



Recruitment Pack:

**One Member of the
Legal Services Consumer Panel**

Welcome

Dear candidate,

We are delighted that you are interested in finding out more about becoming a member of the Legal Services Consumer Panel (LSCP) and working with us to ensure the public interest is at the heart of legal services regulation.

If you've ever needed legal advice, you may have experienced how challenging it can be to compare providers based on price and quality of services. You may not have known whether the provider was regulated or what you should do if you were not satisfied with the service.

Or perhaps you are one of the one in three people who have an unmet legal need each year.

Although there have been many achievements over the last ten years of independent regulation, the legal services market does not currently work for everyone. The Legal Services Board (LSB) and LSCP are committed to changing this and ensuring everyone who has a legal problem gets the help they need.

The LSB has launched a consumer-focused strategy to reshape legal services to better meet society's needs. The LCSP contributed to its development and has aligned its work around the objectives of fair outcomes, stronger confidence, and better services.

The LSB and LSCP will work together and with others across the sector to listen to citizens and create a legal services sector that is diverse, competitive, and professional and that better serves the public.

We are looking for one new member to join the Panel, drawing together informed and lay voices to create a rich source of skills, experience and opinions. Panel members lead on key workstreams in between Panel meetings and champion its work externally. It is only through collaboration that we will achieve our joint vision, so we want to appoint someone committed to this 'hands on' working ethos.

To ensure the Panel is as representative as possible, we are actively seeking applications from all sectors and sections of the community.

Dr Helen Phillips
Chair
Legal Services Board

Sarah Chambers
Chair
Legal Services Consumer Panel

1. About the Legal Services Consumer Panel

The Legal Services Consumer Panel is an independent statutory body established by the Legal Services Act 2007. The Panel's overarching role is to ensure that the interests of consumers are carefully considered by legal services regulators. As such, the Panel provides advice and challenge to the Legal Services Board and the other frontline regulators. The Panel also has its own strategy and work-programme which it publishes on its website.

Over the next three years the Panel will focus its efforts on the following issues: access to justice, transparency, effective monitoring and evaluation of regulatory policy, a coherent response to Covid19, law-tech, advice deserts. The Panel will also respond to the work of regulators as necessary.

How Consumers are currently experiencing the legal services market

- 30% consumers shop around for legal services; this has increased steadily from 23% in 2012, but more needs to be done.
- Consumers are more likely to find the price of their service from talking to their provider (64%) than through other means
- 6% found out the price on the provider's website, 3% in an advertisement and 3% on a comparison website
- 56% of consumers say it is easy to make comparisons between different providers
- 36% of consumers dissatisfied with the services they receive but did nothing about it (silent sufferers)
- 3% of consumers fund their services through legal aid compared to 8% in 2014
- 64% of consumers say that the overall service and advice provided is good value for money.

1.1 What the Panel does

The Legal Services Consumer Panel is a central feature of a regulatory framework in England and Wales which is designed to transform the legal services market around the needs of its users. As a permanent, discrete champion for consumers it has an essential responsibility to ensure that regulators are able to consider and act on the user perspective.

The Panel was established by the Legal Services Board (LSB), the independent body responsible for overseeing the regulation of legal services in England and Wales, under the Legal Services Act 2007 and it exists to represent the interest of consumers in the regulation of legal services.

Appointments to the Panel are made by the LSB which is itself independent of Government and the legal profession.

What we have achieved in 2020/21:

Area	Impact
Tracker survey	<p>10 years of the Tracker Survey has created a rich dataset which is freely available to all who want to use it. The data assesses the legal services reforms from a uniquely consumer perspective.</p>
Law Tech	<p>The Panel is active in engaging on the topic of innovation and LawTech.</p> <p>Last year, we published a discussion paper on the regulatory environment needed to support innovation via regulatory sandboxes. And in 2019 we published another paper on LawTech highlighting the need for regulators to harness the potential of technology to address access to justice gaps.</p>
Transparency of legal services	<p>The Panel has doggedly advocated for improved transparency in the sector. Our report on the need for transparency on pricing information and quality indicators preceded the Competition and Markets Authority's review which later affirmed our findings; lack of information was hindering consumer engagement.</p> <p>Over the past year we have continued to be active in helping regulators shape their policy and deliberations around transparency. We have continued to publish papers as well as host roundtable events.</p>
Diversity	<p>Evidence from our tracker survey has consistently showed a disparity in the experiences of minority ethnic consumers when they access legal services. We have now published two reports highlighting the need for regulators to further explore and address our findings.</p>

This has been achieved by an advisory panel of just eight members, two full-time secretariat colleagues and an operational budget of £37,000 excluding staff costs.

