

Chief Executive's Report to Council – Part 1

Author: Paul Tennant, Chief Executive

**Classification - Public
Freedom of Information**

Not applicable as this paper is public

Summary:

This report follows the format used for the October 2019 meeting. Structuring the report in this way allows Council to get a clear view of the breadth of work going on in our Directorates. It also means that Council members can take the briefings as standalone documents to share with their constituents should they wish. I continue to endeavour to ensure that the majority of information is contained within my part 1 report.

My part one report has two appendices:

Appendix 1 – Strategic Insight and Influence Directorate briefing

Appendix 2 – Member Experience Directorate briefing

My part 2 paper covers progress being made against delivering our business plan which can be turned white after discussions and subsequently shared with members.

Recommendations / Conclusions:

This paper is for: information.

Assessments. This should be either a summary of what is in the paper (cross-referenced to the relevant paragraph), or, if the issues are very straightforward, a full statement of the relevant position.

Financial:	There are no financial implications arising from the paper. Financial performance is included within the body of the report.
Risk:	The plans in this report are covered by the Strategic and Operational Risk registers in place throughout the Law Society.
ED & I	ED&I implications are considered as part of all aspects of our work particularly around culture as creating an inclusive and proactive culture is an important outcome for the Law Society.
Organisational Values	Details of the ongoing work to embed our organisational values are included within the paper.
Consultation	Executive Leadership Team.

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Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of issues impacting on the Law Society and our members, along with our responses. The focus of our business plan for 2018/19 was around four organisational goals. Our goals set out what we are trying to accomplish through our activities and programmes. These are:

- Goal 1 - Promoting the profession, so that their value to purchasers, society and the economy is understood and their place in the wider legal market is maintained
- Goal 2 - Influencing for impact, so that the profession's voice is listened to in public and regulatory policy
- Goal 3 - Driving professional excellence, to help members deliver for their clients and be the best they can be
- Goal 4 - Enhancing member value through organisational efficiencies, growth and developing our people

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COUNCIL
05/12/2019

Part 1, Appendix 1 – Chief Executive’s Report to Council on Strategic Insight and Influence

Author: Brian Bannister

Classification - Public Freedom of Information

Not applicable as this paper is public

Summary:

This paper provides an update on activities across the strategic insight and influence directorate, including an update on:

- Brand and Communications
- Policy
- Public Affairs and Campaigns
- Futures and Insight

Recommendations / Conclusions:

This paper is for: noting

Assessments. This should be either a summary of what is in the paper (cross-referenced to the relevant paragraph), or, if the issues are very straightforward, a full statement of the relevant position.

Financial:	None – this paper does not discuss spending
Risk:	None – this paper provides an update on current activity
E D & I	No EDI issues were raised in this paper.
Organisational Values	This paper focuses on clarity and excellence to provide Council with a detailed update on how we are working to achieve success, including information on what we have been working on and how successful we have been.
Consultation	Senior members across the Public Affairs, Policy, Futures & Insight, and Brand & Communication teams.

Introduction

This paper to Council provides an update on activities across the Strategic Insight and Influence directorate during the period September – October 2019. Throughout our different workstreams we are considering the needs of the membership and how we can support the Common Core of our member offer to promote the profession and influence for impact. We are working to ensure we embed our values, principles and behaviours at the heart of everything we do.

During the final months of the business year, the Prorogation of Parliament, that Prorogation being deemed unlawful, the Queen's Speech, and the call for a General Election had a significant influence and impact on our work.

Queen's Speech

The Queen's Speech included a number of bills that are of interest to the Law Society including:

