

LEGAL SERVICES COMMITTEE FOR WALES

Internet Briefing Note on the Meeting held on 15th-16th February 2005

Members Present: Roger Chater
Margaret Griffiths
Tom Jones (Chair)
Linda Summers
Fran Targett

Apologies for absence received from Roy Morgan and John Williams

Legal Services Commission (LSC) Strategy for the Community Legal Service (CLS)

The Committee welcomed Crispin Passmore, the new Director of the CLS, to the Wales Committee. Crispin is visiting a number of Legal Services Committees around the country on a fact finding mission as part of his research feeding into the LSC strategy for the Community Legal Service.

The Advice Strategy for Wales

The Committee considered an updated draft of the Advice Strategy for Wales. Two further chapters will be added before the end of March after which it will be published for consultation.

It was noted that the Consultation Draft would be presented to the Wales CLS National Forum on Monday 25th April.

Developing a Work-Plan for the Committee

The Committee approved its work plan for the year.

Date	Location	Provisional Agenda Items
April 18 th	Cardiff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response to the CLS Strategy • Agree CLSDF priorities for 2005/06 • Review progress of PIB / CLSDF Projects • Outline of Wales Report • Update A-D Ratings
June 20 th	Aberystwyth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial Draft of Wales Report • Update A-D Ratings
July 26 th	Cwmbran	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endorse Monitoring Meetings • Final Draft of Wales Report
October 7 th	Anglesey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review progress of PIB/CLSDF Projects • Update A-D Ratings
December 7 th	Cardiff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update A-D Ratings • Prepare work plan for 2006

Community Legal Service Development Fund (CLSDF) update

There had been 64 bids in all, and 23 had been awarded funding up to £5k each – a total of just over £100k. This had brought in a further £150k in match funding.

In addition, one further project for the Valleys Race Equality Network had been forwarded to the Awards for All Programme and had been successful in receiving £5k to

add to the £12k awarded from Lloyds TSB Trust. Thus the LSC had been instrumental in bringing together two other funding partners even when CLSDF were not themselves being used.

A single larger grant had been made out of the CLSDF towards a financial literacy project for young people in partnership with the Welsh Assembly Government, the Financial Services Authority, the Basic Skills Agency, and the Personal Finance Education Group. The total cost was £110k of which the CLSDF contributed £35k. It would produce an interactive bi-lingual CD Rom aimed at young people aged 14-21, and would be piloted in two areas of Wales.

Partnership Initiative Budget (PIB) Project: Flintshire Mental Health Advocacy Project

Sue Wood joined the Committee to explain how the Flintshire Mental Health Advocacy Project was using the PIB2 funding allocated in 2003.

Monitoring Meetings

Twice a year the Committee determines how well the supply of specialist legal advice services for eligible clients meets the identified need in each of the twenty two Community Legal Service Partnerships (local authority areas) in Wales. It does this by allocating a rating (A-D) to each of the main categories of law for each geographical area.

A	All identified needs for specialist level advice in the particular category of law for eligible clients are covered by appropriate contracts.
B	A gap or gaps have been identified which can be met by a minor solution and implemented with 12 months; i.e. a small increase in new matter starts from within existing funding to the Region or Area, or the issuing of a work specification for work to be done within existing contracts.
C	A gap or gaps have been identified which require a major solution which can be implemented within 12 months; i.e. a new contract or the input of new money to the Region or Area.
D1	A gap or gaps have been identified and it is unlikely that progress will be made towards filling the gap within the next 12 months because of a lack of funding.
D2	A gap or gaps have been identified and it is unlikely that progress will be made towards filling the gap within the next 12 months because of a lack of an appropriate supplier.
D3	A gap or gaps have been identified and it is unlikely that progress will be made towards filling the gap within the next 12 months because of some other reason.

The Committee approved a paper outlining the proposed changes.

It was noted that there was overall some improvement in the overall coverage of A & B areas. It was noted however that whilst supply was currently rated as adequate in many areas it was nevertheless fragile in a number of places – e.g. in Blaenau Gwent, Monmouthshire and Wrexham.

The **bold** letters in the table below indicate the significant gaps still awaiting remedial action.

Area / Zone	Family	Welfare Benefits	Debt	Housing	Consumer General Contract	Family Mediation
Anglesey	A	A	A	A	A	A
Blaenau Gwent	A	A	A	B to A	A	A
Bridgend	A	A	A	A	A	A
Caerphilly	A	C to B	C to B	A	A	A
Cardiff	A	A	B to A	A	A	A
Carmarthenshire	A	A	A	A	A	A
Ceredigion	A	B	B	B	A	A
Conwy	A	A	A	A	A	A
Denbighshire	A	A	A	A	A	A
Flintshire	A	A	A	A	A	A
Gwynedd	D2	A	A	A	A	A
Merthyr Tydfil	A	B	B	C to B	A	A
Monmouthshire	A	D2 to B	D2 to B	A	A	A
Neath Port Talbot	A	A	A	A	A	A
Newport	A	A	A	A	A	A
Pembrokeshire	A	B	B to A	B to A	A	A
Powys	A	C to B	C to B	A	A	A
Rhondda Cynon Taf	A	C	C	A	A	A
Swansea	A	A	A	A	A	A
Torfaen	A	B	B	B	A	A
Vale of Glamorgan	A	A	A	A	A	A
Wrexham	A	A	A	A	A	A

CLS Wales Conference 2005

The Committee received a paper on the arrangements for the CLS Wales Conference to be held in October 2005. Further details will be publicised in due course.