1.2 How the Panel works

The Consumer Panel meets as a group around five or six times a year. It works differently to trustee boards and some other public bodies. Members are not asked to act either as trustees or as traditional public sector non-executive directors but to contribute directly their experience, knowledge and understanding of the needs and experiences of both individual and small business consumers.

The Panel is made up of [eight lay members](#) with varied experience and expertise that currently includes: charitable, private and public sectors, advice provision, economics, trading standards and government. Each Panel member takes a leadership role on specific areas of the work programme, working closely with secretariat colleagues.

This might include contributing to meetings and teleconferences, speaking at events, contributing to research specifications and writing and reviewing draft papers. At Panel meetings the Panel leads update fellow Panel members on progress being made.

As well as advice to the LSB, the Panel also seeks to influence the Legal Ombudsman, the regulators and representative bodies and Government where appropriate.

The time Panel members contribute in between our actual Panel meetings is therefore extremely important and vital to enabling us to make full use of the knowledge and experiences of our members.

2. What we're looking for

2.1 Qualities required for the role of a Panel member

Core competencies

It is essential that in your written application, you give examples of your proven experience against each of the following:

- an understanding of, and a deep-seated commitment to, promoting and protecting the interests of consumers and the wider community;
- an understanding of diversity and the application of equal opportunities working in practice;
- the ability to listen and challenge in a constructive manner, providing an objective and independent point of view;
- the ability to work as part of a team, working collaboratively and co-operatively, a highly developed ability to take account of different perspectives as part of a collegiate decision-making process and to take responsibility for decisions made;
- some knowledge of tech, including but not limited to LawTech, FinTech and/ or RegTech and impacts of digitisation on legal services;
- excellent communication and influencing skills.

Desirable criteria

- experience of issues affecting legal services users in Wales;
- regulatory understanding, including knowledge of front-line regulation from other regulated industries;
- consumer policy development and analysis;
- community engagement.

2.2 Diversity and equality of opportunity

The LSB and the Consumer Panel welcome applications from all sections of the community and from people with diverse ages, experience and backgrounds for these posts. Applications from throughout England and Wales are encouraged and welcome. It is important to us that the Panel has as diverse a mix of members as possible, reflecting the diversity of users of legal services.

2.3 Ineligibility for appointment

The Legal Services Act 2007 does specify some circumstances in which a candidate is not allowed to serve as a member of the Consumer Panel. This includes anyone who is:

- a) a member of the Legal Services Board or its staff;
- b) a member of the Office for Legal Complaints, an Ombudsman appointed by it or a member of its staff;
- c) a member of the governing body, or of the staff, of an approved regulator¹;
- d) an authorised person in relation to an activity which is a reserved legal activity²;
- e) a person authorised, by a person designated under section 5(1) of the Compensation Act 2006 (c.29), to provide services which are regulated claims management services (within the meaning of that Act);
- f) an Advocate of Scotland;
- g) a solicitor in Scotland;
- h) a member of the Bar in Northern Ireland; or
- i) a solicitor of the Court of Judicature of Northern Ireland.

Further advice about eligibility for appointment can be given by contacting Paige Torrance at WIG Talent.

¹ The LSB is the oversight regulator for legal services approved regulators as set out in the Legal Services Act 2007. Approved regulators are the bodies that the LSB oversees which directly regulate lawyers practising in England and Wales. For details of who the approved regulators are, please see the [LSB website](#).

² An authorised person is someone who is allowed to carry out the six specific legal services activities. The six reserved legal activities are: the exercise of a right of audience; the conduct of litigation; reserved instrument activities; probate activities; notarial activities; and the administration of oaths. For further information, please see the LSB's [reserved legal activities page](#)

3. On appointment

Remuneration for the Panel member

- An annual fee of £4,500 will be paid for a time commitment of 15 days a year
- Remuneration is taxable under Schedule E and subject to Class I National Insurance contributions. It is not pensionable
- Those appointed will be eligible for travel and subsistence costs necessarily incurred on Consumer Panel business at rates set centrally by the LSB

Tenure of office

The appointment will be for a period of up to four years. Appointment terms are staggered to ensure continuity.