- **Domestic Abuse Bill** – this bill was carried over from the previous session. It will create new protections for victims of domestic abuse.
- **Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill** – this bill will aim to minimise the impact of divorce on children, and will provide for divorces on a no-fault basis.
- **Serious Violence Bill** – this bill will create a new duty on public agencies to put in place plans to prevent serious violence.
- **Extradition (Provisional Arrest) Bill** – this bill would create a new power to enable the immediate arrest of fugitives after the issuing of an Interpol Red Notice.
- **Victims' Law** – a new Victims' Law will be consulted on in early 2020, alongside the publication of a new Victims' Code which will set out the minimum level of service victims can expect from criminal justice agencies.
- **Private International Law (Implementation of Agreements) Bill** – this bill will aim to maintain the UK's role in delivering justice across borders on civil and family issues and make it easier for UK individuals who become involved in international legal disputes to access justice. This would include clarifying the implementation in UK legislation of the 1996, 2005 and 2007 Hague Conventions. The government's background briefing notes that legal services contribute around £25 billion a year to the UK economy.
- **European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Bill** – this bill will implement any withdrawal agreement that is agreed between the UK and the EU. The government also signalled its intent to ensure that EU, EEA and Swiss citizens currently living in the UK will continue to have a legal right to stay.
- **Health Service Safety Investigations Bill** – this bill will establish a new independent body to investigate patient safety concerns – something which will be of interest to clinical negligence solicitors.

We had previously briefed on the Domestic Abuse Bill and Divorce, Dissolution and Separation Bill. It was noted that the Courts and Tribunals (Online Procedure) Bill was not reintroduced at this Queen's Speech. Due to the election, all of this legislation has now fallen, and we await a new Queen's Speech following the Election.

Political party conferences

The Law Society's full programme at the political party conferences can be found [here](#).

Conservative Party Conference

The President attended the Conservative Party Conference in Manchester. While there Simon Davis spoke at several fringe events, including:

- Speaking alongside the Solicitor General, Michael Ellis MP, the High Commissioner for Australia, George Brandis QC and Chair of Policy and Resources for the City of London, Catherine McGuinness on a panel exploring how strengthening the rule of law could drive UK competitiveness. The Solicitor General praised the legal services sector as a crucial component of the economy and said that our law and courts are the "*platinum standard*." He also said the UK would seek to accede to the Lugano Convention and wanted to become a world leader in private international law again. Following questions, the Solicitor General stated the importance of an independent judiciary and the need to respect the judgment of the Supreme Court.
- Hosting a drinks reception with the Society of Conservative Lawyers and the Bar Council, where the Lord Chancellor Robert Buckland QC MP spoke about the criminal justice system, the rule of law and access to justice.
- Speaking at a fringe event on vulnerability in the justice system alongside representatives from the Bar Council, Justice and Society of Conservative Lawyers.

Labour Party Conference

Vice President David Greene attended the Labour Party Conference in Brighton. While there David spoke at several fringe events, including:

- A panel event with the Shadow Lord Chancellor, Attorney General and Solicitor General, hosted by the Society of Labour Lawyers, on the rule of law and the criminal justice system.
- A Labour City Lawyers fringe event on Brexit and financial services alongside panel members that included chair of the Exiting the EU Select Committee Hilary Benn MP and Shadow Economic Secretary to the Treasury Jonathan Reynolds MP.
- A panel hosted in conjunction with the Society of Labour Lawyers, JUSTICE and the Bar Council on diversity in the law, at which the Shadow Attorney General and David Lammy MP also spoke.
- A panel hosted in conjunction with the Legal Aid Practitioners Group and Young Legal Aid Lawyers on access to justice, alongside the Shadow Attorney General and Shadow Lord Chancellor Richard Burgon MP.

The Law Society also hosted a dinner for legally qualified parliamentarians. The dinner provided an opportunity to discuss some of our key priorities for law and justice and was attended by members of the shadow legal frontbench, the Justice Select Committee and other political stakeholders.

Liberal Democrat Party Conference

Deputy Vice President Stephanie Boyce attended the Liberal Democrat Party Conference in Bournemouth. While there, Stephanie spoke at a fringe event we hosted alongside the Liberal Democrat Lawyers Association on access to justice and lawtech. Other panel members included Lord Marks, the Liberal Democrat Justice Spokesperson, and Ruth Daniels, CEO of the Access to Justice Foundation.

Policy

We have continued to work on issues within the five priority policy themes agreed by Council, as well as delivering policy work across all practice areas.

Access to Justice and Rule of Law

Wales

TLS Wales was noted and thanked for its contributions in both the Commission on Justice recommendation report and in the Jomati rapid review of legal services in Wales that was commissioned by the Welsh Government.

