

Legal Ombudsman

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Karen Afriyie
Legal Services Board
One Kemble Street
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17 February 2016

Dear Karen Afriyie

LSB Business Plan 2016/17

The OLC welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on your draft Business Plan 2016-17.

In broad terms we feel that the overall shape and thrust of the business plan is in the right place and that the objectives as set out are the right areas to focus on.

We strongly endorse the work the LSB have begun to do in mapping the unregulated sector, and look forward to exploring the scope for either voluntary arrangements under section 163 or 164.

The research you are commissioning to evidence the experiences of consumers in a range of vulnerable circumstances with different legal providers, will be a huge benefit to the sector and we hope there will be learning we can take from this important piece of work too. We are keen to remain engaged with the LSB on the development of research to ensure that our research supports the sector alongside the work of the LSB and other regulators. To this end, we would welcome the LSB taking a more active role in co-ordinating research and intelligence gathering and the Legal Ombudsman would be a very willing partner in this.

The logo for the Legal Ombudsman. The word "LEGAL" is written in a bold, pink, sans-serif font. Above the letters "L", "E", and "G" are decorative, flowing pink lines that resemble a signature or calligraphic flourish. Below "LEGAL", the word "OMBUDSMAN" is written in a black, all-caps, sans-serif font.

There will be interesting developments for the Legal Ombudsman to consider in the face of a changing regulatory landscape, and whilst being mindful of the needs of the regulated community we are keen to ensure that consumers do not end up in a worsening position regarding redress. We will be interested in the review you will be undertaking regarding transitional protections for special bodies.

We are committed to working in partnership with the LSB and MoJ to ensure that the additional measures that are needed to make sure the governance relationship between MoJ, LSB and OLC is as effective as possible. We look forward to working with you to review governance protocols between the LSB/Ministry of Justice/OLC.

Ahead of the planning for the Legal Ombudsman's next three year strategy – due to start in 2017 - it would be useful to have a joint strategic workshop to ensure that our work is able to have the impact both organisations would like.

We welcome your strategy and for the opportunity to contribute, and look forward to seeing the work planned progress throughout the year.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Green', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Steve Green
Chair, Office of Legal Complaints