

Company number: 04608905

**MINUTES**  
**Costs Lawyer Standards Board Ltd**  
**Wednesday 23 October 2019 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)  
Matthew Hill (CEO of the LSB) for Items 1.3 and 3.2 only

**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 Roundtable with Matthew Hill (CEO of the Legal Services Board)**

Matthew joined the meeting at 11:30am and the board paused the agenda to welcome him for a roundtable discussion. Matthew passed on apologies from Helen Phillips, Chair of the Legal Services Board (LSB), who was also due to attend the meeting but had a conflicting appointment. Steve noted that the invitation remained open if Helen would like to attend in the future. Steve congratulated Matthew on his recent appointment at the LSB and encouraged a candid discussion with the board. Introductions followed.

Steve provided some background on the CLSB as an organisation, including the size and nature of the regulated community, challenges faced in recent years (such as suspension of the Costs Lawyer Qualification) and opportunities for the future under new executive leadership. Matthew conveyed the LSB's optimism about the new direction of travel for the CLSB. He explained that the LSB wants the CLSB to succeed and to do so sustainably.

Steve led a discussion around the need for proportionality and collaboration, given the scale of the CLSB, including collaboration with the LSB. Matthew noted that the LSB will always insist on performing its role as an oversight regulator, but that this role is not incompatible with developing collaborative relationships with the approved regulators (ARs). The ways in which the regulatory principles are best brought to life should be the subject of conversation across the whole sector; the CLSB should be a part of those conversations and the LSB's door is open.

It was agreed that proportionality is necessary, but that proportionality is not about being relieved from responsibility to deliver against the regulatory standards; rather,

it is reflected in the manner of delivery. Board members noted that proportionality had been used as a shield by the CLSB on occasion in the past, but that recent cultural change had moved the organisation away from that approach. This was reflected in the CLSB's recent work on the consumer dimension of the Costs Lawyer market.

A discussion about the consumer interest followed, touching on who consumers of Costs Lawyers' services are, historic difficulties in capturing data about consumers and future opportunities for remedying this. Steve outlined some of the initiatives being explored by the CLSB in this regard and sought feedback from Matthew as to the LSB's likely response to the overall approach, particularly if that approach does not generate significant tangible outputs in terms of data or changes in policy. Steve noted that the CLSB has had concerns in the past about the LSB applying a "one size fits all" approach to oversight regulation.

Matthew explained that the LSB wants to see an AR embodying the paradigm of the intelligent, curious regulator, asking itself where it can make the biggest difference in influencing behaviours toward agreed outcomes. As an oversight regulator, what matters most to the LSB is that regulators understand the intended outcomes of regulation and take them seriously; the LSB will look to the CLSB's board for reassurance on both these points. The material that the board uses to convince itself that it understands the intended outcomes and has made decisions accordingly can be shared with the LSB to underpin that reassurance. Steve acknowledged that the board had shortcut this process of communication in the past and conveyed that Matthew's observations were helpful for the CLSB as it moved into a new era.

A general discussion about evidence followed, including different sources and forms of evidence, how complaints data can be used, ways of informally gathering evidence, and learnings from the LSB's Individual Legal Needs Survey. Matthew acknowledged that there was scope for the LSB to be more alive than it had been previously to different ways of achieving the same outcome in relation to evidence, so long as the reassurance described above could be provided by ARs. He offered the LSB's assistance in fostering collaboration between the CLSB and the larger regulators.

There was also a discussion about evidence generated by the Legal Choices website. Matthew reminded the board that promotion of the website was not scheduled to take place until the final year of the project, which should drive more traffic and, in turn, usable data. Steve confirmed that the CLSB was being patient – and would meet its existing financial commitments – but did expect to see more traffic next year given the commitments made.

The discussion then moved onto resourcing. The LSB had recently expressed concerns about the CLSB's resource levels in the context of considering whether to approve the CLSB's proposed practicing fee for 2020. Matthew highlighted that the CLSB's regulatory performance assessment shows there is much work to be done; the CLSB has further to go than any other AR in meeting all the standards. The LSB wants to ensure that the changes which have taken root under new leadership at the CLSB are sustainable and will be sustained. Ultimately, the LSB needs assurance that the CLSB is keeping open the question of how much resource it needs to do its job properly

going forward. Matthew also noted that the CLSB spends less per regulated individual than any other AR by some margin and, while this is not definitive, there would seem to be a link between spend and performance. He encouraged the CLSB to make this part of the discussion in setting practising fees in future years.

