

LSB progress report

Council for Licensed Conveyancers (CLC)

Date action plan was published: 29 June 2017

The action plan is published [here](#).

The LSB sufficiency assessment of action plan is published [here](#).

Progress Update: 16 October 2018

The action plan set out a number of commitments from the CLC. This update reviews its progress in delivering on these commitments. Where possible the information below has been drawn from the following four key documents:

- [CLC policy consultation document](#) 'Helping consumers choose their lawyer – service, quality and price transparency'
- [CLC rules change consultation document](#) 'Implementation of CMA transparency recommendations set out in its Legal Services Market Study'
- CLC rules change [application](#) to the LSB
- [CLC transparency guidance](#) 'Informed Choice: Quality, Service and Price guidance'

The CLC has had an opportunity to update the LSB on its progress on any commitments in the action plan not covered by the publications above.

The commitments related to four different high-level outcomes relating to market transparency which LSB asked all frontline regulators to focus on in their action plans. This note sets out the status of each commitment under each outcome:

- 1) Action to deliver a step change in standards of transparency to help consumers (i) to understand the price and service they will receive, what redress is available and the regulatory status of their provider and (ii) to compare providers.
 - **Completed:** The CLC published a consultation 'Helping consumers choose their lawyer – service, quality and price transparency' in September 2017.
 - **Completed:** The CLC action plan set out that it would conduct a review of inspection visits to firms and the format and content of annual regulatory returns firms must make to the CLC. CLC has confirmed to us that this work has been completed.

- **Completed:** The CLC action plan proposes to work with SRA and CILEx Regulation on a quote generator for conveyancing. After discussions the decision was made not to develop such a tool. However, the regulators' respective rules aim to ensure consistency on the elements that make up the price quoted to consumers, e.g. treatment of disbursements. Also, the three regulators have developed price estimate templates which can form the basis of a quote generator.
- **Completed:** The CLC action plan set out that the secure logo scheme would be enshrined in the change to the Handbook. This was included in the CLC's rule change application.
- **In progress:** The CLC action plan set out that it has participated in client care research and is reviewing its practice rules. CLC has informed us that it expects to complete its review of this area in Spring 2019.
- **In progress:** The CLC action plan proposed that it would agree with LeO (and others) a schedule for availability of data in a reusable format to inform the service dimension of transparency. The CLC and other regulators have started discussions with LeO.

New significant developments not included in action plan.

- **Completed:** The CLC action plan set out that the CLC would rely on guidance rather than rules. However, following analysis of the consultation feedback CLC has decided to draft rules in this area. CLC published a consultation on these rules in May 2018. It submitted a rules change application to the LSB on 26 July 2018 which was approved on 30 August 2018. The new rules will come into force in December 2018.
- 2) Promotion of the use of independent feedback platforms to help consumers to understand the quality of the services offered by competing providers.
- **In progress:** Both the CLC policy and rules consultations set out that CLC intend to promote the use of feedback platforms and provide guidance in line with CMA's recommendations. CLC has informed us that it will use the guidance on the new transparency rules to encourage practices to use third party feedback platforms. CLC is also taking this issue forward with a variety of representative and trade bodies.
- 3) Facilitation of the development of a dynamic intermediary market through making data more accessible to comparison tools and other intermediaries.
- No new commitments made under this category.

- 4) Making better information available to assist consumers when they are identifying their legal needs and the types of legal services providers (both regulated and unregulated) who can help them.
- **In progress:** The legal regulators are working together to deliver a three-year plan to enhance the Legal Choices website and social media channels. The Legal Choices Governance Board and Steering Group are continuing to lead the work, informed by the Advisory Panel which includes 17 organisations from the consumer and not-for-profit sectors. The suppliers that have been appointed to deliver the plan's market research and digital design components delivered a two day 'ideation' workshop in June 2018, which is informing a detailed redesign and relaunch strategy for the website. This will be discussed with the legal regulators in the autumn. In the meantime the regulators are continuing with their schedule of new content for members of the public that focuses on priority areas of law, as well as topical articles, which is promoted by using the website's social media channels. So far in 2018 new articles have focused on holiday sickness claims, immigration work (connected to Windrush), cycling laws and divorce processes.
 - **In progress:** The regulators have taken some steps to assess the feasibility of a joint register, in particular working on a taxonomy of the data to be included in the register. Work to explore the feasibility of a single digital register is ongoing. As an interim step, regulators are working on opportunities to provide a better access point to the legal regulators' respective registers of regulated entities and individuals through the Legal Choices website.

In addition to the delivery of these commitments we recognise that the CLC has delivered a substantial programme of stakeholder engagement, which has included road shows, in developing and delivering these proposals.