



LEGAL SERVICES  
**BOARD**

# Business plan 2020/21

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March 2020

# Strategy and five-year policy objectives

## The LSB's strategic objectives 2018-21

Promoting the public interest through ensuring independent, effective and proportionate regulation

Making it easier for all consumers to access the services they need and get redress

Increasing innovation, growth and the diversity of services and providers

### 5-year policy objectives: Key markers of our success

The regulators have appropriate frameworks for continuing assurance of professional competence throughout the careers of the people they regulate

The LSB is perceived as being at the forefront of enhancing public legal education

Access to legal services is increased through the promotion of responsible technological innovation that carries public trust

# Summary of work packages for 2020/21

Promoting the public interest through ensuring independent, effective and proportionate regulation

Making it easier for all consumers to access the services they need and get redress

Increasing innovation, growth and the diversity of services and providers

## 5-year policy objectives

Ongoing competence

Public legal education

Technology

## Other key workstreams

- Implement the new IGRs
- Contingency planning for regulator exit

- Future approaches to enforcement
- Legal needs surveys
- Quality indicators

- Respond to EU exit
- Engage with CMA review
- Complete prices research

## Discharging our statutory functions

Regulatory performance

Rule changes and review

Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal

OLC performance and cost

PCF approvals and review

Host LSCP

## Developing our 2021-24 strategy

# Developing our 2021-24 strategy

A programme of extensive communications and stakeholder engagement. Subject to Covid-19 developments, we will hold an event with sector leaders and key influencers in September 2020.

The strategy will define an agenda for legal services regulation as well as set out a clear strategy for the LSB's work. In relation to Covid-19, we will consider how best to address the issues that the sector is likely to face when we enter the recovery phase and the wider role that regulation might play in supporting and promoting economic recovery.

We will produce a State of the Legal Services Sector report in autumn 2020. This will be informed by stakeholder views and evidence from a range of sources to shape an agenda for change.

# Discharging our statutory functions

## **Regulatory performance**

Continue to monitor the regulators' performance against our framework to ensure progress on actions identified from published assessments.

## **OLC performance and cost**

Hold the OLC to account to make sure that the Legal Ombudsman is delivered at an appropriate cost and achieves sustained performance improvement.

## **Changes to regulatory arrangements**

A significant number of applications for changes to regulatory arrangements are expected. Complete a review of our processes and consult as required.

## **Review of PCF including non-regulatory permitted purposes**

Conclude our review of the PCF approval process, including the regulators' approaches to the non-regulatory permitted purposes in s51 of the Act. Maintain our focus on regulators' costs through the approval of PCFs.

## **Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal**

Approve its annual budget. No scheme rules changes are expected.

# 1) Promoting the public interest, through ensuring independent, effective and proportionate regulation

## **Ongoing competence**

Identify and consult on policy options following our call for evidence.

Consider primary research to fill evidence gaps; options include qualitative research on public attitudes, expert interviews and thematic reviews.

## **Internal Governance Rules**

Implement the new IGR. Once the transition period ends on 23 July 2020, monitor compliance through our regulatory performance framework.

## **Contingency planning for regulator exit**

Review our approach and planning documentation relating to regulator exit, for example as a strategic choice, due to insolvency or persistent poor performance.

## **2) Making it easier for all consumers to access the services they need and get redress**

### **Public legal education**

Consider use of our regulatory levers to ensure regulatory bodies actively promote PLE in carrying out their functions. Explore options to safeguard the future of the Legal Choices website. Publish the findings of a literature review of existing PLE research with a focus on how impact is assessed.

### **Future approaches to enforcement**

Develop and implement new arrangements for enforcement and disciplinary oversight under the regulatory performance framework.

### **Quality indicators**

Develop proposals to help consumers select providers based on signals of the quality of service.

### **Legal needs surveys**

Publish further briefings on our 2019 individual legal needs survey. Lay the groundwork for a legal needs survey of small businesses in 2021-22.

### **3) Increasing innovation, growth and the diversity of services and providers**

#### **Regulatory approaches to technology**

Distil the learning from our a collection of commissioned papers and podcasts on the regulatory implications of developments in technology in legal services.

#### **Responding to the regulatory consequences of EU exit**

Continue to liaise closely with the legal services regulators and the Ministry of Justice as the UK leaves the European Union, to ensure as smooth a transition as possible for the public, for consumers and for legal services providers.

#### **CMA review**

Engage with the CMA's review of progress on its legal services market study.

#### **Prices research**

Complete our research on the prices of common legal services commissioned in partnership with the CMA and Ministry of Justice.



