

Meeting: Legal Services Board

Date: 26 November 2019

Item: Paper (19) 62

Title: Plans for the Board's out of London meeting 2020

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Status: Official

Introduction: Purpose of the paper

1. This paper sets out proposals for the Board's out of London meeting in 2020, following lessons learnt from the October 2019 visit to Newcastle. We set out some of the positive aspects of the visit to the North East, and ideas for how we might build on these to maximise the Board's time out of London in 2020.

Recommendation

2. The Board is invited to consider the executive's recommendation that:
 - a. Future Board engagement events are held over two days
 - b. That they are moved to summer (May/June)
 - c. That the event for 2020 is held in Liverpool or Birmingham (as emerging preferences).

Timing

3. An early steer would be appreciated from the Board, as the planning involved in an out of London Board meeting is extensive c 5 months.

Background

4. The Board held a successful out of London Board meeting and stakeholder event on 22 October 2019. The format for 2019 differed to earlier years, in that Board and executive colleagues travelled up to the location the afternoon before, held the stakeholder event and Board meeting earlier in the day than usual, and travelled back to London in the afternoon on the second day.
5. The event was also held one month earlier than in the past, to reduce the likelihood of adverse weather impacting arrangements.

6. Some of the positive aspects of the Newcastle event from the executive's perspective, as well as lessons for next time, were as follows:
- Fixed outward train tickets – these worked well and all colleagues caught the fixed trains with considerable savings over open tickets;
 - Accommodation – the hotel was considered to be of a good standard, in a convenient location and offered good value for money;
 - Stakeholder event – ongoing competence – the turnout was good, and the event was considered to be a success with a high level of engagement from a very broad range of stakeholders (including solicitors, courts, CPS, consumer groups etc) – a summary of the event has been circulated to Board members by email, and has also been published on the LSB website. The format and timing worked well, and the proposal would be to repeat next year – there would be a need to identify a suitable topic in good time to generate the invitee list, and invest energy in following up with individuals by email and telephone, as happened this year – the intention, if we were to proceed with a summer event, would be to issue the date in March, follow up by email in April, and do phone calls in May;
 - Board meeting – with the exception of the quality of the line for the attendee who joined by telephone, the meeting went smoothly and Northumbria University's help with providing a room and catering was much appreciated;
 - Visit to law clinic – this was considered to be excellent and the only concern was a shortage of time;
 - Guest speaker on PLE – again, this was very positively received, but the slot was curtailed owing to the law clinic visit overrunning somewhat;
 - Return travel arrangements – open tickets had been booked for all Board members and colleagues, to allow for the possibility of the events overrunning. In the end, everyone caught the first trains listed on the itinerary, so we might have saved money by booking travel on those fixed trains.

Proposal for 2020

7. While the move from November to October was an improvement, the optimal time from the point of view of settled weather and length of day would be the summer, and so the recommendation is that we base the Board out of London visit in 2020 around the Board meeting on Friday 5 June. To maximise the

time out of London, a two-night stay might be preferable and a timetable might look as follows:

- Afternoon of Wednesday 3 June – outward travel (fixed trains);
 - Evening of Wednesday 3 June – joint Board and executive informal dinner;
 - Early morning of Thursday 4 June – roundtable breakfast event based on a key work stream, structured along similar lines to 2019;
 - Late morning Thursday 4 June – bilaterals with key local groups (Board/Execs in groups)
 - Afternoon Thursday 4 June – visits to local law projects or similar (Board/Execs in groups);
 - Evening Thursday 4 June – evening engagement event inviting a key number of external stakeholders from local legal community;
 - Morning of Friday 5 June – Board meeting, including guest speaker from the region
 - Lunchtime/early afternoon Friday 5 June - depart (fixed trains).
8. In relation to a location, recent visits have taken place to Newcastle, Cardiff, Bristol, Manchester and Leeds. Options for 2020 considered by the executive include: Liverpool, Exeter, Birmingham and Norwich. The Board will want to return to Wales in 2021 or 2022, and options other than Cardiff might include Swansea or Aberystwyth. The executive's emerging preferences for 2020 are Liverpool or Birmingham, on the basis that either of these locations would draw a considerable number and diverse range of stakeholders from the immediate area, without long distances having to be travelled. Of course, the out of London Board meeting will not be the only opportunity for engagement throughout the year – and in particular we plan some targeted work in the Midlands in 2020.

Recommendation

9. The Board is invited to consider the executive's recommendation that a two-day event is held 3-5 June 2020, in Liverpool or Birmingham (as emerging preferences).

Annexes

None

Risks and mitigations	
Financial:	Costs expected to be in the region of £5,000 – savings will be considerable if travel is on fixed trains rather than open tickets
Legal:	None
Reputational:	Positive – part of the overall stakeholder and communications strategy agreed by the Board in early 2019
Resource:	See financial above

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Fol)		
Para ref	Fol exemption and summary	Expires
None		