Jonathan Davies, the new Head of Wales, has been invited to sit on the Wales Council for Economic Development which is sponsored by the Minister for Economy and Infrastructure, Ken Skates AM. This invitation comes on the back of the Jomati rapid review and Welsh Government seeking to prioritise the development of the legal sector in Wales as a significant contributor to wider economic development.

Increased spending for the Ministry of Justice

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) allocation includes a 4.9% increase in real terms to the department's resource budget from 2019-20 to 2020-21, with £55 million bookmarked for use across the criminal justice system to *"support the work of 20,000 additional police officers and additional funding to support the ongoing reform of the probation system, which will help reduce reoffending and improve the quality of post-custody supervision."*

We met with the Lord Chancellor and Justice Minister Wendy Morton MP to emphasise that the whole criminal justice system, including courts and defence fees, need to be funded for the Government to achieve their aims. We have also raised this with MoJ officials.

The Law Society sent a letter to Chief Secretary to the Treasury, Rishi Sunak MP, following the spending review and the proposed budget (which was then cancelled). However, we were not able to secure a meeting at this time. With a three-year spending review expected next year and the new Government likely to hold a budget soon after the election, we will approach the Treasury ministerial team to discuss the funding of the justice system.

Human Rights

In July, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) issued a consultation regarding proposals to change the way in which criminal and civil law is applied to armed forces personnel operating overseas. The Law Society produced a response to the proposals, drawing on the expertise of the human rights, criminal and civil justice committees, while also reiterating our opposition to the Government's already-stated intention of derogating from the European Convention on Human Rights, and the use of language such as "lawfare" which appears to criticise legal professionals.

At least one of the proposals, a presumption against prosecution for offences more than ten years ago which were investigated at the time, is now expected to appear in the Conservative Party manifesto. TLS will continue to monitor and engage with this agenda.

HMCTS

In November two select committees published reports on the court modernisation programme. The Justice Select Committee report mentioned the Law Society's evidence five

times (based on Richard Miller's evidence) and was supportive of several of our recommendations.

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) also published a progress review on HMCTS' court modernisation programme. Richard Miller provided oral evidence to this inquiry on behalf of the Law Society, and we were mentioned 12 times in their final report. We stated that HMCTS should not close any further courts until they have analysed the impact of their progress so far and have been able to bring in the legislative framework required for the programme. PAC report also noted some of our concerns such as the need for HMCTS to set out what it will do to make sure that the needs of vulnerable users are considered in future closure decisions, and where access issues are apparent, it should put in place measures to compensate for difficulties.

Criminal justice campaign

We achieved a number of successes as part of our criminal justice campaign, which was initially launched in January. Highlights from the September-October period included:

- Publishing new analysis on "released under investigation", which highlights problems with increased usage. This resulted in wide press coverage in the Express, Daily Mail, Channel 4 News, the Guardian, the Telegraph, the Times and over 115 local news outlets. This was based on new data obtained by the law firm Hickman and Rose and a Law Society paper written in collaboration with members of our criminal justice committee.
- Following this, the Government announced a review of the released under investigation.
- We met with Diane Abbott (Shadow Home Secretary) and Louise Haigh (Shadow Policing Minister) to discuss released under investigation.
- We launched a "write to the Lord Chancellor" e-action calling for action on legal aid deserts and criminal justice – 640 members took part.

Role of the Profession

Wales Commission on Justice

The published recommendations of the Commission on Justice reflect long held frustrations of the Welsh Government and wider civil society that Wales has been historically underfunded and hit harder than England by the deep cuts to justice funding by Westminster Governments over the last decade. Estimated expenditure by the UK government on the justice system in Wales has fallen by a third since 2009-10, although increased funding by the Welsh Government and Welsh local authorities has offset some of these cuts. The Commission on Justice recommendations are wide ranging, and the Wales office is in the process of canvassing members across Wales for their views and opinions on the published recommendations.

Solicitor Judges

We have held a round of events as part of the Pre-Application Judicial Education programme. This is a new initiative aimed at supporting applicants for judicial office from non-traditional and under-represented backgrounds. Early feedback has been positive, and we are developing a formal evaluation framework so we can build on what has worked well.