Steve reiterated that the CLSB is committed to improving its performance and achieving the objectives in its mid-term strategy, and understands that resourcing is key to this. Practising fee levels in future years would be driven by the work that was required at the time. There was a discussion around the impact of fees on the regulated community. It was acknowledged that, if regulated numbers fell, costs could not be distributed across a decreasing number of people indefinitely; a strategic decision would be required in the event that risk materialised. Steve emphasised that these factors were kept closely under review by the board. Matthew was reassured by this discussion and offered the LSB's assistance if it was needed going forward.

The board members conveyed their gratitude to Matthew for attending the meeting and emphasised the importance they placed on the refreshed working relationship with the LSB. Matthew noted that the LSB's relationship with the CLSB is now among its most constructive, given the high quality of the dialogue. All parties expressed their optimism for the future on that basis.

Matthew stayed to observe the board's discussion of agenda Item 3.2 (in relation to KPI monitoring) to give him a flavour of the board's deliberative process.

## **2. MINUTES**

### **2.1 Minutes dated 23 July 2019**

The board considered the minutes of its last scheduled quarterly meeting on 23 July 2019. The board agreed the minutes as being a true record for signing.

**Action: Post minutes on CLSB website**

### **2.2 Matters arising**

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

## **3. STRATEGY**

### **3.1 2020 Business Plan**

Steve introduced the draft Business Plan for 2020. The Business Plan sets out what the CLSB will achieve in 2020 to enable it to deliver its mid-term strategy (available [here](#)) by 2023.

Kate explained that a number of the priorities identified in the proposed Business Plan reflected key commitments that the CLSB had already made for 2020 in its regulatory action plan or elsewhere. Other priorities were new, aimed at addressing: (i) feedback received from stakeholders; (ii) core issues that required urgent attention; and/or (iii) improvements which laid the foundations for work in future years. Kate also noted that the proposed Business Plan took a different format to previous years, by focusing

on strategic priorities rather than setting out all business-as-usual activities. The board was therefore asked for feedback on format / approach as well as content.

The board agreed that the new approach was a significant step forward, allowing for clear articulation of the organisation's annual priorities for stakeholders and providing internal focus. The board noted that the Business Plan was ambitious and that resourcing would therefore need to be carefully considered to ensure success.

The board discussed the content of the proposed Business Plan. Board members considered whether the three main areas of focus were the right ones, including whether protecting the interests of consumers and promoting professional standards had been conflated. They concluded that the focus areas did strike the right balance, but should be reordered to make it clear that the CLSB's public interest functions were its core priority, with internal organisational improvements being a subsidiary priority that was necessary to support its public-facing work. The protection of consumers should also be emphasised as being the ultimate intended outcome ahead of the promotion of professional standards.

In terms of format, the board liked the look-and-feel and felt the layout was modern and accessible. However, it was noted that accessibility for lay readers might be hampered by the use of acronyms and the board asked for acronyms to be replaced by long-hand terms wherever possible.

Otherwise, the board approved the Business Plan for adoption and publication, subject to the above amendments and correction of one typographical error. The board thanked Kate for her efforts in developing the Business Plan.

***Actions: Amend 2020 Business Plan as agreed; Publish on CLSB website***

### **3.2 KPI monitoring: New approach**

Steve introduced this item. At its July meeting, the board had considered the KPIs previously set for the CLSB and agreed that a fresh approach was warranted. The board asked Kate to put forward a proposal for discussion at this meeting; she did so in the form of a new Performance Indicators document. Steve asked the board for comments on the proposal.

The board welcomed the new approach. Board members felt the Performance Indicators were more meaningful and aligned to the organisation's strategy than previous KPIs, and would aid the board in monitoring success. It was considered helpful to link the Performance Indicators back to the LSB's regulatory standards and the board felt that the metrics articulated well what the CLSB was trying to achieve.

In relation to the strategy metrics, the board considered the first strategy area (collaborative relationships) and discussed how "significant developments" would be identified in practice. Kate explained that this was intended to be a retrospective assessment, encouraging the organisation to look back at its achievements throughout the year and consider which of those were the result of effective collaboration. If the organisation was making progress against its collaboration objectives, there should be

evidence of this. If not, this would highlight the need for further action. It was therefore agreed that the descriptor of “targets” should be changed to “outcomes” to better capture this intention. It was also agreed that the board should assist with giving meaning to the concept of “significant developments” and assessing performance against this KPI over time.

