FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 2026

Consumer Panel welcomes LSB commitment to put consumers at the center of legal services regulation

The Legal Services Consumer Panel has welcomed the Legal Services Board's response to the Public Bodies Review, and its commitment to focus on the greatest risks to consumers. The Panel looks forward to supporting the LSB as that focus is carried through all of its work, including its oversight of regulators.

The LSB has accepted all of the review's recommendations directed at it. It has set out plans to direct most of its resources towards consumer protection, through stronger and more targeted oversight of frontline regulators and the Office for Legal Complaints.

The Panel particularly welcomes the LSB's commitments to:

- take earlier and firmer action where regulators fall short, including its stronger oversight of the Solicitors Regulation Authority following recent firm failures
- drive up standards in complaints handling and support the Legal Ombudsman to resolve complaints more quickly
- improve transparency so that consumers can make choices that are right for them
- build a shared picture of risk across the sector, drawing on data and on evidence of consumers' experiences
- set clear outcomes and measure the difference its work makes for the public

People turn to legal services at some of the most important moments in their lives. They need to trust the help they get, and to be protected when things go wrong.

The LSB's new Enforcement Challenge Panel, and the Board Regulatory Oversight Committee it plans to set up by spring 2027, offer a valuable opportunity to build a strong consumer lens into its new approach to oversight. The Panel would welcome the chance to bring consumer evidence and insight to this work.

The LSB has also committed to review how it works with the Panel, so that it can make better use of the Panel's insights and expertise to focus its oversight on areas of significant consumer harm. The Panel was established under the Legal Services Act 2007 as the independent voice of consumers in legal services regulation. It looks forward to working with the LSB on this review, and to ensuring that consumer evidence continues to shape regulatory decisions.

The LSB will consult on its new strategy for 2027 to 2030 and its future budget in the coming months. The Panel will respond, and will look for clear priorities, measurable results for consumers and value for money.

Tom Hayhoe, Chair of the Legal Services Consumer Panel, said:
"The Panel welcomes the LSB's commitment to put consumers at the heart of its work. Stronger oversight of regulators, better complaints handling and faster redress will make a real difference to the people who use legal services.

Consumer protection is a core regulatory skill, and it is strongest when it runs through everything a regulator does, including oversight. As the statutory voice of consumers, we look forward to working with the LSB to make that a reality."

Notes to editors
The Legal Services Consumer Panel was established under the Legal Services Act 2007 to provide independent advice to the Legal Services Board about the interests of consumers of legal services in England and Wales. The Panel considers issues that affect consumers and uses evidence and data collated to influence decisions about the regulation of legal services.

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