Advocacy

We submitted a response to the SRA consultation on assuring advocacy standards. We supported the general approach of not changing advocacy rights, instead relying on the professional obligation not to undertake work beyond your competence. We stressed the

need for any proposals to be evidence based, and highlighted areas where we considered that they were not. We emphasised the need to ensure that any requirement for higher standards did not further damage an already fragile market, particularly in areas covered by legal aid. We agreed with the principle that youth courts require separate consideration but did not support the proposal that higher advocacy rights were an appropriate reflection of the skills needed in the youth courts.

Technology and the law

The senior judiciary made supportive statements echoing the Law Society's recommendations on the ethical considerations on the use of algorithms and the use of English law for smart contracts and dealing cryptoassets:

- A Supreme Court Justice, Lord Sales, called for the regulation of computer algorithms handling decisions about people's lives. He stated that an 'expert commission' could help ensure that automated decision-making processes have 'a capacity for mercy'.
- The Chancellor of the High Court, Sir Geoffrey Vos, urged the profession to turn its intellectual fire-power towards the development of the English common law, so that it can effectively tackle the problems thrown up by the use of big data, cryptoassets, on-chain smart contracts, and artificial intelligence.

Sole practitioners and small and medium firms were equipped with practical tools on the uses of legal technology and informed of the opportunities that could bring for their business which enable them to make informed investment decisions.

Civil Justice

Housing

In October, the Law Society responded to the Government's plan to remove s.21 of the Housing Act 1988, which would end no-fault evictions. We support this proposal and made other observations about how the rights of tenants and landlords could be balanced better.

Regulation

Influencing the SQE

Since the SRA began to develop SQE in 2014, the Law Society has responded to all four rounds of consultation and the SRA have met many of our key demands. The inclusion of a degree level qualification and two full working years of qualifying work-experience as requirements were major wins.

In addition to raising concerns with the SRA, the Law Society has been heavily engaged in ensuring the profession is aware of the upcoming change to legal education. Most recently this culminated in an updated SQE overview available on our website. The overview outlines all currently known information on the SQE and is a live document, updated with new information as it become available.

Alan East (Chair of Education and Training Committee) has been conducting a podcast series focusing on different elements of the SQE. The most recent of which was recorded with Julie Brannan (Director of Education and Training at the SRA) covering the SQE 1 pilot results. The podcasts are released every 4-6 weeks and aim to provide different perspectives on the SQE's development.

Alongside providing members with key information on the SQE, the Law Society has participated in a range of conferences and roundtables (Legal Cheek, Nottingham University, Coventry, Law Gazette), and consistently provides updates to members through digital communications (social media, professional update, presidents update).

We continue to argue for the SQE to be offered in the Welsh language and have met with key officials to discuss the importance of it. The Wales office recently met with the Welsh Government Counsel General, Jeremy Miles AM, and will continue to follow up with him and his office.

Legal Ombudsman

In October, the legal ombudsman (LeO) released a discussion paper entitled 'Transparency and Reporting Impact', to which tLS is preparing a response. LeO is seeking views on how it can improve transparency and extend its current reporting of decisions to make more information available to consumers, service providers, and others.

One of the suggested options outlined in the paper is the publication of ombudsman's decisions in full. We are not convinced that publishing full ombudsman decisions will help consumers to make decisions about the quality of service. Most of the options discussed in the paper would be very labour intensive and therefore costly, which would fall to the profession to pay. LeO does not presently have the powers to publish such information and would require amendment to the Legal Services Act 2007(LSA) to enable such publication. Accordingly we would strongly oppose these options and any application to amend the LSA.

SRA Standards and Regulations

On 25 November the new SRA Standards and Regulations comes into force giving solicitors more flexibility in the way they want to practice. In preparation for the changes we have developed a range of resources for members to help them with compliance. We published two practice notes on the two new models of practice – freelance solicitors and solicitors offering legal services to the public from unregulated businesses. We also developed a programme of training and events.

Fifth Money Laundering Directive (5MLD)

The Government's position has long been that it will transpose the latest EU anti-money laundering changes regardless of Brexit. Prior to the dissolution of Parliament the Government did not publish a response to the consultation on the proposal conducted earlier this year. The 5MLD is due to be transposed by 10 January 2020 and the Law Society is working with other professional bodies to re-draft the legal sector guidance in accordance with the anticipated policy positions. There remain some unresolved policy questions which will have significant impacts for the profession, especially regarding the scope of trust registration. It is expected the new government will lay the regulation in Parliament shortly before the transposition date.