# Market intelligence

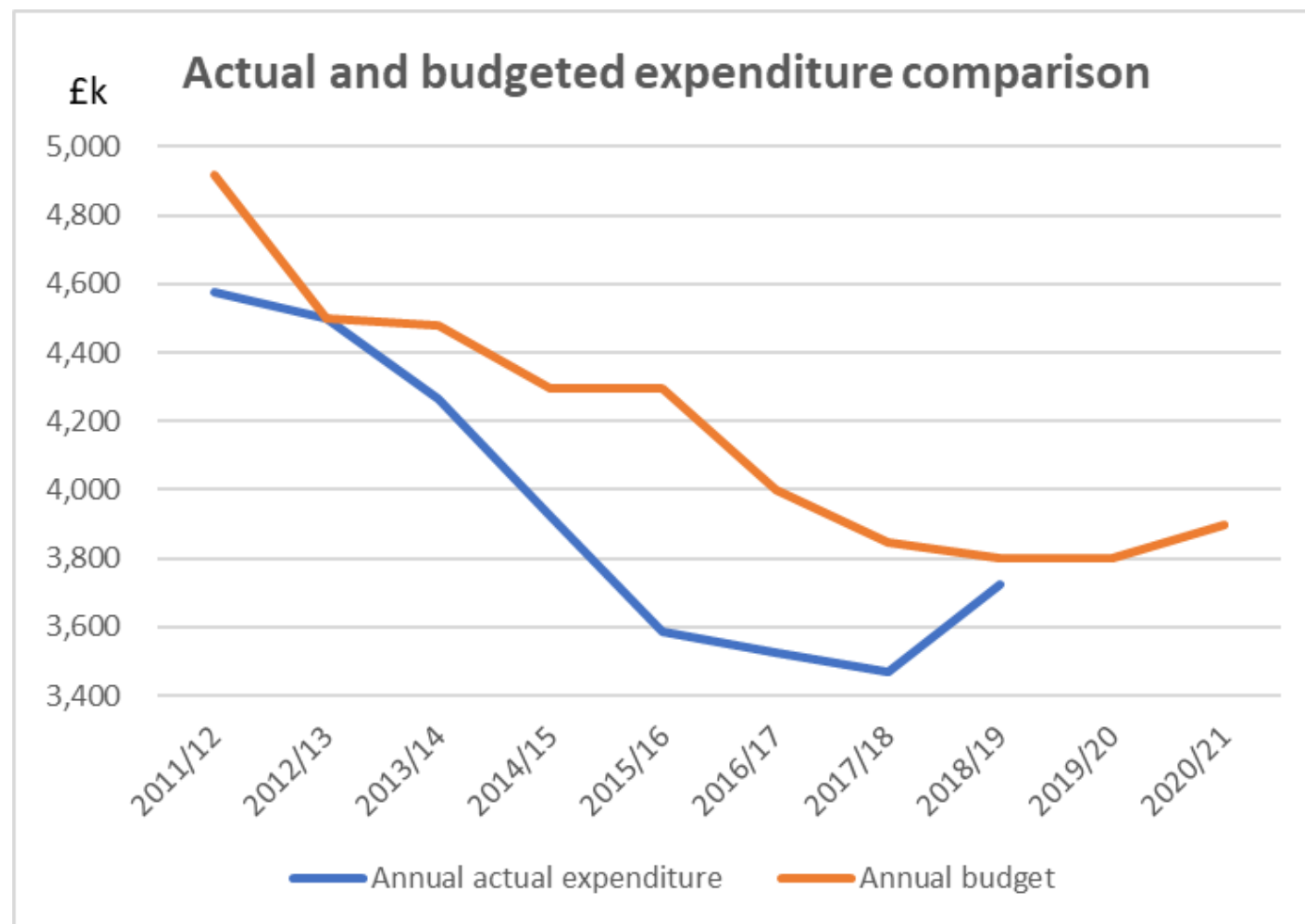
The focus of our research in 2020/21 will be to support our five year policy objectives on ongoing competence and public legal education. We will publish further briefings using data and findings from the individual legal needs survey, which we published in January 2020.

In partnership with the Legal Services Consumer Panel we will establish a panel of members of the public to enable us to engage more directly with the public so we can listen to and understand their views as part of our policy development process.

We have established a repository of key official statistics and published regulatory data and our research findings on our website as a useful reference resource for stakeholders and the media. We will continue to build on this in 2020/21.

We will consider our future approach to market intelligence alongside the development of the LSB's new corporate strategy for 2021-24.

# Financing our work in 2020/21



- Budget of **£3,923k** - a 3.3% increase on the 2019/20 budget
- Costs are financed 100% through statutory levy on approved regulators
- Annual LSB expenditure is **19%** lower than at inception

- Since the budget is set at a level required to deliver the business plan, persistent budget underspends risk adversely impacting achievement of our objectives
- This year, increased transparency on how resources are deployed and a more robust approach to budgeting overall should enable us to maximise the effective use of resources.

# Activity schedule

We have published activity schedule to the business plan on our website giving an indication of timings for key milestones.

We will update this quarterly, in particular as milestones are planned in for the new areas of work we will be commencing this year and in response to Covid-19 developments.

<https://www.legalservicesboard.org.uk/our-work>