

Company number: 04608905

MINUTES
Costs Lawyer Standards Board Ltd
Wednesday 22 January 2020 at 10.30 am
The Studio, 7 Cannon Street, Birmingham

Present: Steve Winfield (Chair): Lay NED
Gillian Milburn (Vice-Chair): Lay NED
Tracyanne Ayliffe: Non-Lay NED
Stephanie McIntosh: Lay NED
Paul McCarthy: Non-Lay NED

In attendance: Kate Wellington (Company Secretary and CEO)
Andrew Harvey (incoming Lay NED)
Andrew McAulay (incoming Non-Lay NED)

1. QUORUM, APOLOGIES, DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & GUESTS

- 1.1 The Chair declared the meeting quorate. There were no apologies.
- 1.2 There were no declarations of interest on any agenda item.
- 1.3 Steve introduced the two incoming board members. He welcomed them to the meeting as observers and encouraged them to ask questions on any agenda items.

2. MINUTES

2.1 Minutes dated 23 October 2019

The board considered the minutes of its last scheduled quarterly meeting on 23 October 2019. The board approved two minor amendments and agreed the minutes as being a true record for signing.

Action: Publish minutes on CLSB website

2.2 Matters arising

The board considered the matters arising from the minutes of its meeting on 23 October 2019. There were no matters arising that had not been scheduled as agenda items or otherwise dealt with.

3. STRATEGY

3.1 Structure and resourcing

Kate updated the board on resourcing requirements following structural changes in November 2019. She noted that, despite resourcing challenges during the period, the changes had been successful and the CLSB had continued to exercise its core functions and meet all its additional commitments to the LSB and other stakeholders.

Kate also provided feedback on her recent review of operational performance and highlighted a number of areas in which reform and modernisation were necessary. She highlighted the challenges to the CLSB in resolving these issues in 2020 while continuing to improve regulatory performance (through delivery of the Business Plan)

and carrying out core functions within budget. Success would require the organisation to be disciplined and focused in its prioritisation, and to implement a structure that is nimble and responsive.

Kate put forward short-term staffing proposals, including bringing in more IT expertise on a consultancy basis and potentially increasing the working days of the newly appointed Administration Manager (to assist with the implementation of operational reforms). The board discussed how resource requirements were being impacted by the ongoing practising certificate renewals process and how other workstreams would be prioritised once that process was complete. Overall, the board supported Kate's proposals and was content for them to be implemented without the need for further board approval of specific budget items prior to the April board meeting.

Kate also conveyed concerns that had been raised by the LSB about the CLSB's resources immediately following the structural changes in November. The LSB was understandably keen to ensure that the CLSB continued to perform its regulatory functions during the transition period. The board was provided with correspondence from the LSB as well as Kate's response, which offered reassurance and detailed the steps taken to mitigate risk and procure new support.

The board noted the concerns raised. Although adequate resourcing would remain a key focus for the board in 2020, it considered the immediate issues to have been successfully resolved. The board thanked Kate for her work in steering the organisation through the transition period.

4. BOARD MATTERS

4.1 Formal appointment of board members

The board was provided with feedback on the interview and selection process for the appointment of the new board members. The interview panels unanimously recommended the appointment of Andrew McAulay and Andrew Harvey as Non-Lay and Lay NEDs respectively, for an initial period of one year commencing 23 January 2020 with the possibility of reappointment for up to six years. Those appointments were confirmed by the board.

Action: Update Companies House details and internal registers to reflect retirements and appointments as approved

4.2 KPI monitoring

The board considered updates to the Performance Indicators document that had been adopted at the October meeting. The intention was to report on performance against the governance and strategy metrics toward the end of 2020, however the board had discussed in October whether the operational metrics (service standards) required updating.