Brexit

With the possibility of the UK leaving without a deal on 31 October remaining until late October, the Law Society continued to promote our nine guidance notes on steps solicitors could take in such a scenario (on civil co-operation, consumer law, criminal justice, data protection, family law, intellectual property, VAT, and providing legal services in the EU). We also held eight roundtable events across England and Wales to speak to members with speakers from the MoJ and Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

We were successful in bidding for the Government's Business Readiness Fund. This funding allowed us to put together a [ten steps law firms should take to prepare guide](#) which was posted to five partners in each firm outside the top 50 firms. We promoted our guidance through social media and online advertising, hosted three webinars and produced guidance for law firms on their EU workforce.

The President met with the Lord Chancellor, Justice Minister Chris Philip MP and Business Minister Nadhim Zahawi to discuss no deal preparations and the Law Society's asks for the UK-EU future relationship. The President met with Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Michael Gove and the Lord Chancellor to discuss the Law Society's asks for the future relationship. We also met with Justice Select Committee Chair Bob Neil MP and Liberal Democrat Brexit Spokesperson Tom Brake MP.

We continue to engage with relevant EU bars and law societies on what steps could be taken in a no deal situation and share changes with our members. We are working with the SRA to secure data sharing arrangements with EU regulators. We hosted an event with City based firms to discuss the latest in relationship to requalification in Ireland.

Brussels-based Brexit activities

On 16 October, The Brussels Office organised a Legal breakfast meeting on: Recognition and enforcement of foreign judgments after Brexit – the Lugano Convention and the 2019 Hague Judgements Convention.

The Brussels Office spoke about Brexit at four events including the European Criminal Bar Association conference in Belfast, for a FIDE group in the University of Helsinki, for Hannes Snelman law firm in Helsinki and Simmons and Simmons in London. The office also spoke at a London roundtable on continuing business in Brussels in light of Brexit. This was supplemented with a podcast. Following the event around 100 solicitors registered with the Brussels Bar Dutch speaking division.

Ongoing TLS activities

Brand and communications

Influencing for impact

Our media relations team, with the support of our subject matter experts on staff and committees achieved a 59% increase in broadcast media coverage in the year to October 31. We know from the member survey that being a strong voice in the media is one of the things members expect and value.

This media work notably included work to generate significant coverage of the use of release under investigation which resulted in government announcing a review. The former chair of our criminal law committee Malcolm Fowler wrote to the Guardian saying "I am proud of my professional body's work on the ills of long delayed decisions over the prosecution or otherwise of suspects."

CLSA also tweeted their reaction.



CLSA @CrimeSolicitors · 4m

Well this may be a first - we intended to call for this at our conference on Saturday ! That is how important our Bath conference is - it's so influential that it's bringing about policy changes before we've even met. Imagine what could happen when we all get together. Book now !



The Law Society @TheLawSociety · 22m

Our high-profile investigation revealed tens of thousands of suspects are being released under investigation (RUI) – an open-ended arrangement which lacks the conditions, balances and checks afforded by bail. Thank you to @simonisrael for working with us to reveal the problem

[Show this thread](#)



