

13 February 2014

LSB announces new members of the Office for Legal Complaints

The Legal Services Board (LSB) today announced the appointments of **Stella Manzie CBE** (lay member) and **Professor Philip Plowden** (non-lay member) as new members of the Office for Legal Complaints (OLC). The OLC is the Board of the Legal Ombudsman and is responsible for the administration of the scheme. The vacancies arise with the terms of Margaret Doyle and Professor Mary Seneviratne ending on 31 March 2014.

The appointments are made by the Legal Services Board in accordance with the Legal Services Act 2007.

Commenting on the announcement, David Edmonds, LSB Chairman said:

"I am delighted with these appointments. Stella and Philip bring with them impressive skills and experience, which I am confident will be of significant value to the OLC Board as it moves into the next phase of its development. I wish them every success."

Elizabeth France, OLC Chair said:

"In welcoming Stella and Philip to the OLC, I would also like to thank Margaret and Mary for their invaluable contribution to the establishment of the Legal Ombudsman."

The new members have both been appointed from 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2017.

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Notes for editors:

1. **Stella Manzie CBE** has worked in a number of senior positions in public service, ranging from Chief Executive of local authorities like Coventry and West Berkshire to Director – General Justice and Communities in the UK Civil Service (Scottish Government). She has a focus on public service improvement and strengthening democracy. She is a graduate of Cambridge University, post - graduate of University of Birmingham and Honorary Senior Research Fellow of the Open University and is currently a consultant in public service and governance issues. She was awarded a CBE in 2007 for services to local government.
2. **Professor Philip Plowden** is Deputy Vice Chancellor at the University of Derby where he has responsibility for all aspects of the university's academic portfolio. His first degree is in English, and on graduation he worked for some years in the Citizens Advice Bureaux Service as an advice worker. He qualified as a solicitor, having undertaken his training contract at Christian Fisher, a leading London civil liberties practice. In 1993 he joined the Law School at the University of Northumbria as a lecturer, becoming Dean of the School in 2008. In 2001 he was called to the Bar.

He retains his practising certificate as a barrister, and is a door tenant at ParkLane Plowden Chambers in the North East, although his practice is currently dormant. He remains on the Roll of Solicitors but is not in practice. Philip was appointed as a National Teaching Fellow in 2005 in recognition of his work in legal education, and in particular his development of law clinics in the UK. His academic focus has been in criminal law, evidence and practice; in human rights law; and in legal education. He is currently a member of the Law Society's Education and Training Committee and of its Criminal Law Committee. He is also a Trustee of the Derby Museums Trust.

3. The Legal Services Act 2007 (the Act) requires the Legal Services Board (LSB) to appoint the Chair and Members of the [Office for Legal Complaints](#) (OLC) [[Schedule 15](#) of the Act].
4. The OLC is responsible for establishing and administering the [Legal Ombudsman for England and Wales](#) – the independent and impartial complaints resolution body for the legal sector.
5. The Legal Ombudsman for England and Wales, as set up by the Office for Legal Complaints (its Board), is independent and impartial. This means that when the service receives a complaint, it will look at the facts in each case and weigh-up both sides of the story. The Ombudsman is not a consumer champion or part of the legal profession, and is also independent of Government. There is no cost to the taxpayer.
6. During the past year, the Ombudsman received just over 71,000 contacts, accepted 8,500 complaints for investigation and resolved a total of 7,600 cases.
7. The Act created the LSB 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.
8. 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 Chartered 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.
9. In addition, the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland and the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants are listed as approved regulators in relation only to reserved probate activities.
10. As at 1 April 2013, the legal profession comprised 126,624 solicitors, 15,335 barristers, 7,947 chartered legal executives and 4,184 other individuals operating in other areas of the legal profession such as conveyancing. The sector is currently valued at £25.49 billion per annum (total turnover in 2010).