The board considered whether, in light of the new approach, the service standard metrics required updating. The board discussed whether the right factors are being measured or whether there are elements of service that are more important to the public or the regulated community. For example, it was not clear whether application processing times in fact have any practical impact on Costs Lawyers. It was agreed that the service standards remained useful in the short-term, but the board would monitor the impact on service standards of mounting pressure on CLSB resources. If the data suggested that standards were dropping in certain areas, the practical consequences of this for the regulated community and the public could be assessed in a targeted way.

The board also discussed the benefits of automating the processes that underpin the service standards, both in alleviating pressure on resource and obtaining better management information.

The board approved the Performance Indicators document for adoption and publication, subject to the above amendments. The board also agreed to revoke the existing KPI Policy, as this was rendered obsolete by the Performance Indicators document which stands on its own.

***Actions: Amend Performance Indicators as agreed; Publish on CLSB website; Revoke KPI Policy***

#### **4. BOARD MATTERS**

##### **4.1 Board recruitment update**

At its July meeting, the board asked Kate to launch a recruitment campaign to find successors for Gill and Tracyanne, who were both approaching the end of their tenure as board members. Kate updated the board on progress. The roles (one lay and one non-lay NED vacancy) had been advertised from September, with the application window closing on 20 October 2019. There was an overwhelming response, with over 150 applications received in total. Kate explained that she had provisionally shortlisted eight applicants for the lay NED role and seven for the non-lay NED role.

The board agreed that Kate and Steve would finalise a shortlist and would share the CVs of the shortlisted candidates with board members. CVs for non-lay NED candidates would be shared with Paul and Tracyanne (the current non-lay NEDs) for initial feedback prior to shortlisting.

The board discussed the success of the various advertising channels used. Kate noted that the total spend on advertising was around £200, which was less than the amount spent in previous years (usually £750 for one source). The channels used had led to a high volume of applications but also high-quality candidates.

The board considered whether anything in the Business Plan or other agenda items altered the skills that were being prioritised in recruitment (those skills having been identified using the capabilities matrix agreed at the July board meeting). Kate reported that, as expected, none of the shortlisted applicants possessed the full suite of desirable skills, but there was a good mix of relevant skills across the pool of candidates and some applicants could be engaged as consultants if not board members. The board agreed that, once the roles had been filled, it would be necessary to address remaining gaps in capability (e.g. via upskilling, consultancy).

The board agreed that Kate should work with Steve to set up interviews and would be in touch with board members in due course to arrange panels.

***Actions: Move to interview stage of recruitment process***

#### **4.2 Resourcing**

The board considered a confidential staffing matter.

### **5. FINANCE**

#### **5.1 Quarterly report: Q3 2019**

The board noted the financial position at the end of Q3; there were no issues arising. The board had previously asked for the quarterly financial position to be more clearly displayed against the budget projection going forward, following the move to electronic board packs in July. The data was presented in this format and no further requests for clarification were made.

The board discussed provisioning for legacy liabilities and considered whether it would be appropriate to now seek updated financial advice about whether the items should remain in the accounts. Kate explained that the main provision related to surplus funds from an historic project, but that any debt claim by a third party in respect of those funds would recently have become time barred. The board agreed to seek advice when the next annual accounts were prepared as to whether the provision should remain.

***Action: Diarise to seek advice on provisioning at end of financial year***

#### **5.2 2020 practising certificate fee (PCF)**

Kate updated the board on the progress of the CLSB's practising fee application for 2020. The board was provided with a copy of the application (as published [here](#)) and noted the feedback on the proposed level of the PCF provided by consultation respondents.

The board was informed that a decision on the application was due from the LSB on 14 October 2019. On 17 October, the LSB conveyed that it was minded to refuse the application on the basis that a PCF of £275 did not provide sufficient resource for the CLSB to make the improvements needed to meet the LSB's regulatory standards. Kate reported having a frank and constructive discussion with the LSB about its concerns, which resulted in Kate sending the LSB a comfort letter in relation to the CLSB's financial position and ongoing commitment to making the improvements needed. Following that letter, the LSB had indicated that the application would be approved, although the final decision had not yet been published by the time of the meeting. The

board was also provided with email correspondence between the LSB and CLSB, to ensure they had full sight of the concerns raised.

The board noted that this issue had been canvassed with Matthew during his attendance for Item 1.3 and felt the discussion had been constructive. The board acknowledged that this would impact on the budget preparation process for the following year and that sufficient time would need to be allowed to ensure the LSB's feedback was taken into account.