The board was concerned that the operational metrics had been self-selected, and thus may be biased toward areas where standards are likely to be high. The purpose of, and audience for, the metrics was discussed and the board concluded that: success against a number of the metrics was likely to have little practical impact on the regulated community; the metrics did not paint a holistic picture of what the CLSB does and how;

the metrics were overly focused on delivering service to Costs Lawyers (in terms of application processing times etc) rather than consumers or the public. There was a desire to identify more objective measures covering a broader range of activity.

The board felt that the regulatory data requested by the LSB would better serve this purpose, since the LSB monitored all Approved Regulators on areas that the LSB had identified as being in the public interest. The board therefore agreed to replace the operational metrics with the more objective regulatory data as soon as data could be collated for the 2019 practising year. This would “rerack” the Performance Indicators document for the new year and provide benchmark data for comparison in 2020.

Actions: Collate regulatory data for 2019 and update Performance Indicators as agreed; Publish on website

4.3 Appointment of new Vice Chair

The retirement of Gill Milburn from the board left a vacancy for the position of Vice Chair. Steve thanked Gill for her service in the role and recommended the appointment of Stephanie as Gill’s successor, Stephanie being the more senior of the Lay NEDs. The board approved Stephanie’s appointment as Vice Chair.

4.4 2020 board meeting dates

To accommodate the diaries of newly appointed members, the board reconsidered its meeting dates for the remainder of 2020. The board agreed to hold the July meeting on Tuesday 21 July 2020 in London and the October meeting on Tuesday 20 October 2020 in Leeds.

5. FINANCE

5.1 Quarterly report: Q4 2019

The board considered the financial position at the end of Q4 and noted the overspend against budget. This was primarily due to organisational restructuring which was not anticipated at the time the budget was set in June 2018. The board was conscious that an overspend may be perceived negatively by stakeholders, but that the contextual narrative of organisational change and progress was very positive. The cost of restructuring was a necessary part of the journey toward significant reform and improvement. The board agreed that this should be communicated openly to the regulated community when consulting on the 2021 PCF.

The board discussed the most prudent way of funding the overspend. It was agreed that it should be partially met from the operating account surplus and partially from the reserve account, in line with the CLSB’s Reserves Policy. The board noted that this approach would be appropriate under both the existing Reserves Policy and the proposed amended Reserves Policy that would be discussed at Item 5.3.

5.2 2020 practising certificates

The board was provided with the LSB’s formal decision approving the 2020 PCF and Kate updated the board on the practising certificate renewal process. As at 16 January, 614 applications had been processed and 584 practising certificates issued (the delta being due to late payments or missing documents).

Kate identified a number of significant difficulties that were created by the timing of the renewal process and its manual nature, including the use of hard copy forms sent by post. Kate put forward proposals for reforming the process going forward, designed to save cost, minimise risk, and improve efficiency and data security. These reforms would involve: introducing digitalised application forms for the 2021 renewals process; moving the application deadline forward to 30 November from 31 December; reworking the Register of Costs Lawyers.

The board supported the proposed reforms and discussed their likely impact, including how they might be perceived by the profession. The board discussed whether a transitional approach was necessary for the first one or two years of a new system. The Non-Lay NEDs were of the view that the regulated community should be experienced with electronic processes, given the need for Costs Lawyers to be familiar with electronic bills or online systems used in legal aid cases. Electronic forms would likely be preferable for many, as they could be accessed from the home or office, and shared with finance departments for payment. On balance, the board concluded that transitional arrangements were unlikely to be necessary, particularly given the complexity they would add, but agreed that applicants should be informed that reasonable adjustments could be made where necessary (for example on the basis of disability).

The board discussed what the ideal system might look like, but appreciated the need for proportionality and cost effectiveness. Thus, the CLSB would need to prioritise the functionality that would make the most difference in terms of user experience, cost and time savings, and risk mitigation. The board was keen to ensure clarity of purpose from the outset of developing a new system with a comprehensive plan in place for delivery this year.

