

LSB progress report

Master of the Faculties

Date action plan was published: 29 June 2017

The action plan is published [here](#).

The LSB sufficiency assessment of action plan is published [here](#).

Progress Update: 16 October 2018

The action plan set out a number of commitments from the Master. This update reviews its progress in delivering on these commitments. Where possible the information below has been drawn from the following key document:

- Master of the Faculties [Consultation](#) document ‘Consultation on the proposals set out in the Master of the Faculties action plan to deliver transparency for consumers in the legal services market arising from the recommendations of the Competition and Market Authority’s market study into legal services’.

The Master has had an opportunity to update the LSB on his progress on any commitments in the action plan not covered by the publications above.

The commitments related to four different high-level outcomes relating to market transparency which LSB asked all frontline regulators to focus on in their action plans. This note sets out the status of each commitment under each outcome:

- 1) Action to deliver a step change in standards of transparency to help consumers (i) to understand the price and service they will receive, what redress is available and the regulatory status of their provider and (ii) to compare providers.
 - **Completed:** The Master published a consultation ‘Consultation on the proposals set out in the Master of the Faculties action plan to deliver transparency for consumers in the legal services market arising from the recommendations of the Competition and Market Authority’s market study into legal services’ in October 2017.
 - **In progress:** The action plan set out that the Master planned to deliver new rules in relation to price, service, redress and regulatory status by November 2017. The consultation asked a series of questions on this area but did not commit to timescales for implementation. The Master has informed us that the consultation raised a number of significant issues which required more time than

anticipated to address. We understand that the issues raised during consultation means that the Master is now likely to introduce guidance rather than rules. Furthermore, during this period the Master has been considering whether the scope of regulation should be limited to notarial activities only.

- **In progress:** The consultation set out that the Master is considering whether to introduce a badge for providers to use.
- 2) Promotion of the use of independent feedback platforms to help consumers to understand the quality of the services offered by competing providers
- **In progress:** The action plan set out that the Master would encourage notaries and their clients to take part in feedback platforms. However, there was little detail about how this would happen. The Master has informed us that he does not propose to mandate engagement with feedback platforms and that he is currently considering how best to fulfil the commitment included in the action plan.
- 3) Facilitation of the development of a dynamic intermediary market through making data more accessible to comparison tools and other intermediaries.
- No new commitments made under this category.
- 4) Making better information available to assist consumers when they are identifying their legal needs and the types of legal services providers (both regulated and unregulated) who can help them.
- **In progress:** The legal regulators are working together to deliver a three-year plan to enhance the Legal Choices website and social media channels. The Legal Choices Governance Board and Steering Group are continuing to lead the work, informed by the Advisory Panel which includes 17 organisations from the consumer and not-for-profit sectors. The suppliers that have been appointed to deliver the plan's market research and digital design components delivered a two day 'ideation' workshop in June 2018, which is informing a detailed redesign and relaunch strategy for the website. This will be discussed with the legal regulators in the autumn. In the meantime the regulators are continuing with their schedule of new content for members of the public that focuses on priority areas of law, as well as topical articles, which is promoted by using the website's social media channels. So far in 2018 new articles have focused on holiday sickness claims, immigration work (connected to Windrush), cycling laws and divorce processes.
 - **In progress:** The regulators have taken some steps to assess the feasibility of a joint register, in particular working on a taxonomy of

the data to be included in the register. Work to explore the feasibility of a single digital register is ongoing. As an interim step, regulators are working on opportunities to provide a better access point to the legal regulators' respective registers of regulated entities and individuals through the Legal Choices website.