Promoting the profession

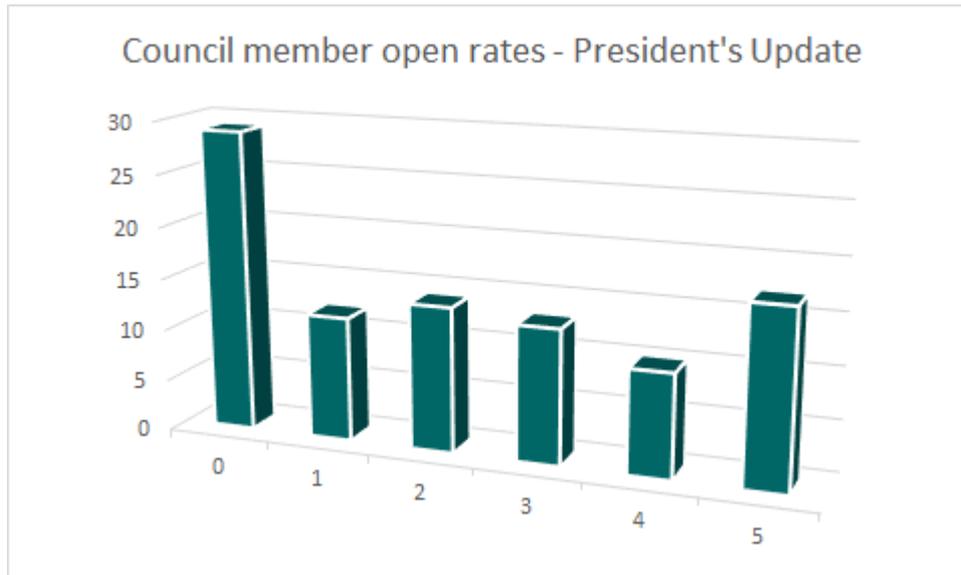
The Solicitor Brand campaign continues to promote the profession as honest and honourable, approachable and accessible, experts in their field, client focused, delivering value for money and adding value to society.

Keeping members up to date

Members will be aware that the new website is now live for testing. Council have been sent information on how they can join other members taking part testing and feeding back on the new site. Six different test periods will run as we develop the site and the new, simpler MyLS registration process will be at the heart of our drive to personalise the content we give our members.

The President's Weekly Update for Council members will take a Christmas break from w/c 23 December and will return on 10 January. This is our main tool for keeping Council up to date on the latest work by the Society to influence for impact, promote the profession, keep members up to date, support practice excellence and be members' career companion.

Our new system enables us to monitor and report on open rates for the update. An analysis of open rates for a five-week period showed that 81 members read one or more Updates, 29 Council members did not read the Update at all and three have opted out of receiving it. 17 Council members opened the Update every week. The chart below shows the frequency with which Council members opened the update.



Futures and Insight (including Research)

KPMG have completed their report detailing the wider economic value of the legal services sector to the UK. The study provides an assessment of the direct, indirect, and induced contributions the legal services sector makes to the UK economy, using the most recent macroeconomic data available. The key findings have begun to be shared internally and we will agree a comms plan. We are expecting to publish the final report in January 2020.

The Legal Needs Survey (jointly commissioned with the LSB as a detailed investigation of how individuals in England & Wales handle a range of legal issues) report has been finalised with a standalone executive summary. The report will be published jointly by the Law Society and LSB, in January 2020. The brand and communications directorate will work on a mini-campaign to promote the research to members.

The Annual Statistics Report is now available on the website.

The Member Feedback survey is in piloting stage, with mainstage interviews with 1800 members being conducted throughout November and December. Interviews with senior representatives from the top 50 law firms will run from mid-November to mid-February.

The PC holders survey report will be available in December and includes insight on skills, wellbeing, earnings and diversity – alongside evaluation of online methods versus telephone research with members. The findings will inform development of the Law Society's career services, and policy on education, technology and diversity.

Ongoing policy activities

Brussels Stakeholder engagement

Brussels Office organised two events, with wide stakeholder engagement.

On 11 September, The Brussels Office organised its Autumn Reception in the offices of Slaughter & May, 52 guests were in attendance. David Greene, Paul Wilson, LSS President John Mulholland, Michael Clancy and Katie Hay participated in meetings throughout the day and attended the reception. This was an opportunity to engage with various business and membership organisations over lunch (British Chamber of Commerce BBUKOO (Brussels

based UK Organisations and Offices), as well as our Brussels based members. After lunch there was a meeting with the UK Permanent Representation to meet with Hazel Cameron, Legal team, Fergus Eckersley, Article 50 team, Adam Burton, Legal team. The Brussels team also hosted a meeting with UK MEPs Jackie Jones, Sheila Ritchie and Seb Dance. This was followed by a reception which was attended by around 60 people, with several law firm partners (White and Case, Slaughter and May, Skadden) and associates in the audience.

Together with the Law Society of Scotland, the Brussels Office drafted a panel proposal for the WTO Public Forum. This panel was accepted and the Brussels Office spoke on “Millennials and Generation Z as customers and clients: changing trade for next generation of businesses”.

