

**Notes of Meeting of Legal Aid Special Interest Group Committee held on
Wednesday 11th February 2015 – 10.30am – 11.15am**

Present: Paul Seddon
Jonathan Brennan
Rachel Perkins
Kim Fensom

1. Roles and Responsibilities of Committee Members

- a. Education
Paul felt that this should be split into two sections:
1. Seminars; and
2. Updating information ie website/rates etc.
It was decided that this “role” should be changed from “Education” to “Information” so as to differentiate and keep separate from the Education provided by ACL Training.
- b. PR
There was nothing to add to the discussion about this at the previous meeting on 28.01.15.
- c. Policy
The ACL has a paid policy officer – Claire Green and this role would involve liaising with her on matters such issues with the CJC/CPR. It would also involve dealing with consultations to the CAG and general communications regarding parts of the CPR that are incorrect/out of date with regards to Legal Aid. Paul was concerned that CAG consultations were not on a regular basis and therefore could not be certain as to the pressure this would place on whoever takes up this role.
- d. Finance and Governance
This would be dealing with the finance regarding seminars and budgeting, and involve liaising with Diane. It was also felt that the LAG should keep a separate set of books to show whether it makes/loses money for the ACL.

Paul did advise at this juncture that he had been pressing the LAA to undertake a complete overhaul of the CAG. He has been dealing with Matthew Holden who has advised that he can't deal with this at the moment/doesn't have time and will review it at a later date. No further response has been received to date.

Briefly the discussion turned to the income of the group. It has been previously agreed that the LAG hold two conferences a year which are income based (ie through the ACL) and if possible hold a third in aid of Sheila Chapman.

The income generated from the LAG seminars is used, in part, to pay the committee's expenses. It was noted that if a breakout session was provided at the Manchester conference, this would have to be the “second” conference (ie there wouldn't be another separate one), but then negotiations would need to be undertaken regarding an apportionment of income raised by the conference to be allocated to the LAG.

It was then agreed between attending committee members that there was little point allocating the roles and responsibilities at this point in time in light of the upcoming nominations/election of a new committee. It was felt that these could be allocated either at the short "in person" committee meeting to be held immediately after the AGM with the new committee, or in the alternative via a further video conference to be held in the week following the AGM.

2. Seminar 16th March

Paul advised that Diane should be in attendance, as it is an ACL seminar.

It was also suggested that Linda Kann be requested to do a resume of the seminar to be published in the Costs Lawyer magazine.

Jonathan Brennan will deal with issues regarding the Electronic Handbook, especially as Paul confirmed that he did not tend to use the publication, preferring to use the authorities direct.

Paul will send an email to all LAG members requesting Questions for the Q&A session. He will also request details of recent rejections in order to establish whether these tend to be of a "one off" nature or whether any are more "national" and require further investigation.

3. CCMS

Paul then gave a quick update on the position on CCMS. The LAA are continuing to push ahead. Paul has discussed with Sue Nash regarding the possibility of getting either the Law Society or Resolution to do a joint report to the Major Projects Authority (copied to the Public Accounts Committee) regarding our concerns. He also wished to do this to keep the pressure on. He confirmed that Sue Nash had indicated that she was open to support this course of action.

4. AOB

None.

ACTION LIST

Paul to ask Linda to prepare Costs Lawyer article on seminar

Paul to provide material to Diane by 26th February for the seminar

Jonathan Brennan to deal with issues on the Electronic Handbook

Paul to email LAG members requesting questions for Q&A session and rejects.