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For further information, please contact the External Affairs Team by calling 0121 245 3047 / 0121 245 3231 or emailing support@legalombudsman.org.uk.

Office for Legal Complaints publishes 2020-23 Strategy and Business Plan consultation

The Office for Legal Complaints (OLC) has launched a consultation [link] on its proposed Strategy and Business Plan for 2020-23.

Over the last three years the Legal Ombudsman has successfully implemented a number of changes, from modernising the IT infrastructure, changing the business process and trialling new approaches to casework. The success of these changes has led to visible improvements in our work, especially in recent months, leading to greater consistency in the timeliness and quality of service provided to people who bring disputes to us.

The OLC strategy and business plan sets out how we will continue to enhance our service to meet the full expectations of stakeholders.

The three strategic objectives are:

- Improving the experience of our service for complainants and service providers while using our expertise to guide and add value to the complaint journey
- Increasing the transparency and impact of our casework to support greater access to justice
- Developing our service to ensure it is appropriate for the evolving legal sector

The first year of the strategy will focus on further enhancing people's experience of our service and our approaches to learning and feedback. In particular we will continue our work on the beginning of our process so that people can access the service as quickly as possible, and make sure the way we communicate with people helps and supports the earliest resolution of disputes. We will build more structured learning and feedback into our work, so that we can provide greater support and insight to the sector.

Chair of the OLC, Wanda Goldwag said: *"The Legal Ombudsman has worked extremely hard over the last three years to address a range of infrastructure challenges and ensure that we have the right people and processes. In recent months I have seen real gains in the Legal Ombudsman's performance which shows that we are*

supporting both complainants and the legal profession to resolve disputes as effectively as possible. As I come to the end of my three-year term as Chair I am confident that this will continue.”

The consultation runs until 14th February 2020.

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Notes to Editors:

1. The Legal Ombudsman for England and Wales was set up by the Office for Legal Complaints (our board) under the Legal Services Act 2007 and is an independent and impartial scheme to help resolve legal service disputes. When it receives complaints, it examines the facts in each case and weighs up both sides of the story. The Ombudsman is not a consumer champion or part of the legal profession and is also independent of Government.
2. The consultation runs from 16th December to 14th February 2020.
3. Performance gains which have been made over the last year include:
 - a. Unit cost. Q2 unit cost is £1,597. The target for the year is £1,695.
 - b. Case closures. On track to close 7,200 cases by March 2020. This is in line with business plan targets.
 - c. Timeliness. Currently meet the majority of timeliness targets. 33% of high complexity cases should be resolved in 180 days. In Q2 this has increased from 20% to 30%.
 - d. Resolved historic pool of legacy cases.
 - e. Introduced a Customer Assessment Tool which has been accessed over 25,000 times.
4. Wanda Goldwag’s term as Chair of the OLC comes to an end on 31st March 2020. She has decided not to seek re-appointment in order to take up the position as the Independent Uniform Network Code Modification Panel Chair for the Joint Office of Gas Transporters.