The board discussed whether it was appropriate to move the application deadline to November from December, or whether more wholesale change was required (such as changing the practising year dates). The pros and cons of the various options were considered, and on balance the board agreed that the deadline should be moved to November in conjunction with streamlining the operational aspects of the process; together, these changes should see considerable efficiency improvements. This would be reviewed after the next renewal process.

Consequential issues were considered, such as whether the November deadline would impact CPD attainment and how the payment process could be enhanced. Kate noted the board's suggestions, which would feed into planning for the reforms.

5.3 Amended Reserves Policy

The LSB's decision on the 2020 PCF application highlighted the need for the CLSB to amend its Reserves Policy to reflect the new PCF level. Kate had taken the opportunity to reconsider the Policy more broadly, as it had not been recently updated, and the board was provided with an amended version for consideration.

The board discussed the proposed amendments. It was agreed that the reserves target should be framed as a concept not a fixed amount, given that expenditure and

income (and thus reserve requirements) would inevitably change over time. In practice, at the time of setting the budget and again at year end the board would consider the most recent annual expenditure figure against the existing level of reserves and assess what further contribution, if any, needed to be made to the reserves. The description of the operating reserves target should be amended to reflect this.

The board adopted the amended Reserves Policy subject to this amendment, to supersede the previous version dated 24 October 2018.

Action: Adopt amended Reserves Policy into CLSB Operations Manual

5.4 Cost of living wage increase

The board considered the annual standing item of a pay rise across all employees to reflect the increasing cost of living. Projected inflation for 2020 was 2.1%, with inflation in 2019 being reported as 1.8%. On this basis, Kate recommended a salary increase of 1.95% (the average of the two figures) for all staff, implemented from 1 March 2020.

The board approved the increase of 1.95%, noting that the day rate for Panel Members and NEDs should be rounded to the nearest £5 for simplicity.

Action: Liaise with payroll to implement approved cost of living wage increase from 1 March 2020

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

6.1 Review of risk registers

The board reviewed the risk registers and considered whether any new risks should be added, any existing risks removed or any risk scores changed.

The board discussed risk OP2 (*unavailability of CEO or HoO on an unexpected or unplanned basis*) in detail. The board agreed that the description of the risk should be updated to cover all business continuity risks flowing from the CLSB's evolving organisational structure, rather than being focused on the absence of an individual. The impact score should remain at 5 and the probability score at 3, but with controls meaning the probability score should fall over time.

The board considered risk OP5 (*sanction for data protection non-compliance*) in detail given agenda item 6.2 (*data protection compliance review*). The board agreed that the risk was wider than the imposition of a sanction and should be couched around non-compliance generally, the potential consequences of which included sanctions but also reputational damage and harm to the public or the regulated community. The impact score remained high (given the potential level of fines) but the probability score should also increase, given that there was scope for non-compliance while the outcomes of the data protection compliance review were actioned during Q1. The board agreed that this risk was now "red", but should be "amber" or "green" by the next board meeting. The controls for the risk should be updated to reflect the workstreams identified under the compliance review.

The board considered whether risks R1 (*first tier complaints procedure not communicated*), R2 (*Costs Lawyers receiving client monies*) and R3 (*insurance*) remained relevant, given the lack of evidence of the risks materialising over a long period of time. It was agreed that risk R2 (*Costs Lawyers receiving client monies*) remained a standalone risk, particularly as the proportion of lay client instructions was increasing. However, the board felt that R1 and R3 were just two examples of how a regulatory failure might manifest; a broader risk should be registered (encompassing R1 and R3) covering the CLSB's overall responsibility for setting and maintaining standards. The controls in the register should record the steps taken to prevent poor consumer outcomes and, where they cannot be prevented, to ensure the CLSB can take clear and decisive action.