## **6. RISK MANAGEMENT**

### **6.1 Operational risk; and**

### **6.2 Regulatory risk**

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 considered the impact on risk OP3 (no route of entry into the profession) of its recent decision to lift the suspension of ACL Training's approval to take on new students for the Costs Lawyer Qualification. The board agreed that OP3 remained a real risk, as recruitment was ongoing and the level of uptake for the course remained to be seen. However, a means of entry into the profession had now opened and the board agreed that the risk rating and associated controls should be updated to reflect the considerable inroads that had been made toward addressing this risk. Significant progress had also been made in mitigating risk OP6 (breakdown in the relationship between the CLSB and ACL or ACL Training) and the board agreed this risk should now have an amber rating.

The board discussed risk OP2 (unavailability of CEO or HoO on an unexpected or unplanned basis) and agreed the probability score for this risk should be increased to 5, moving this risk to red.

The board agreed that the impact rating for risk OP5 (data protection non-compliance) should increase, given the reputational impact of any actual or perceived non-compliance in this area. The probability rating should also increase, given that a routine review of compliance processes had not been carried out since those processes were first implemented when the GDPR came into force. Kate also reported having identified two areas in which compliance could be improved, namely in relation to privacy notices and contractual obligations around data processing. Improvements in these areas were already in train, but the board agreed that a routine review was now warranted and that the risk was now amber.

The board also requested that the risks in the register be reordered to make them easier for readers to follow.

***Actions: Update risk ratings as agreed; Reorder risks; Post updated versions of the risk registers on the website; Progress routine data compliance review***

## **7. REGULATORY MATTERS**

### **7.1 Disciplinary Rules and Procedures consultation**

The board was provided with the consultation that had been launched in September on proposed changes to the CLSB's Disciplinary Rules and Procedures. The board was informed that this had been sent directly to Costs Lawyers, the LSB and ACL's policy liaison, as well as being published on the website. Industry press had shown particular interest in the proposals to introduce interim suspension orders and to hold Conduct Committee hearings in public. The consultation was due to close on 15 November. The matter was noted and Kate agreed to update the board further at its next scheduled meeting.

The board also asked to be copied into communications to the regulated community, so that board members could keep track of developments in real time.

***Actions: Provide further update on DR&P consultation outcome at January board meeting; Ask HoO to include board members in Costs Lawyer circulation lists***

## **7.2 Continued funding of Legal Choices website**

Kate informed the board that, since the BSB's decision to withdraw funding from the Legal Choices website, there had been a series of meetings of the Legal Choices Governance Board to agree a way forward. Kate updated the board on discussions, including plans for some approved regulators to increase their financial contribution and proposed amendments to the marketing programme for the project.

The board reiterated that the CLSB would meet its funding commitment for 2020 and would assess the value of the outputs from the website during the marketing phase.

## **7.3 Interim report by Stephen Mayson**

Steve drew the board's attention to the interim report recently published by Stephen Mayson as part of his Independent Review of Legal Services Regulation. Kate provided a high-level summary of the key findings and recommendations in the report. She noted that the interim report was structured as an informal consultation, which was due to close on 29 November, and that she had been liaising with ACL to discuss early views on the proposals.

The board agreed that the CLSB should assist where it could, particularly in providing evidence – based on practical experience – of the benefits and costs of the existing regulatory structure and the options floated in the report. The board also discussed the opportunities presented by the report to reconsider protected titles. Overall, the Non-Lay members of the board had not seen significant evidence of the Costs Lawyer title being used inappropriately (despite it not being protected), but the board agreed that there was the potential for consumer detriment if this did occur. The board noted there was potential for collaboration with ACL on the issue of protected titles, if the opportunity arose in the context of responding to the report.

***Action: Provide evidence in response to the report as appropriate***



#### **7.4 Changes to MRPQ rules upon a no-deal Brexit**

Kate updated the board on preparations for a no-deal Brexit on 31 October 2019. 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. The government had introduced a variety of secondary legislation that would come into force on 31 October governing the situation. The board was provided with a rule-change application that had been made to the LSB under an exemption direction (ED133), designed to bring the CLSB's regulatory arrangements into line with the new secondary legislation. The board noted the application and was content with its content, insofar as the proposed regulatory arrangements tracked the amended legislation.

Kate also explained that transitional language and guidance had been posted on the CLSB's website as an interim measure. No proactive communications were carried out given that the CLSB had no EU qualified professionals in its regulated community. The board noted the position.

