

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **LSB PUBLISHES ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2011/12**

### **ANNUAL REPORT SETS OUT PROGRESS IN DELIVERING REFORM OF LEGAL SERVICES REGULATION**

The Legal Services Board – the independent body overseeing the regulation of lawyers in England and Wales – has published its Annual Report and Accounts for the year 2011/12. The document was laid before Parliament earlier today, 19 June 2012.

This, the LSB's fourth Annual Report, is the second to cover a full year of the new regulatory regime for legal services, which became active in January 2010. This report covers the final year of the LSB's first strategic planning period.

The annual report describes how the LSB delivered the priorities set out in its 2011/12 Business Plan and its statutory objectives. It also outlines the progress which has been made with initiatives such as:

- the introduction of alternative business structures, and
- the launch of an investigation on whether to bring will writing and estate administration services within the scope of regulation.

The report also looks forward, outlining some of the areas the LSB will be focusing on in the coming year. These include:

- a major programme of activity to establish and assure the effectiveness of legal services regulators, and
- continuing work to address the regulatory objective of securing a strong, independent, diverse and effective profession

The report also outlines the wide-ranging series of reports which have been published by the LSB including original and ground-breaking research into the legal services provided by 'special bodies, and the regulation of city firms, an interim evaluation of the impact of the Legal Services Act, a framework to monitor the legal services sector and an interim baseline assessment of the state of the legal services market.

**David Edmonds, Chairman of the Legal Services Board** said:

*This report indicates the considerable progress the LSB has made in securing the public and consumer interest at the heart of legal services regulation. Our central role is to drive improvements in regulation across the legal sector.*

*This requires involvement, intervention (where necessary) and leadership in thinking about new ideas and directions. The annual report shows a strong record of achievement in the last year. It is a record upon which we intend to build over the coming 12 months.*

**Justice Minister Jonathan Djanogly** said:

*The Legal Services Board's oversight and support allows the legal services industry to develop new markets, seek external investment and join up with other businesses through Alternative Business Structures - introducing more competition in the market place - delivering competitive pricing, higher standards of product and more choice for the consumer.*

*Since the LSB was established it has played a key role in driving forward legal services reforms and helping UK legal services remain world leading. I am confident that it will continue to do so.*

For further information, please contact our Communications Manager [Vincent McGovern](#) or by calling 020 7271 0068.

#### **Notes for editors:**

1. The Annual Report can be found [here](#).
2. It indicates a zero cost to the public purse. The LSB's expenditure in 2011/12 was £4.58m against a budget of £4.93m resulting in an under spend of £0.35m. 100% of this under spend will be returned to the approved regulators in the form of a reduced levy for the coming year.
3. It highlights the efficiency of the organisation with just 30 members of staff (as at 31 March 2012) and an average annual sickness absence levels at approximately 4.0 days per person
4. The [Legal Services Consumer Panel](#) is also publishing its Annual Report for the 2011/12 period today. Their Annual Report can be found [here](#).
5. The Legal Services Act ("The Act") created the Legal Services Board as a new regulator with responsibility for overseeing the regulation of legal services in England and Wales. The new regulatory regime became active on 1 January 2010.
6. The LSB oversees eight Approved Regulators, which in turn regulate individual lawyers. The Approved Regulators, designated under Part 1 of Schedule 4 of the 2007 Act, are the Law Society, the Bar Council, the Master of the Faculties, the Institute of Legal Executives, the Council for Licensed Conveyancers, the Chartered Institute of Patent Attorneys, the Institute of Trade Mark Attorneys and the Association of Costs Lawyers.
7. In addition, the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Scotland and the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants are listed as Approved Regulators in relation only to reserved probate activities.
8. The legal profession currently consists of some 15,000 barristers, 119,000 solicitors and 12,000 individuals operating in other aspects of the legal profession such as conveyancing. The sector was valued at £24.74 billion per annum (total turnover) in 2009.