

To:	Legal Services Board	Agenda Item: 3
Date of Meeting:	25 May 2017	Item: Paper (17) 36

Title:	Consumer Panel Annual Report
Author/ Introduced by:	Lola Bello, Consumer Panel Associate Lola.Bello@legalservicesconsumerpanel.org.uk / 020 7271 0077 Jane Martin, Consumer Panel Chair
Status:	Official

Summary:
The Consumer Panel's Annual Report is attached at Annex A . The Board is asked to receive and comment on the report.

Risks and mitigations	
Financial:	N/A
FoIA:	Annex A: Section 22 Information intended for future publication.
Legal:	N/A
Reputational:	The Annual Report is the Panel's key accountability tool and allows stakeholders to assess its achievements, impact and value for money.
Resource:	N/A

Consultation	Yes	No	Who / why?
Board Members:		✓	
Consumer Panel:	✓		The Annual Report was agreed by the Consumer Panel following its meeting on 26 April.
Others:	None		

Recommendation(s):
The Board is invited to: a) discuss the Annual Report

LEGAL SERVICES BOARD

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Consumer Panel Annual Report

Recommendation

1. The Board is invited to:
 - a) discuss the Annual Report

Annual Report

2. The Panel's terms of reference include a commitment to producing an Annual Report. The attached document reports on the Panel's work between April 2016 and March 2017.
3. The Annual Report is an important document as it gives the Legal Services Board and our stakeholders, including legal services consumers, a record of our activities during the previous twelve months and allows them to hold us to account for this work. It is also a key means for us to demonstrate our impact and value for money.
4. In order to reinforce the Panel's outcomes, the report reflects the five high level vision. This is the same format that was used last year. It consists of:
 - A one page overview of the Panel
 - A foreword by the Panel Chair, drawing out key areas where our work has had a particularly important impact
 - The five key themes which the Panel uses in the Consumer Impact Report to measure the direction of change in the legal services market: responsive services, high quality advice, diversity, complaints, and consumers at the heart of regulation
 - Each theme sets out brief findings from recent research (including the Panel's tracker survey), followed by the action the Panel has taken, and our impact in this area
 - Transparency – financial information, attendance record and activity summary
 - Annexes – a comprehensive list of our activities: reports, research, consultation responses, speeches and presentations, events hosted by the Panel, news releases, membership of ongoing committees and working groups, and stakeholder meetings.

Next steps

5. The Consumer Panel plans to publish the Annual Report immediately after Purdah.

Summary of our key activities/impacts in 2016-17

Area	Impact
Tracker survey	Six years of the Tracker Survey has created a rich dataset which is freely available to all who want to use it, and continues its assessment of the legal services reforms from a uniquely consumer perspective. This year, the Panel highlighted the disparity between the experiences of Black and Ethnic Minorities (BME) groups and those from a White background and targeted recommendations to address this issue.
Working in Wales	We reaffirmed our commitment to consumers in Wales with our booster sample in our annual tracker survey.
Open data	We used evidence from our open data report to influence the CMA's assessment of the legal services sector. The Panel successfully advocated for remedies around transparency; price and quality specifically.
Consumer Segmentation	We published a report encouraging regulators to use the principles of consumer segmentation (and in time devise a segmentation model) to help them assess risks, identify problems, and devise tailored solutions.
Regulatory responses to consumer vulnerability and consumer principles	Two good practice guides have been developed into bespoke training for regulators. We trained more regulators in 2016; CILEx Regulation, Council for Licensed Conveyancers and the LSB staff.
Information Remedies	Our response to the LSB commission on the effectiveness of information remedies in the legal services sector distilled good practices from across different regulatory sectors into nine success criteria for the use of information remedies in legal services.