

Westminster Legal Policy Forum Keynote Seminar

The future of legal aid - assessing the impact of the *Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Bill*

Timing: Morning, Thursday, 2nd February 2012

Venue: Council Room, One Great George Street, Westminster, London SW1P 3AA

Draft agenda subject to change

- 8.30 - 9.00 Registration and coffee
- 9.00 - 9.05 **Chairman's opening remarks**
Yvonne Fovargue MP, Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Legal Aid
- 9.05 - 9.30 **Legal aid and access to justice - a context**
How significant are Government's proposals for reform of publicly-funded legal services in England and Wales, particularly in comparison to other jurisdictions internationally?
Roger Smith, Director, Justice
Questions and comments from the floor
- 9.30 - 10.20 **The future of publicly-funded legal services - the practitioner's perspective**
How will proposed reforms to fee and remuneration structures for legal aid practitioners across criminal and civil law impact on the sector? Has Government addressed the issue of market sustainability adequately? Has enough consideration been given to alternative sources of funding to support the legal aid fund? Will proposed reforms lead to an increase in the numbers of litigants representing themselves in court, and what impact would this have on court proceedings? What alternative proposals for reform should be considered ahead of the Bill?
Max Hill QC, Chairman, Criminal Bar Association
Lucy Scott-Moncrieff, Vice President, Law Society
Vicky Ling, Consultant, Partnership Quality Systems and Founding Member, Law Consultancy Network
Katie Brown, Co-Chair, Young Legal Aid Lawyers and Solicitor, Philcox Gray & Co
Questions and comments from the floor
- 10.20 - 10.25 **Chairman's closing remarks**
Yvonne Fovargue MP, Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Legal Aid
- 10.25 - 10.55 Coffee
- 10.55 - 11.00 **Chairman's opening remarks**
Rt Hon Elfyn Llwyd MP, Member, Justice Committee
- 11.00 - 11.30 **Alternative proposals for reform**
Andrew Slaughter MP, Shadow Minister for Justice
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.30 - 12.25 **Legal aid in the community - access to justice and advice services**
In what ways has Government responded to stakeholder concerns and objections raised during the Green Paper consultation on proposed reforms? How will access to justice be impacted in areas of law where Government is planning to remove the availability of legal aid, and what alternative mechanisms of funding might be available for those seeking representation and legal advice? To what extent will cuts to the legal aid budget impact on the provision of wider community advice services? What challenges exist for the proposed expansion of specialist telephone advice services; what limitations might these schemes face in providing legal advice to vulnerable groups?
James Sandbach, Social Policy Officer, Citizens Advice
Julie Bishop, Director, Law Centres Federation
David Emmerson, Chair, Legal Aid Committee, Resolution
Elizabeth O'Hara, Policy Officer, Shelter
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.25 - 12.55 **The view from Government - objectives of the Bill**
Jonathan Djanogly MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice, Ministry of Justice
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 - 13.00 **Chairman's and Westminster Legal Policy Forum closing remarks**
Rt Hon Elfyn Llwyd MP, Member, Justice Committee
Sean Cudmore, Senior Producer, Westminster Legal Policy Forum