The board also agreed the following amendments to the registers:

- adjust the wording of OP3 (*no means of entry into the profession*) to reflect that this risk had become about ongoing take-up of the qualification rather than the existence of a route of entry (agenda item 12.1);
- reduce the probability score for OP6 (*breakdown in communications between ACL/ACL Training and CLSB*) from 3 to 2, to reflect ongoing improvements in those relationships;
- update the controls for OP7 (*no-deal Brexit*) following the LSB's approval of the CLSB's proposed new regulatory arrangements for MRPQ (agenda item 7.4);
- update the controls for OP8 (*retirement of board members in close succession*) to reflect new NED appointments, dropping the probability rating to 1 with a view to removing this risk altogether once the board has been able to assess whether the skills mix is adequate over the course of the new members' first year;
- reduce the probability score for R4 (*CLSB cannot generate sufficient evidence about the consumer dimension of the market*) to level 2, to reflect implementation of the new Consumer Engagement Strategy (agenda item 7.5).

The Non-Lay board members agreed there had not been any practice area developments that necessitated changes to risk OP1. The implementation of fixed recoverable costs proposals had been delayed and the status of the reforms was not yet clear.

Actions: Update risk ratings as agreed; Post updated versions of the risk registers on the website

6.2 Data protection compliance review

The board had agreed at its October meeting that the impact and probability rating for risk OP5 (*sanction for data protection non-compliance*) should increase and that a routine compliance review was warranted.

Kate updated the board on progress with the review and presented a proposed new Data Protection Manual, drawing all the CLSB's data protection policies and procedures into a single up-to-date document. This would render the existing Data Security Policy obsolete.

The board agreed the timeline for the proposed actions arising out of the review. The board felt the new Data Protection Manual was comprehensive and easy to follow, and approved it for adoption at an appropriate juncture prior to the next board meeting.

Actions: Revoke Data Security Policy and replace with Data Protection Manual; Progress actions from review

7. REGULATORY MATTERS

7.1 Disciplinary Rules and Procedures consultation

Kate noted that the Disciplinary Rules and Procedures consultation had closed on 15 November 2019 and provided the board with a summary of the substantive responses received. The responses were supportive of the proposals, offering useful feedback on points of detail. Kate also noted that a response had been received from a Costs Lawyer who felt the consultation contained too much detail. This feedback would need to be balanced against the LSB's requirement to adopt a more thorough consultation process, and the LSCP's request for the inclusion of more detail in future consultations. Tracyanne noted that a summary of the consultation questions on a single page would be a helpful addition to future consultation papers.

Kate explained that, for the first time, the CLSB would publish a consultation outcome document to ensure transparency and accountability around the consultation process. This would become usual CLSB practice going forward.

Kate updated the board on progress with the rule change application following the consultation. The aim was to introduce the new rules by May, with further guidance to complement the rules being ready for the board's consideration in April. The board noted the position.

Actions: Prepare guidance for board consideration in April; Include a summary of consultation questions in future consultation documents

7.2 Practising Rules review

Kate presented the findings of a recent review of the CLSB's practising arrangements, including proposals for amendments to the Practising Rules. She explained that the review had taken into account upcoming changes to the CLSB's Disciplinary Rules and Procedures and CPD Rules, and that the new rules sought to refresh what had become outdated and inconsistent requirements.

The board discussed the proposed new rules. Board members agreed that the disclosure requirements should be reordered so they were grouped by subject matter, helping to ensure that the forms which supported the Practising Rules would be clear for practitioners. It was also agreed that the definition of ACL was confusing and should be simplified.

The board identified other possible inconsistencies or redundancies in the Rules (for example, whether it was correct to distinguish between a Costs Lawyer and an applicant). The board discussed these issues and agreed that the language used was correct and appropriate, subject to any confusion identified through the consultation process.

Subject to the above, the board approved the proposed Practising Rules for consultation.

Action: Launch consultation on new Practising Rules

7.3 Handbook Audit: Phase 1

Kate updated the board on progress against the workstreams arising from the audit of the Costs Lawyer Handbook that was carried out in 2019. Phase 1 of the content review was due to be completed by the end of the year and Kate reported that this had been achieved.