Probate Fees

Due to the sustained pressure resulting from the Law Society’s campaign against the increase in probate fees, the Government has now confirmed that it has scrapped its proposals to raise fees charged for a grant of probate. The fee hike had already been put on hold following the prorogation of parliament, but the announcement means that the controversial policy will not be revived. Pressure from the Law Society and opposition from the public and MPs meant the Government never brought the plans to a vote in the House of Commons.

During our campaign, our arguments against the fee hike were cited in parliament 13 times and were featured in 26 pieces of national media coverage, including pieces by Sky News, the *Financial Times* and the *Daily Telegraph*. In addition, we launched a campaign tool in February 2019 allowing members and the public to write to their local MPs urging them to oppose the fee increase. In total 2,624 people wrote to their MPs using the tool.

The Lord Chancellor also announced that the MoJ will conduct a wider review of court fees, which will involve only “*small adjustments to cover costs.*”

Tax Law

Tax legislation and policy is complex and in occasions unclear and difficult to apply. To address this issue, we made representations to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and the Treasury (HMT), produced evidence-based policy briefings and lobbied officials and ministers with the following positive outcomes:

- **Structures and Buildings Allowance:** we responded to HMRC in support of this proposal which is now being introduced. Two specific positive changes to the draft regulations were made following our consultation response, namely in the commencement provisions (the concept of ‘connected preparatory contract’ has gone) and in additions relating to the interaction of the new allowance with capital gains tax.
- **Digital Services Tax:** the DST draft legislation addressed points made in our consultation response by making amendments to avoid double taxation on certain transactions and allowing DST to be calculated and reported at group level to simplify administration.
- **Off payroll working rules:** the draft legislation introducing off payroll working rules into the private sector included a provision to pass information about worker status determinations down the contractual chain to the worker in line with one of our consultation response recommendations. The legislation also picked up concerns we raised with HMRC about the imposition of secondary liabilities on top parties in the labour supply chain who are not at fault. The government’s summary of responses indicated that their position on this had changed positively to limit the application of secondary liabilities.

We are following up to ensure that this policy change is reflected properly in the law.

- **Stamp Duty Land Tax non-residents surcharge:** we raised significant concerns about the proposed introduction of this surcharge and were pleased that it was not included in Finance Bill 2019, although it may still appear in a future finance bill.
- **Offshore Receipts in respect of Intangible Property:** we provided comments to HMRC on a draft statutory instrument introducing these important new tax rules. We raised concerns about the scope of a number of the exemptions to the new tax charge, including de minimis provisions and protections against double taxation. These have been reflected and changed by HMRC in response in updated regulations published in October 2019, which should make the rules more practicable for taxpayers and solicitors.

International activities

Market access and practice rights

We have had two key successes in our international market access work: the decision by the Law Society of Hong Kong not to pursue the introduction of restrictive measures for foreign lawyers/law firms; and the signing and ratification of the UK-Korea Continuity Free Trade Agreement which enables UK law firms to remain established in Seoul post-Brexit.

International conferences and visits

We are promoting the jurisdiction internationally through the organisation of English Law Days/Week in jurisdictions of key interest to the profession.

Annual Conference of the International Bar Association in Seoul:

- We secured eight speaking engagements for the President and nine speaking engagements for other members of TLS on panels, plus speaking roles for a number of members.
- We held our annual networking reception for over 550 key contacts including members, bar leaders and leading foreign lawyers.
- We met formally with stakeholders in the margins of the conference including the Madrid Bar, the Korean Bar Association, the Law Council of Australia, and our member firms based in South Korea.

Opening of the Legal Year (October 2019)

The Opening of the Legal Year (OLY) saw 63 representatives from foreign bar associations visit London. Alongside the ceremony held in Westminster Abbey we hosted a public seminar at the Law Society hosted by David Greene, Vice President.

We used OLY as an opportunity to hold meetings with key international stakeholders - Paul Tennant, CEO, hosted a roundtable with voluntary and quasi-voluntary bars to learn from their experiences; we signed an MOU with the Belgian Bar; and held bilateral meetings with our counterparts from Malaysia, Singapore, Switzerland, Luxembourg, and India.

The Vice President met with the President of the Law Society of Singapore (LSS) during the Opening of the Legal Year in London. The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss operationalising our memorandum of understanding, signed in September 2018.

