## LEGAL SERVICES **Consumer Panel**

# PANEL MEMBER CANDIDATE PACK 2023

# Introduction from the Chair of the Legal Services Board (LSB)

Dear candidate,

Thank you for your interest in finding out more about becoming a member of the Legal Services Consumer Panel (LSCP) and working with us to ensure the public interest is at the heart of legal services regulation.

If you've ever needed legal advice, you may have experienced how challenging it can be to compare providers based on price and quality of services. You may not have known whether the provider was regulated or what you should do if you were not satisfied with the service. Or perhaps you are one of the one in three people who have an unmet legal need each year.

The legal services market does not currently work for everyone. The Legal Services Board (LSB) and LSCP are committed to changing this and ensuring everyone who has a legal problem gets the help they need.

The LSB has published a consumer-focused strategy to reshape legal services to better meet society's needs. It puts the public and consumers at the centre of regulation. The LCSP contributed to its development and aligned its work with the objectives of fairer outcomes, stronger confidence, and better services.

The LSB and LSCP are working together and with others across the sector to listen to Citizens and encourage the sector to become more diverse, competitive and professional, and to better serve the public.

We are looking for two new members to join the Panel, which draws together informed and lay voices to create a rich source of skills, experience and opinions. Panel members lead key work streams in between Panel meetings and champion its work externally. It is only through collaboration that we will achieve our joint vision, so we want to appoint someone committed to this 'hands on' working ethos.

To ensure the Panel is as representative as possible, we are actively seeking applications from all sectors and sections of the community.



Alan Kershaw, Chair LSB

### **About the Legal Service Consumer Panel**

The Legal Services Consumer Panel (LSCP, 'the Panel') exists to represent the interest of consumers in the regulation of legal services.

The Panel was established by the Legal Services Board (LSB), the independent body responsible for overseeing the regulation of legal services in England and Wales, under the Legal Services Act 2007. As a permanent, discrete champion for consumers we have an essential responsibility to ensure that regulators pay full attention to the user perspective.

The Panel provides high quality, evidence-based advice to the LSB, in order to help them make decisions that are shaped around the needs of users. It has a remit to represent the interests of the many different consumers of legal services, including small businesses and charities. Within this it has committed to prioritise the needs of more vulnerable groups of consumers. The Panel has legal powers to publish its advice and the LSB has a legal duty to explain its reasons when it disagrees with such advice.

#### LSCP's Vision

The vision is for a market where everyone can access high quality and affordable legal services that meet their needs:

- A competitive legal services market where consumers are empowered and have easy access to high quality legal advice at a fair price;
- All consumers have an equal access to legal services regardless of their personal circumstances;
- Regulatory bodies have processes enabling them to take decisions which are in the consumer interest;
- · Consumers receive legal advice from a diverse and competent workforce;
- Consumer complaints are resolved fairly, quickly and cost-effectively.



## **Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion**

LSCP is committed to increasing diversity and inclusion within the Panel as well as using its voice and platform to help make legal services more inclusive. This means reflecting critically on issues of diversity and inclusion within all that LSCP does, identifying and taking appropriate actions to reduce inequality.

We welcome applications from anyone regardless of disability, ethnicity, heritage, gender, sexuality, religion, socio-economic background and other differences. We are committed to inclusive working practices. During the recruitment process we will:

- Make any reasonable adjustments for example ensuring we have sign language interpreters organised in advance if you'd like them.
- Provide this document in a Word document format which is screen reader accessible, readily available to download.

If there is anything you're concerned about or think we could provide, please let us know.

### The Structure of the Legal Service Consumer Panel

The Panel comprises eight lay members, including a Chair, with varied experience and expertise that currently covers: charitable, private and public sectors, advice provision, economics, trading standards and government.

Appointments to the Panel are made by the LSB and approved by the Lord Chancellor.

Working with the <u>approved regulators</u>, LSCP and the Office for Legal Complaints (OLC) the LSB is responsible for ensuring high standards of competence, conduct and service in the legal profession are maintained for the benefit of users and the public as a whole.

#### Responsibilities of the LSCP

The Panel has an advisory role. Its key activities are to:

- help the LSB and the OLC to understand fully, and take account of, the interests of consumers in its policy development and decisions;
- · respond to relevant consultations as appropriate;
- carry out and commission research, as agreed with the LSB, and gather other intelligence and evidence to understand the consumer experience of the legal services market;
- provide the LSB and the OLC with feedback from a consumer perspective on the effectiveness of their policies and practices;
- help the approved regulators develop their own approach to consumer engagement to inform their work;
- speak out publicly on behalf of consumers as appropriate in order to positively influence outcomes for consumers of legal services; and
- maintain an overview of developments in the legal services market, and related developments affecting consumers in other markets, in order to best deliver the activities listed above.

# About the Role of an LSCP Board Member

The Consumer Panel meets around five or six times a year. Members are not asked to act either as trustees or as traditional public sector non-executive directors but to contribute directly their experience, knowledge and understanding of the needs and experiences of both individual and small business consumers of legal services.

Each Panel member takes a leadership role on specific areas of the work programme, working closely with secretariat colleagues (2 FTE's). The time Panel members contribute in between actual Panel meetings is therefore extremely important and vital to enable us to make full use of their knowledge and experiences.

