



Minutes

Legal Services Consumer Panel meeting

Date: 29 April 2015
Time: 13:00-17:00
Venue: One Kemble Street, London WC2B 4AN

Present:

Elisabeth Davies	Chair
Andy Foster	Member
Cathy Gallagher	Member
Michelle Goddard	Member
Frances Harrison	Member
Philip Marsden	Member
Marlene Winfield	Member
Catherine Wolthuizen	Member
Steve Brooker	Consumer Panel Manager
Stephanie Chapman	Consumer Panel Associate
Ramandeep Bhatti	Legal Services Board
Jenny Hart	Legal Services Board

Item 1 – Welcome and apologies

1. The Chair welcomed the Legal Services Consumer Panel ('The Panel') and Jenny Hart who has recently joined the LSB as Business Planning Associate. The Chair advised that Julie Myers had sent her apologies as she is at the LSB Board meeting.

Item 2 – Declarations of interests

2. No conflicts noted.

Item 3 – Minutes of 25 February 2015 meeting

3. The Chair presented the draft minutes for the 25 February 2015 meeting.
4. Michelle Goddard advised of a slight change to point 22 in Item 13 - Any Other Business.

The Panel approved the minutes of 25 February 2015, subject to a minor change in the AOB section.

Item 4 – Matters arising

5. In relation to item 4, the Chair advised she had written to BEUC asking them to review their criteria for affiliate membership. Monique Goyens, the Director General, had replied reiterating the desire for continued close working and advising us that the matter will be discussed at the Executive Committee meeting in June.

Item 5 – Annual report

6. The Panel Manager presented the Draft Annual Report 2015 for the Panel's approval. An update on the financial information was also provided, which outlined the budget headings compared to 2014-15.
7. Panel Members suggested some drafting and terminology changes to the middle chapters.

In line with suggested changes, The Panel approved the Draft Annual Report 2015, which will be presented to the LSB Board on 27 May.

Item 6 – Self-regulation: principles for engagement

8. Catherine Wolthuizen presented a paper proposing a set of draft self-regulation principles to guide judgements on whether to engage with particular self-regulation initiatives on a case by case basis.

The Panel approved the principles and agreed they should be reviewed in 12 months.

Item 7 – Unbundling

9. Cathy Gallagher introduced a paper on unbundling legal services, including a draft report prepared by Ipsos MORI.
10. The Panel discussed the policy implications of the research and how it intended to take forward the work on unbundled legal services. Points raised in the discussion include:
 - Consumers currently appear to be discovering unbundling by chance not by intent since it is apparently not actively marketed by lawyers
 - What other information is already available on unbundled legal services that the Panel can use to inform its work
 - There are concerns around consumer protection and redress that need to be addressed which could help enable the market to thrive without chilling innovation
 - The right framework needs to be put in place to deliver safely unbundled legal services – including understanding how providers address issues around ascertaining consumers' capability to use unbundled services
 - Whether there is a viable market for unbundled services for low income consumers is a question that will not be resolved by this research and require further investigation

- The Panel could bring together organisations from different sectors to help map out this work e.g. Civil Justice Council, Law Works, Bar Council, The Law Society.

The Panel agreed to set-up a working group to discuss these points and next steps. The Chair and Cathy Gallagher will email Panel Members to set this up.

Item 8 – Stakeholder engagement

11. Marlene Winfield introduced a paper on stakeholder engagement. The paper invited Panel Members to discuss the Panel's approach to stakeholder engagement to deliver the 2015-16 work programme and wider organisational objectives.
12. Panel Members discussed the priorities for stakeholder engagement, which included: more direct engagement with providers, exploring different ways of working and identifying new stakeholders not familiar with the work of the Panel.
13. The Panel also discussed whether current engagement included the right spread of stakeholders. It was noted that engagement with stakeholders would depend on each of the Panel's initiatives and their outcomes. Moving forward, there should be the set of core stakeholders and then also an additional database of stakeholders that relate to each of the different projects.
14. The Panel discussed additional methods of engagement with stakeholders, including:
 - Regular speaking engagements could help secure more coverage in the press
 - The Panel could consider hosting a meeting once or twice a year where key issues and reports can be discussed
 - More guest speakers at Panel meetings could be a good way to reach out to more stakeholders
 - 'Panel lite' meetings could be an effective way of engaging, whereby two or three Panel Members meet with various stakeholders as opposed to trying to arrange a full or additional Panel led meeting

The Panel agreed to reflect the discussions in future planning of projects and Panel meetings and to review our stakeholder engagement approach in 12 months time.

Item 9 – Chair's report and members' updates

15. The Chair presented her report covering recent meetings and speaking engagements.
16. In addition to the report the Chair advised she and Marlene Winfield attended the OLC Board meeting on 21 April 2015, where they talked through the Panel's strategy and relationship between The Panel and the Board. The Chair and the Panel Associate also met with Kathryn King, Interim Chief Ombudsman at the Legal Ombudsman on 23 April 2015.

The Panel noted the Chair's report and additional items raised.

Item 10 – Projects update

17. The Panel Associate gave an outline of her work programme over the next 3 months.

The Panel noted the Projects update and additional update from the Panel Associate.

Item 11 – Consultation responses

18. The Consumer Panel Manager presented a paper on recent and upcoming consultation responses.

The Panel noted:

- **Responses have been submitted to the QC Appointments consultation on Eligibility for appointment as a QC, the Competition and Markets Authority consultation on Call for information – online reviews and endorsements, the CLC’s consultation on Compensation Fund Operating Framework and the LSB’s consultation on Practising restrictions for in-house lawyers.**

Item 12 – Draft agenda for 1 July meeting

19. The Chair presented the proposed agenda for 1 July 2015 meeting and advised it is deliberately outline to account for the staff vacancy until August and to offer maximum flexibility.

The Panel agreed the proposed agenda for 1 July 2015.

Item 13 – Any other business

20. The Chair advised that time needed to be scheduled for annual appraisals of Panel Members and she would be arranging 1:1 catch-ups with each of the Members. She also advised that Members needed to appraise the Chair and that one Panel Member should lead this process and feed this information back to Mike Pitt.

21. The Chair noted this is the Panel Manager’s final Panel meeting after 5 ½ years with the Panel. She took the time to thank Steve for all his hard work and commitment.