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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dea Gilbert', is written over the printed name.

Empowering consumers: Phase 1 report

My Board has discussed your report as part of its work investigating individual consumer engagement and has agreed our formal response. I attach the paper that my Board considered at its April meeting which I am grateful you were able to attend.

As you made clear in your presentation to my Board, the report identifies some fundamental challenges which it is essential are addressed. My Board has accepted this and, indeed, our response is more robust as a result of your helpful challenge to us.

Your report references the progress which the LSB has made through our regulatory standards framework as well as in our work on quality in legal services, where the success criteria we have developed, which included the provision and transparency of performance information, will be used to hold regulators to account over the coming years. We agree with you that it is important to build on progress already made in these existing initiatives before starting on any major new projects. As you know, it is also my Board's view that rather than a purely rule-based regulatory response, commercial action, backed by effective regulatory action to create proper incentives where appropriate, has an essential part to play in overcoming the challenges you have identified.

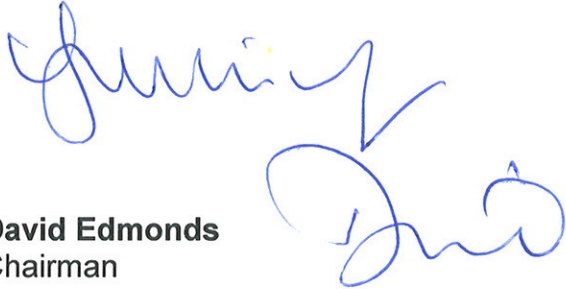
I am therefore writing to the regulators, placing the challenges your report highlights in context with the wider strategic issues they are working on and emphasising the relevant existing regulatory actions and timescales set out in our Business Plan for 2013/14. Both letters are being made public.

Maintaining momentum is essential and we are grateful for the work you have continued to do in this area. We are keen that all of the regulators are involved in any developments and I would encourage you to ensure that all of the regulators are aware of the work you are involved in with the SRA, CLC and legal services comparison website providers, which I reference in my letter.

The complexity of the regulatory framework for legal services is an area in need of much work and one which my Board is keen to address. We will continue to support

greater coordination and information sharing between organisations which results in an improvement in quality for consumers.

While progress is continuing in the areas discussed above, it would be helpful if you could keep the LSB informed of the timing you believe is appropriate for any further generic or specific work reviewing the progress and plans of the approved regulators which takes account of the learning from other sectors you have identified.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'David Edmonds', written in a cursive style.

David Edmonds
Chairman