



## LSCC Advisory Board and Legal Services Consumer Board

### Minutes

8 February 2007

#### Attendees

Zahida Manzoor (The Commissioner – Chair)

Stephen Boys Smith (Member)

Colin Brown (Member)

Countess Eglinton of Winton (Member)

Steven Silver (Member)

Les Courtnell (OLSCC)

Lorraine Jackson (OLSCC)

Bronwyn Baker (OLSCC)

Anita Holmes (OLSCC)

Janice Revill (OLSCC – Secretariat)

#### Apologies

Rob Chester (Member)

Malcolm Hurlston (Member)

Michael G Wilson (Member)

David Harker (Member)

George Seligman (Member)

Louise Hanson (Member)

Professor Avrom Sherr (Member)

Professor Dame Hazel Genn (Member)

Professor Shamit Saggat (Chair, LCS Board)

Deborah Evans (Chief Executive, LCS)

### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

1.1 The Commissioner welcomed members to the joint meeting of the LSCC Advisory Board and Legal Services Consumer Board.

1.2 The Commissioner explained that due to the severe weather conditions and the disruption to travel, several Board members were unable to attend the meeting. Professor Shamit Saggat, Chair of the Board for Legal Complaints Service and Deborah Evans, Chief Executive of Legal Complaints Service (LCS) were also unable to attend the meeting. It was agreed that the discussion with Professor Saggat and Deborah Evans would be rescheduled for a future Board meeting.

### **2. Legal Services Reforms**

2.1 OLSCC updated the Board members on the progress of the legal reforms. The Legal Services Bill had been published in November and introduced to the House of Lords. The Bill was currently at Committee Stage in the House of Lords.

2.2 There are areas within the Bill, which the Commissioner feels need improvement to ensure it meets the needs of the consumer. Discussions regarding these issues, between the Department and the Commissioner, are ongoing.

### **3. Work of the OLSCC**

- 3.1 OLSCC updated Board members on the year to date performance of the Law Society against its complaints handling plan.
- 3.2 The Commissioner had formally set the Law Society's targets for 2007/08 in December 2006. The Commissioner thanked Board members for their contribution and support during the target setting process.
- 3.3 The Law Society had submitted a draft plan for 2007/08 to the Commissioner. The Commissioner had provided comments on the draft plan and was expecting the final version on 23 February. The Commissioner will make her decision on whether she considers the Plan to be adequate by 9 March.
- 3.4 OLSCC updated Board members on the recent audits which had been undertaken. Results of the audits will be communicated to Board members and published on the OLSCC website.

### **4. Consumer Strategy**

- 4.1 OLSCC had prepared two draft documents – a consumer guide to probate and a suggested protocol for effective handling of legal complaints. It is intended that these documents form part of the overall Consumer Strategy. Board members were asked to review the documents and feedback comments to OLSCC.

### **5. Closure**

- 5.1 The next meeting is due to be held on **3 May** in London. This will be a joint meeting of the Advisory and Consumer Board.
- 5.2 The Commissioner thanked Board members for their attendance and valuable contribution to the discussions.