#### **7.5 Review of approach to CPD**

The board considered revisions to the CLSB's Continuing Professional Development (CPD) rules and guidance, aided by a report outlining a proposed new approach to continuing competency and setting out the evidence that had been drawn upon to shape the proposals.

The board supported the proposed approach. In addition to being more aligned with LSB guidance, board members felt that it was consistent with movement in the wider sector toward ensuring regulated individuals take responsibility for their own competency. It was agreed that the hybrid approach proposed – which combined a points-based reporting system with an outcomes-focused regime – would help make the transition more manageable for Costs Lawyers. The Non-Lay board members felt that the new approach would be more flexible and meaningful for Costs Lawyers in practise.

It was noted that sole practitioners or Costs Lawyers in small firms might benefit from case studies and template forms to assist with compliance. However, the board was keen to ensure that the regulatory arrangements were not overly prescriptive as to form, since Costs Lawyers working in SRA regulated firms should have the flexibility to make use of their firms' existing documents and processes around professional development planning (PDP) where appropriate.

The board considered whether it should remain mandatory for Costs Lawyers who provide training to be accredited in order for that training to qualify as CPD. The board agreed that this would be inconsistent with the proposals as a whole, but that an

accreditation regime should be retained as an indicator of quality. Board members suggested various ways to enhance the accreditation program in the future (such as assessing practical teaching ability) but these enhancements were not considered essential for proceeding with next steps on the CPD review.

The board agreed that the regulated community would need time to consider how best to implement the changes, but that it should be possible to achieve implementation for the 2021 practising year, subject to feedback during consultation. Otherwise, the board approved the draft rules and guidance for public consultation.

***Action: Proceed with next steps for consultation; Work up case studies and template form***

## **7.6 Costs Lawyers and consumers interim report**

Kate presented an interim report which collated and considered various evidence sources on the consumer dimension of the Costs Lawyer market, as envisaged under the CLSB's regulatory action plan. The board found the report both interesting and valuable, noting that creative ways had been identified to access consumer insight.

The board discussed various elements of the report, including the observation that Costs Lawyers had a role to play in helping the wider legal services market present prices in a transparent way. The board also discussed the role of Legal Choices in public education about Costs Lawyers' role and scope of service.

The board discussed the evidence of unmet need. There was further scope to consider complaints against other legal services providers (e.g. complaints to the Legal Ombudsman or SRA about solicitors) that related to costs or pricing, to assist in identifying and quantifying unmet need. The Non-Lay board members shared insights as to how own-client costs are presented to consumers and the possibility that a lack of awareness about whether and how to challenge costs is leading to further unmet need.

The board agreed that the report should be shared with the LSB and other approved regulators who could provide input. The board supported progression to the next phase of the project, as outlined in the report.

***Action: Progress work on next phase of consumer insight project***

## **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 September 2019. Kate updated the board on discussions with the LSB in relation to the assessment. Overall, the assessment reflected the significant inroads the CLSB had made in the two months following the adoption of its

regulatory action plan. Kate also noted that the assessment had been positively reported in the sector press.

Kate informed the board that the next updated assessment would be carried out in November, with a deadline of 1 November for the approved regulators to make representations on their progress. If performance was assessed against any standards as “not met – action needed”, additional scrutiny and intervention from the LSB would follow.

The board had no pressing concerns about the content or language of the updated regulatory assessment and agreed it was a fair reflection of progress made. The board noted the ratings applied, thanked Kate for her work in progressing the action plan and reiterated the CLSB’s commitment to improving assessment outcomes over time.  
**Action: Provide an update on the next regulatory assessment to the board at its January 2020 meeting**

## **8.2 Revised Internal Governance Rules (IGR)**

The board was provided with the LSB’s new IGRs, which were published in late July, as well as the transition letter sent by the LSB to the CLSB. The board noted the deadline for implementation of 24 July 2020 and the requirement to update the LSB on progress six months before that deadline (24 January). Kate noted that she was working with ACL to produce an updated MOU for consideration by the board at its meeting in January 2020. The board offered its assistance if required in the meantime.

**Action: Aim to finalise a draft MOU between ACL and CLSB, in line with the new IGRs, for the board’s consideration at its January 2020 meeting**

## **9. LEGAL SERVICES CONSUMER PANEL (LSCP)**

### **9.1 Work update**

The board received an update on the LSCP’s work on lawtech, including its request for the approved regulators to consider convening a “community of interest” to interact with the tech market, help get in front of risks and facilitate innovation. The board noted that the LSB was leading on the community of interest and conveyed its support for the project.