International Rule of Law programmes and human rights activity

The Lawyers at Risk programme (LaR)

- On 20 September, we submitted written evidence to the Foreign Affairs Select Committee of UK Parliament in response to its inquiry on the FCO's human rights work and work on HRDs.
- Philippines (September 2019) – TLS joined 151 international and domestic bar associations, other lawyers' organizations and legal professionals from 49 countries around the world to call on the Government of the Philippines to take all necessary measures to stop the attacks against and extrajudicial killings of lawyers and to end the culture of impunity in which these attacks occur.
- Netherland (October 2019) – TLS signed an international solidarity statement with 33 organizations over the murder of Dutch lawyer Derk Wiersum. He was representing a crown witness in the so-called Marengo-trial, a high-profile criminal case against members of an organization accused of several murders and attempted murders.
- Colombia (October 2019) – TLS sent a letter to Colombian authorities to express grave concern about death threats – and other security incidents – against the lawyer Germán Romero Sánchez. Mr. Romero Sánchez legally represents victims of serious human rights violations, such as extrajudicial executions, in cases brought against high-ranking active and retired military officers. TLS urged the Colombian authorities to comply with international legal obligations to protect the life and physical integrity of the lawyer.

International Women and the Law programme (IWIL)

- Three IWIL roundtables have taken place during this period: Mexico (3 September), Colombia (6 September) and South Africa (18 September) – this latter via video conference.

COUNCIL
05/12/2019

Part 1, Appendix 2 – Chief Executive’s Report to Council on Member Experience

Author: Louise Hanson

**Classification - Public
Freedom of Information**

Not applicable as this paper is public

Summary:

This paper provides an update on activities across the Member Experience directorate

Recommendations / Conclusions:

This paper is for: noting

Assessments. This should be either a summary of what is in the paper (cross-referenced to the relevant paragraph), or, if the issues are very straightforward, a full statement of the relevant position.

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Risk:	None – this paper provides a backwards look only
E D & I	None
Organisational Values	This paper focuses on clarity and excellence to provide Council with a detailed update on how we are working to achieve success, including information on what we have been working on and how successful we have been.
Consultation	Senior members of staff across the member experience directorate

Introduction

This paper to Council provides an update on activities across the member experience (MX) directorate during the period September – October 2019.

Member Experience Transformation programme

- While we have been focusing on delivering the foundation projects within the MX Shaping our Future programme, we have also been looking at how we can improve our existing delivery to members. We have worked internally to develop personas to help us better understand the needs of members; we have used the new CRM to improve processes for handling accreditations and for handling requests in the Library. We have agreed a new approach to member communications and reviewed our events processes. A new Member Experience strategy has been prepared that identifies the main changes we need to deliver to ensure we are a membership body of choice.

Accreditations

- We have started a pilot of desk-based assessments of Conveyancing Quality Scheme (CQS) accreditations. An analysis of the results of the pilot will inform how and when we might consider rolling the approach out more widely. We will keep lenders informed throughout the process.
- As part of our focus on continuous improvement, we provided training to Lexcel assessors as part of assuring quality and consistency in assessments. We also delivered a successful 3-day Lexcel Consultant course.
- Internally, we have been focussing on reducing the delivery times for accreditations and supporting our learning and development team as they work on the development of a new accreditation.

Publications

- Following the disruption of changing online bookshop providers our sales and distribution channels are finally back to normal thanks to a considerable amount of additional work from both the publishing and marketing departments throughout the year.

Learning & Development

- Our L&D offer has developed significantly in recent months. We trialled a series of digital and face-to-face personal and career development workshops and activities with our members. In March 2020 we'll launch a new Learning Management System (LMS) which is part of broader changes to how we deliver education including a new lifecycle curriculum, content types and approaches to assessment. Recruitment delays means the project's foundation phase has been extended to March 2020.

Events

- We ran a total of 257 events this year, 16 fewer than last year, reaching 3% fewer delegates. However, we still managed to bring in significantly more income than last year.
- The team delivered a very successful Excellence Awards event which saw a 20% increase in nominations and table sales exceeding forecast two by 8%. Work is already underway on the 2020 Awards.