

Minutes of the Meeting of the VHCC Steering Group held on 12 March 2009 at the Ministry of Justice, 102 Petty France, London

Present: Sarah Albon (SA)
Michael Collins (MLC)
Prof Martin Chalkley (MC)
Simon Hayllar (SH)
Alexandra Healy (AH)
Derek Hill (DH)
David Keegan (DK)
Abbas Lakha QC (AL)
Mark Lucraft QC (ML)
James MacMillan (JDM)
Paul Mendelle QC (PM)
Jim Meyer (JM) (by telephone)
Keith Milburn (KM)
Richard Miller (RM)
Alice Mutasa (AM)
Matt Shelley (MS)
Cris Scotter (CS)
Barbara-Ann Tweedie (BAT)
Adrian Vincent (AV)

Action

1. Apologies

Rodney Warren

2. SAHCA Membership of Working Group

AM explained that SAHCA could make contributions as an individual AM group or as part of the Law Society delegation. AM suggested that her preference would be to include them as part of the delegation. This was agreed.

3. Summary of Responses

Responses to the consultation exercise evidenced a lack of support for the proposals and serious concerns/reservations were made by respondees.

In the light of these responses, it was agreed that the current contract arrangements should be extended and remain in place for up to 12 months, though it would be possible to terminate the contract earlier if a new scheme was ready for earlier implementation. Members of this committee would continue to work collaboratively to develop other options for further consultation. PM suggested that having a genuine opportunity to be involved in, and comment on, these proposals was positive in itself. It was also agreed that the next meeting should focus on data collection requirements, options and development methodology for any future scheme.

MS/CS

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| <p>PM suggested that the brief summary of responses circulated at the meeting did not identify who the responses were from. After general discussion it was suggested and agreed that a list of all respondees (and the responses) should be published on the LSC web site at an appropriate time after the press release. It was also agreed that the professions need to be kept informed of progress/developments for the future.</p> | MS/CS |
| <p>The draft press release circulated at the meeting should be circulated electronically for comment. Responses to consultation and the press release will be published on 27 March 2009. Following that an announcement should be made that the current arrangements will remain in place for up to a further 12 months.</p> | ALL |
| <p>4. Options for any future scheme and next steps
 Given that responses to consultation did not evidence sufficient support for any of the options proposed to be taken forward, it was agreed that the next meeting would focus on options for any future scheme. Extending the current arrangements by 12 months should provide adequate time to develop options and consult again in due course. It was noted that the current arrangement cannot be extended again (after the proposed 12 month extension) and that this design work by the 'experts group' should begin as soon as practicable and include representatives of this group as appropriate.</p> | MS/CS |
| <p>5. AOB
None.</p> | |
| <p>6. Date of next meeting
To be agreed – but will be held at the beginning of April. Members will be informed.</p> | MS/CS |