

From: debtwise [mailto:debtwise@freenetname.co.uk]
Sent: 27 February 2009 17:13
To: BoardSecretary
Subject: Legal Services Board Draft Business Plan 2009/2010

Re Legal Services Board Draft Business Plan 2009/2010

I have read the above online plan noting that the consumer is at the heart.

Having read the plan, perhaps you could advise me on the following:-

1. What effect will the plan have on the self regulating side of legal complaints between now and when the OLC is set up?

2. Is it intended the current functions of the SRA, LCS, OLSCC and Legal Services Ombudsman remain in place until the OLC is set up? I cannot see any timetable for what happens to them. Is the takeover by the OLC on a specific day or gradual?

3. Is it intended that the current SRA Code of Conduct 2007 remains in place even after the OLC take over complaints or are the Legal Services Board intending to replace this?

4. When the SRA Code of Conduct 2007 was drawn up, the SRA advised me that various consumer groups had been consulted. In fact when challenged about this, it became evident that there had not been a significant response. At the present time having handled a complaint for a client, it appears to me that the current legal complaints system does not have the consumer at the heart and is focussed on self protection for solicitors. The issues have been taken up with the LCS, SRA and also my MP and correspondence is still ongoing. Section 48 of the Plan deals with consumer input. At what stage are you accepting consumer input? My view is that with the SRA Code of Conduct as it stands and the limited remit of the Legal Complaints Service, that the consumer is not being treated fairly or reasonably. Should you wish to have a copy of a report I have compiled, please let me know. I have already provided a copy of the report to Consumer Focus and my MP.

5 Section 51 & 52 deals with a Consumer Panel being set up. When will further details be announced on this and where are the posts being advertised?

Thank you in anticipation of clarification on the above points.

Ian Yarwood

DEBTWISE (free help service)

(Although I have only handled a small number of complaints against solicitors, I have been shocked at the considerable dilution in the powers of the LCS from its predecessors following the introduction of the SRA Code of Conduct 2007)

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