In addition to progress on the Disciplinary Rules and Procedures (agenda item 7.1) and Practising Rules (agenda item 7.2), a consultation on new CPD arrangements was launched in November 2019 mirroring the report provided to the board in October and including a new template form for recording CPD with a worked example. Kate noted that the consultation was due to close on 2 February 2020 and provided initial feedback from the four responses received to date. The board noted the position.

Two guidance documents, relating to Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) and Reserved Legal Activity (RLA) Rights, were also considered under Phase 1. Kate explained that the current ADR guidance was prepared in 2015 upon implementation of The Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes (Competent Authorities and Information) Regulations 2015. Those Regulations had become well established and many of the issues addressed in the guidance had either been resolved or were not directly relevant to Costs Lawyers. Kate recommended revoking the guidance and replacing it with more relevant guidance around the intersection between the Legal Ombudsman and approved ADR schemes under the Regulations. This could be done in the course of updating the guidance on Complaints Procedures. The board considered this recommendation and approved the proposal.

The guidance on RLA Rights had been flagged for updating due to a discrete point that was raised by an industry commentator in relation to whether RLA Rights can be delegated. Kate explained that a review of the recent case law had been carried out. This indicated that the existing RLA Rights guidance was accurate but could be augmented to make the position clearer.

The board agreed that clarification was warranted and that there was a real risk of poor consumer outcomes if the rules around delegation were not properly understood. The board discussed how the guidance could be more clearly linked to the Code of Conduct on this point and whether other issues should be expressly addressed, such as insurance provision and responsibility for the oversight of delegated tasks. The Non-Lay board members provided input on understanding and perception of this issue within the regulated community. The board asked Kate to ensure that these elements were captured in the updated guidance and suggested that awareness of the issue be raised in a communication to Costs Lawyers.

Actions: Revoke ADR guidance; Publish updated RLA Rights guidance

7.4 Changes to MRPQ rules upon a no-deal Brexit

Kate updated the board on progress with preparations for Brexit. In the event of a no deal Brexit, changes would be required to the CLSB's regulatory arrangements relating to the mutual recognition of professional qualifications (MRPQ) for lawyers with EU qualifications.

Kate explained that the LSB had now approved proposed amendments to the MRPQ regime, which would take effect in a no deal scenario, under Exemption Direction 133. The LSB had confirmed that its approval remained valid unless and until new information about the exit negotiations came to light. The board noted the position.

7.5 Consumer Engagement Strategy

Steve introduced this item. In October, the board had considered an interim report on Costs Lawyers and Consumers. The next phase of that project was to develop a new Consumer Engagement Strategy, establishing a framework for building on and utilising the CLSB's consumer evidence base going forward. The board was asked to consider a draft Consumer Engagement Strategy, covering the same period as the wider organisational strategy (2020 to 2023), highlighting priorities for each year and the anticipated outcome by the end of the period.

The board considered the proposal and discussed the envisaged activities and timings. Board members agreed that the document was accessible and concise. They supported the staged approach, allowing adjustment of the strategy to reflect continual learning. The strategy would also directly address risk R4 in the risk register, bringing down the rating for this risk over time.

The board agreed to adopt the Consumer Engagement Strategy. It also agreed to revoke the existing Consumer and Potential Consumer Engagement Strategy that was developed in 2016, which relied on a notion of consumers that had been superseded by recent work.

The board felt that this issue met the criteria for a Board Decision Note (BDN) as set out in the Transparent Decision Policy and asked Kate to prepare a draft BDN for approval at the April meeting. The board considered whether any other matters on the agenda had resulted in a final decision that warranted a BDN. Board members identified a number of candidates for future BDNs, but it was agreed that none were necessary at this stage.

Action: Publish Consumer Engagement Strategy on website; Revoke previous Consumer and Potential Consumer Engagement Strategy; Prepare BDN on consumer engagement for approval at April board meeting

8. LEGAL SERVICES BOARD (LSB)

8.1 Updated regulatory assessment

The board was provided with the LSB's latest assessment of the CLSB's regulatory performance, published in December 2019, as well as a summary report of all the Approved Regulators' (ARs') performance for context.