As well as advising the LSB, the Panel also seeks to influence the Legal Ombudsman, the regulators and representative bodies and Government where appropriate.



### **Person Specification**

In this recruitment process we are seeking 2 new LSCP Members.

We are particularly interested in hearing from candidates with experience in ONE or both of the following areas:

- expertise in regulation, particularly from outside of the legal sector;
- expertise as a consumer champion with experience in consumer policy.

For both roles, the following criteria also apply:

- understanding of, and a deep-seated commitment to, promoting and protecting the interests of consumers and the wider community;
- proven commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion;
- the ability to listen and challenge in a constructive manner, providing an objective and independent point of view;
- the ability to work as part of a team, working collaboratively and cooperatively;
- a highly developed ability to take account of different perspectives as part of a collegiate decision-making process and to take responsibility for decisions made
- excellent communication and influencing skills;
- some knowledge of legal services and legal regulation is desirable.

#### Ineligibility

The Legal Services Act 2007 does specify some circumstances in which a candidate is not allowed to serve as a member of the Consumer Panel. This includes anyone who is:

- a member of the Legal Services Board or its staff;
- a member of the Office for Legal Complaints, an Ombudsman appointed by it or a member of its staff;
- a member of the governing body, or of the staff, of an approved regulator
- an authorised person in relation to an activity which is a reserved legal activity\*
- a person authorised, by a person designated under section 5(1) of the Compensation Act 2006 (c.29), to provide services which are regulated claims management services (within the meaning of that Act);
- an Advocate of Scotland;
- a solicitor in Scotland;
- a member of the Bar in Northern Ireland; or
- a solicitor of the Court of Judicature of Northern Ireland.

Further advice about eligibility can be given by contacting Inclusive Boards using the details included at the end of this pack.

<sup>\*</sup>An authorised person is someone who is allowed to carry out the six specific legal services activities. The six reserved legal activities are: the exercise of a right of audience; the conduct of litigation; reserved instrument activities; probate activities; notarial activities; and the administration of oaths. For further information, please see the LSB's reserved legal activities page

# **Additional Information**

#### Term of Office

Panel members are appointed for a term of three years with the possibility of a second term of up to three years.

#### Time Commitment

The Consumer Panel usually meets six times a year. The time commitment for panel members is estimated at 15 days a year.

#### Location

Meetings will be held online or at the Legal Services Board's offices at The Rookery, 2 Dyott Street, London WC2A 1DE.

#### Remuneration

Panel members receive £4,500 a year. Remuneration is taxable under Schedule E and subject to Class I National Insurance contributions. It is not pensionable. Those appointed will be eligible for travel and subsistence costs necessarily incurred on Consumer Panel business at rates set centrally by the LSB.

#### Conflicts of Interest

All candidates will be asked to disclose any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, and these will be discussed with the candidate to establish whether and what action is needed to avoid a conflict or the perception of a conflict.

#### Standards in Public Life

Each Board member must ensure that during the period of their tenure they are committed to and conduct themselves in accordance with the seven principles of public life.

## How to Apply

The recruitment process is being undertaken by Inclusive Boards on behalf of LSB and LSCP. If you wish to apply for this position, please supply the following by 23.59 16/07/2023/07/2023.

- A detailed CV setting out your career history, with responsibilities and achievements.
- A covering letter (maximum 2 sides) highlighting your suitability for the role and how you meet the person specification. Please note that the covering letter is an important part of your application and will be assessed as part of it.
- Details of two professional referees together with a brief statement of their relationship to you and over what period of time they have known you. Referees will not be contacted without your prior consent.

If you have any questions or would like to arrange a call to discuss the role please email LSCP@inclusiveboards.co.uk or call 0207 267 8369.

Please visit www.inclusiveboards.co.uk/opportunities to apply online or send your CV and cover letter to <u>LSCP@inclusiveboards.co.uk</u>.

The selection panel is as follows:

- Gary Kildare LSB Board Member
- Sarah Chambers LSCP Chair (outgoing)
- Paula McDonald Independent Member

Timeline:

- Deadline for applications: 16/07/2023
- Interviews: 22/09/2023
- Offers of appointment: October 2023 (pending Lord Chancellor approval)
- First LSCP Member takes up post: January 2024
- Second LSCP Member takes up Post: April 2024

Please note, Inclusive Boards are also currently supporting LSB and LSCP to recruit a Chair for LSCP in anticipation of the expiry of the current Chair's term next March. If you're interested in this position please get in touch using the details above.

# INCLUSIVE BOARDS

#### About Us

*Inclusive Boards* is the UK's leading board diversity practice. We have worked alongside over 300 organisations to provide support with Board recruitment, development and governance reviews. We strive to be at the forefront of equity and diversity, and believe that everyone should be represented at Board level. Additionally, we also provide bespoke training sessions on a variety of subjects including personal branding, inclusive recruitment practices and board structures and governance as well as delivering leadership development programmes for underrepresented leaders across a range of sectors.

#### **Contact us today**

Improve diversity on your Board, please don't hesitate to contact us via <u>hello@inclusiveboards.co.uk</u>.

To join a Board, sign up to become a candidate via our website and be notified of the latest opportunities as and when they become available.



www.inclusiveboards.co.uk



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