



**LEGAL SERVICES
BOARD**

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Dr Vanessa Davies
Director General
Bar Standards Board
289-293 High Holborn
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26 January 2015

Dear Vanessa,

Approval of 2015/16 Practising Certificate Fee (PCF) application made by The Bar Council to the Legal Services Board (LSB) under section 51 of the Legal Services Act 2007

I am pleased to inform you that the 2015/16 PCF levels set out in The Bar Council's application dated 5 January 2015 have been approved by the LSB.

We are content that the information provided meets the criteria set out in the LSB's Practising Fee Rules 2009. The decision has been made under the authority delegated to me by the LSB, and in consultation with the LSB Chairman. I have sent a letter in identical terms to Stephen Crowne, Chief Executive, The Bar Council, and we will publish a copy of each letter on the LSB's website in the next few working days.

In reaching our decision, we had the following observations:

Presentation of the LSB/Office for Legal Complaints (OLC) levy

We noted the increase in the amount being collected against the LSB/OLC levy due to collection of a contingency for the new fee methodology and that levy figures are presented to fee payers as a separate fee to the rest of the PCF. While we understand that this reflects The Bar Council's approach to accounting for the figures and collecting the levy, we considered that the way in which the information was presented in the application risked suggesting to fee payers that levy figures had increased more than they had and/or that LSB/OLC set a 'levy fee' for barristers. We therefore welcomed the revisions to the fee guidance in light of this feedback.

Approach to consultation

We also welcomed the improvements made to communicating the fees and budget to barristers and the various ways in which the Bar Council has sought to engage with barristers about them. We note that the number of responses to the consultation represented a vast improvement on the number received last year.

I have sent an identical letter to Steven Crowne.

I am grateful to David Botha for his work with my team during the assessment process.

Yours sincerely,



Caroline Wallace
Strategy Director