 2015 meeting.

Item 11 – Any other business

24. None.