

To:	Legal Services Board	
Date of Meeting:	29 September 2014	Item: Paper (14) 44

Title:	Draft skeleton of the LSB Strategic Plan 2015-18	
Workstream(s):	Future strategy	
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Status:	Official (Restricted)	

Summary:
A draft skeleton of the Legal Services Board (LSB) Strategic Plan 2015-18 is at Annex A. We are presenting a 'green' first version to allow the Board an early opportunity to steer the key themes in the document. This cover paper sets out the background and context for the skeleton Strategic Plan.

Recommendation(s):
To discuss and comment on the draft skeleton, and in particular to consider the questions set out at paragraph 5 of this paper.

Risks and mitigations	
Financial:	N/A
Legal:	The Legal Director has been and will continue to be consulted throughout the development of the plan, particularly with a view to assessing LSB vires.
Reputational:	The Strategic Plan is the LSB's top level guiding document for the next three years and therefore has high reputational importance. This is magnified as it will be the LSB's first strategic plan under a new Chair, new Chief Executive and new Strategy Director.
Resource:	The Board is asked to discuss resource implications as part of its consideration of the draft skeleton (see paragraph 5 of this paper).

Consultation	Yes	No	Who / why?
Board Members:	x		The skeleton draws heavily on output from the Board strategic planning workshop held in July 2014.
Consumer Panel:	x		The Consumer Panel Chair participated in the above workshop and the Panel is in the process of responding to the LSB's '2020' commission as an input to the strategic plan.
Others:			The Chair of the Office for Legal Complaints participated in the above workshop.

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Fol)		
Para ref	Fol exemption and summary	Expires
Annexes A and B	Section 22 – information intended for future publication	N/A

LEGAL SERVICES BOARD

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Draft skeleton of the LSB Strategic Plan 2015-18

Background / context

1. The skeleton at Annex A does not yet reflect the advice that the LSB has commissioned from the Legal Services Consumer Panel¹, although staff had sight of an early version of the Panel's emerging thinking. The Panel will share the final version of its emerging thinking at today's joint meeting.
2. The skeleton does not yet cover the 2015-16 Business Plan, as the content of the Business Plan will follow from the decisions that the Board takes in relation to the Strategic Plan.
3. For reference, Annex B compares the text on vision and approach from the LSB's 2012-2015 strategic plan with the new text proposed in this skeleton document.

Points for discussion

4. This is a short skeleton document so we have not summarised it here. Rather we ask the Board to consider and comment on the entirety of the document.
5. We ask the Board to specifically consider the following questions:
 - i. The 'vision' and 'approach' sub-sections (paragraphs 6 to 11 of the skeleton) have been updated in light of comments made at the Board's strategic planning workshop in July. A comparison between the old text and the proposed new text is contained in Annex B. Do the suggested changes signal clearly enough that the LSB has refreshed its position in these areas?
 - ii. Are the two strategic themes set out at paragraph 19 of the skeleton the right ones?
 - iii. Are the suggested work packages under each theme appropriate (see paragraphs 26 and 30 of the skeleton)? Have we missed any significant areas of work?
 - iv. The draft skeleton suggests that the LSB may focus more heavily than in the past on consumer policy and 'thought leadership' activities (and also arguably

¹ The LSB asked the Panel to consider the following question: "In the light of developments in the legal services market in particular, but also in the wider economy and society, what risks to consumers of legal services might arise in the period to 2020 and how might the LSB and approved regulators react appropriately to them?"

on research²). However, the MoJ has made it clear that it is under considerable pressure to reduce its expenditure³. The draft skeleton presents a plan that:

- a. does not include work on any new duties or obligations;
- b. does not represent a significant discontinuity with the LSB's work to date; and
- c. is to an extent 'scalable', in that more or fewer work packages (for example, reviews of obligations, initiatives to improve affordability) could be undertaken depending on the budget available.

In this context, where (in qualitative terms) does the Board wish to pitch its budget bid for 2015-16 (ie increase, stand still, decrease)?

- v. Does the Board want to nominate specific members to engage at working level with the staff team over the next few months, as further drafts of the plan are produced?

Conclusion / next steps

6. As stated above, this is a very early draft skeleton of the Strategic Plan. Following this meeting the plan will be developed in light of the Board's comments and further internal work, also taking into account the Consumer Panel's emerging thinking on the LSB's '2020 commission'. We will also make sure that it provides a peg to connect with the work of all colleagues – for example, referencing ongoing commitment to research, our core approval duties and corporate work.
7. We will present the first full draft of the Strategic Plan and the 2015/16 Business plan at the October meeting, with a final version for endorsement at the November Board meeting, along with a robust communication and engagement plan.

19.9.14

² Even with joint funding of research, additional resources are likely to be required for relationship management and contract support.

³ In May 2014, the MoJ wrote to the LSB stating "... MoJ has been asked by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury to submit plans for living within our 2015/16 Settlement. This is in the context of a very challenging SR13 Settlement which sees a 10% real terms reduction against our 2014/15 baseline.... I am mindful of the fact that you receive your funding from industry levies, but you will still wish to be aware of the future financial challenges. ...I have asked your Finance Business Partner and your Sponsor to liaise with you as appropriate as this exercise is completed".