## **10. LEGAL OMBUDSMAN (LeO)**

### **10.1 Service complaints**

The board was informed that LeO had not reported any service complaints against Costs Lawyers during the last six months.

### **10.2 Work update**

Kate updated the board on measures that had recently been implemented by LeO to reduce wait times and improve the experience for complainants. The board asked about the likelihood of those improvements being sustained in the longer term. Kate explained that she had met with the Chief Ombudsman, who had recently also been appointed as the CEO of LeO. This dual appointment was providing new opportunities to synthesise LeO’s back-office and front-office functions, leading to better resource allocation and allowing scope for more innovative approaches to dispute resolution. The board noted the position and considered this to be a positive development.

## **11. REPRESENTATION (ACL)**

### **11.1 Council meeting attendance**

Kate provided feedback from her attendance in August at an ACL Council meeting to discuss the CLSB's priorities and strategy. She informed the board that, since the meeting, the CLSB had engaged with ACL on several items of follow-up work, involving the sharing of data for mutual benefit. The board noted that the CLSB's relationship with ACL currently seemed open and constructive, and this was reflected in the updates made to the operational risk register.

## **12. EDUCATION**

### **12.1 Costs Lawyer Qualification (CLQ)**

The board ratified its decision, made on 10 October 2019 via email exchange, to approve ACL Training to take on a new cohort of students for the CLQ in January 2020. Kate recommended that the board's deliberations be recorded in a Board Decision Note, in line with the CLSB's Transparent Decisions Policy. A draft Board Decision Note was considered by the board and adopted as being a true record.

The board also received an update on the progress that had been made with the CLQ since approval for a new intake was given and was provided with the current version of the course documentation that had been re-published on the CLSB website.

The board took the opportunity to reflect on the process of completing a Board Decision Note and the value that it was likely to provide both internally and for external stakeholders. The board also considered whether any other decisions made at the meeting warranted recording in a Board Decision Note, concluding that they did not, but that a number of issues were at early stages and may benefit from a note in the future depending on how the decision-making process unfolded.

***Action: Publish Board Decision Note in relation to reinstating the CLQ on CLSB website***

## **13. OPERATIONAL MATTERS**

### **13.1 Website usage update**

The board considered statistics on usage of the CLSB website for Q3 2019. The board noted that a material proportion of visitors to the website were based in the US, which brought into question how much weight could be placed on these statistics in informing internal decision-making. However, it was also noted that traffic during the quarter (including US traffic) may have been driven by the recruitment campaign for new non-executive directors. The board agreed that it would be useful to revisit the statistics in a quarter where there was no ongoing recruitment activity.

The board discussed whether traffic may be negatively influenced by the .info suffix in the website domain name and also noted that this could be confusing for consumers who might not view the site as being an official source. The board asked Kate to explore options for changing the domain suffix.

***Action: Explore options for changing the clsb.info domain suffix; Revisit usage statistics in a future quarter***

**14. AOB**

Paul provided feedback from a recent industry roundtable, attended by costs judges and lawyers, in relation to the new bill of costs. He reported that urgent discussions were taking place to remedy perceived difficulties with the new bill and to provide more guidance. The board noted the position.

**15. NEXT SCHEDULED QUARTERLY MEETING**

Date: Wednesday 22 January 2020 @ 10.30am  
Location: The Studio, Cannon Street, Birmingham

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

**ADDENDUM**

Following the meeting, Tracyanne Ayliffe tendered her resignation from the board due to the discussion of agenda Item 4.2.

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Chairman

**Related documents**

Item	Document	Publication location (CLSB website)
2.1	CLSB board minutes – 23 July 2019	Internal governance ⇨ Board minutes
3.1	2020 Business Plan	Internal governance ⇨ Strategy
3.2	Performance Indicators	Internal governance ⇨ Management
6.1	Risk register (operational risk)	Policy outcomes ⇨ Risk management
6.2	Risk register (regulatory risk)	Policy outcomes ⇨ Risk management
7.1	DR&P consultation	Policy outcomes ⇨ CLSB consultations
12.1	Costs Lawyer Qualification course documentation	Qualifying
12.1	Board Decision Note in relation to the Costs Lawyer Qualification	Internal governance ⇨ Board minutes
Item	Document	Publication location (other)
5.2	2020 PCF application	LSB website <a href="#">here</a>
8.1	Updated regulatory assessment	LSB website <a href="#">here</a>