Warning: Impact of appointment on people in receipt of benefits

If you are appointed, this may have an effect on your entitlement to benefits. If you are in receipt of benefits you should seek advice from the Benefits Agency.

Location

Panel meetings are currently being held remotely. When it is possible to do so, meetings will be held at the Legal Services Board's offices at The Rookery, 2 Dyott Street, London WC2A 1DE.

Support

The Consumer Panel is supported by a team of two dedicated staff members.

Training

Induction will be provided following appointment.

Conflict of interests

Successful candidates must ensure that during the period of their tenure they are committed to and conduct themselves in accordance with the seven principles of public life (Appendix 3). They must not, in any capacity, engage in any activity that might undermine, or be reasonably thought to undermine their independence and impartiality. They must not undertake any tasks or activity that may in any way limit their ability to discharge his/her duties in full.

More generally, there are five issues most frequently encountered that could lead to real or apparent conflicts of interest:

- Financial interests or share ownership – for example, holding shares in a firm that is considering applying or has licensed body status in relation to an alternative business structure (ABS) could be a particular area of concern.
- Expertise or activity in particular areas, that whilst not precluding appointment may be perceived by the public as a conflict of interest –

for example, it is especially important that associations with legal firms are explored fully.

- Membership of some societies or organisations – for example, dealings with the legal and financial sectors will need to be explored fully.
- Rewards for past or future contributions or favours.
- The activities, associations and employment of relatives or partners.

Successful candidates are required to declare any interest that may present an actual or perceived conflict of interest prior to appointment. They are also required to declare any actual or perceived conflict of interest during the term of appointment if appropriate. Successful candidates must conduct their private affairs in a way that minimises the possibility of conflict or embarrassment.

The LSB and Consumer Panel are committed to the principle of public appointments on merit with independent assessments, openness and transparency of process. We are also committed to providing equal opportunities for all, irrespective of race, age, disability, gender, marital status, religion, sexual orientation, transgender and working patterns.

4. How to apply

WIG Talent are assisting the Legal Services Board with this recruitment. WIG Talent will be the main point of contact for candidates, including for in relation to applications and feedback. The contact at WIG is Paige Torrence.

To apply, please send:

- A copy of your CV.
- A statement of suitability (maximum 2 pages) explaining how you meet the qualities required of a Panel member as listed in 2.1.
- Please include the names and contact details of two referees. Please note referees will be contacted if you are shortlisted for interview. We will seek your permission prior to approaching referees.
- Please ensure you have also completed and submitted the equal opportunities monitoring form, as it appears on the website. The information you provide will be treated as confidential, and used for statistical purposes only. The form will not be treated as part of your application.

The closing date for receipt of completed applications is **Friday 21 May 2021**
Please see the timetable below for other key dates:

Closing Date	Friday 21 May 2021
Final panel interviews <i>Candidates required</i>	14 and 16 June 2021
Successful candidate takes up post	July 2021 (subject to Lord Chancellor approval)

Selection panel

The appointment advisory panel will be chaired by Jemima Coleman, a non-lay member of the LSB Board, accompanied by the current Chair of the Consumer Panel, Sarah Chambers, and an independent member, Keith Richards.

Final panel interviews:

Please note that if you are invited to interview but are not able to attend on the given date, we will do our best to arrange an alternative date but this may not be possible.

If invited to interview, the selection panel will question you about your experience and expertise and ask specific questions to find whether you meet the specified qualities. You may also be asked to prepare short presentation.

The LSB, with the approval of the Lord Chancellor, will appoint candidates to the Legal Services Consumer Panel.

If you are successful, you will receive a letter from the LSB appointing you as a member of the Legal Services Consumer Panel; if you are unsuccessful, you will be notified by WIG.

Contact Information

Should you wish to have an informal, confidential discussion about the appointment, please contact Paige Torrance at WIG Talent on pt@wig.co.uk or 020 7222 1166.