The board noted that the CLSB's performance scores were contextualised by the LSB's commentary that: *"CLSB has made considerable progress since the transitional review and the LSB has maintained close contact with CLSB throughout the year. The work of the new Chief Executive with support from the Board has resulted in very positive progress on each of the unmet outcomes. At this stage in the reform of the CLSB procedures and practices, none of the [outstanding] outcomes have yet been met. This is not surprising given the extent of the changes required but the LSB recognises the amount of effort which has contributed to a noticeable difference in the performance of CLSB."*

The board agreed that this reflected the significant reforms the CLSB was undertaking and board members were pleased with the breadth of progress that had been achieved in a short time period. Board members hoped that the pace of progress would see some of the scores upgraded in coming months.

The board noted the suggestion in the regulatory assessment that the CLSB's scores against standards WL3 and WL4 were unlikely to improve unless and until the CLSB published board papers, in addition to detailed board minutes and Board Decision Notes. The board considered again the pros and cons of publishing board papers. Board members felt that publication was neither proportionate to the CLSB's resources nor necessary for transparency (given other effective measures), and could in some cases create unnecessary concern or instability within the sector. These factors did not, however, apply to publication of board meeting agendas, and the board agreed to publish agendas (in advance) from April 2020 onward.

The board also considered the approach taken by certain other ARs that had achieved a "met" rating against standards WL3 and WL4, and noted that several of those ARs did not appear to publish board papers at all. The board therefore asked Kate to collate information on the approaches taken by other ARs, tracked against their

regulatory assessment scores, to facilitate further consideration of the issue at the April meeting.

Actions: Publish agenda for April board meeting on website in advance; Compile report on ARs' approach to board paper publication as against WL3 and WL4 assessment scores

8.2 Internal Governance Rules (IGRs)

Kate updated the board on progress with agreeing an updated MOU between ACL and the CLSB, which was a necessary step in complying with the IGRs. There had been some delay in ACL producing and sharing a first draft, but Kate envisaged this would come to the board for consideration and approval in April. The board noted the position.

Action: Bring draft MOU to April board meeting

8.3 LSB business plan consultation

The board was informed that the LSB was consulting on its business plan and budget for 2020 to 2021, with responses due by 14 February 2020. The board noted that a budget increase of 3.3% was proposed, which would take the LSB's total budget from £3.798 million to £3.923 million. The levy per regulated Costs Lawyer would therefore increase and the board considered the potential impact of this.

The board noted other key workstreams proposed in the business plan, particularly in relation to contingency planning, but agreed that a formal response to the consultation was not warranted given competing priorities.

9. LEGAL SERVICES CONSUMER PANEL (LSCP)

9.1 Work update

The board received an update on the LSCP's work on quality indicators. Kate also noted that the LSCP had engaged constructively with recent CLSB consultations. The board was pleased that the relationship was proving fruitful.

10. LEGAL OMBUDSMAN (LeO)

10.1 Service complaints position

The board was informed that there had been no service complaints against Costs Lawyers made to LeO during the last quarter.

10.2 Work update

The board was informed that the Office for Legal Complaints was consulting on its mid-term strategy and business plan for 2020 to 2021, with responses due by 14 February 2020. Kate noted that a number of new initiatives were being proposed, primarily aimed at further reducing front-end wait times for users and improving the feedback loop to the regulated community. While consumers of Costs Lawyers' services rarely complain to LeO, the CLSB would support these initiatives both in principle and in practice insofar as relevant.

Kate noted that to fund the initiatives LeO was proposing a 20% budget increase for the coming year, with the budget then falling slightly for the following two years, and that the consultation was silent as to the impact this would have on the levy paid by

the ARs to fund LeO's activities. Kate had discussed this with LeO and it seemed the £5,000 de minimis contribution that applied to the CLSB would not change. The board noted the position and Kate agreed to keep it under review.

11. REPRESENTATION (ACL)

11.1 Council minutes

The board noted the minutes of ACL Council meetings on 16 August 2019 and 17 October 2019.

11.2 Work update

Kate reported that the ACL Vice Chair would be deputising for the ACL Chair over the coming months and should be the CLSB's primary point of contact during that period. Kate also noted that she would be speaking at the ACL Legal Aid Group's conference in March, covering CLSB's strategy and priorities with a focus on how they might affect Costs Lawyers in practice. The board noted these matters.

12. EDUCATION

12.1 Costs Lawyer Qualification update

Kate confirmed that there has been sufficient interest for ACLT to run the Costs Lawyer Qualification in 2020. Inductions had recently taken place and were reportedly a success. The board was provided with statistics and information in relation to the new intake.

Tracyanne mentioned that she was aware of some students who had been interested in the course but could not start in January, and the board considered whether a September intake (realigning the course to the academic year) would be beneficial. Kate agreed to provide feedback to ACLT on this issue.

The board noted that the number of exemption applications had been positively impacted by adjustments to the course running order and board members were pleased to see that this had made the course more accessible to a wider range of students. It was hoped that more prospective students would appreciate how their existing legal qualifications could help them become a Costs Lawyer in future years.

The board agreed that sustainability of the course would need to be monitored, but that the 2020 intake was a positive development for the future of the profession.

Action: Provide feedback to ACLT

13. OPERATIONAL MATTERS

13.1 Website usage

In October, the board asked Kate to explore options for changing the CLSB domain suffix away from .info to .org.uk or .co.uk or similar. Kate reported that domain names which include the term "clsb" are already owned by the City of London School and provided alternative options. The board discussed the options. It was agreed that any domain with the root costslawyerstandardsboard would be too long and other options were less attractive than the current domain. The .info suffix should therefore be retained and usage statistics should be reconsidered following wider review of the website as a whole.

Board members noted that consumers and members of the public were unlikely to search for the regulator by name in any event. Tests showed that clsb.info appeared in the first page of results for likely consumer searches, so long as the term “Costs Lawyer” was used in the search. Other hits included the Legal Ombudsman and ACL websites, which linked back to the CLSB website. It was agreed that, in development of the new website, thought should be given to potential searches that do not include the term “Costs Lawyer”.

Kate asked the board for early feedback on how the new website should look and feel. The board discussed the branding, user journey, accessibility and SEO optimisation aspects of the new site. It was agreed that detailed thought must be given to the different audiences for the site (Costs Lawyers, consumers, students, the wider public etc), their level of assumed knowledge and their likely pathway through the site. Andrew H and Stephanie offered to assist with testing and development as lay users.

14. AOB

Steve thanked the outgoing board members (Gill and Tracyanne) for their support, effort and commitment to the CLSB over many years. The board also thanked Kate for her continued efforts in reforming the organisation’s ways of working and the progress made to date.

15. NEXT SCHEDULED QUARTERLY MEETING

Date: Wednesday 22 April 2020 @ 10.30am

Location: The Studio, Cannon Street, Birmingham

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting closed.

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Chair

Related documents

Item	Document	Publication location (CLSB website)
2.1	CLSB board minutes – 23 October 2019	About us ⇨ Our board
4.2	Performance Indicators	About us ⇨ Strategy and governance
6.1	Risk registers	About us ⇨ Strategy and governance
7.1	DR&P consultation outcome	Regulatory matters ⇨ Consultations
7.3	CPD consultation	Regulatory matters ⇨ Consultations
7.3	Guidance notes	For Costs Lawyers ⇨ Costs Lawyer Handbook
7.5	Consumer Engagement Strategy	About us ⇨ Strategy and governance
Item	Document	Publication location (other)
5.2	PCF application decision letter	LSB website here
8.1	Updated regulatory assessment	LSB website here