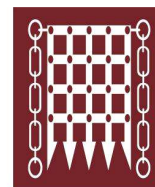


Westminster Legal Policy Forum Keynote Seminar:

The future for legal aid in England and Wales - scope, fees and access to justice

Timing: Morning, Tuesday, 19th March 2019

Venue: Sixty One Whitehall, London SW1A 2ET



WESTMINSTER
LEGAL POLICY
FORUM

Agenda subject to change

- 8.30 - 9.00 Registration and coffee
- 9.00 - 9.15 **Access to justice and tackling unmet legal need - priorities for reform**
Lord Bach, Author, *Bach Commission: The Right to Justice* and Vice-Chair,
All-Party Parliamentary Group on Legal Aid
- 9.15 - 10.15 **The future for the legal aid framework - scope, fees and the future of the market**
To what extent has LASPO delivered in its aim of discouraging unnecessary litigation claims being brought to court, whilst also promoting access to justice? As the Government increase funding for early advice and litigants in person, will this achieve the aim of improving long term savings in the court system by way of a reduction in cases that should not be taken forward, and instead resolved possibly by other means? Given the rise in court users applying for exceptional case funding, how can Government ensure that the supply of this service is not being outstripped by demand? With concern from stakeholders over cuts to legal aid providers and the fees paid to practitioners, how viable is the overall system of legal aid from the perspective of those administering it, and with Government reviewing the AGFS, what policies can be adopted to best improve the long term sustainability of the sector? Have the changes made to the means test for legal aid affected the number of cases, and has this affected access to justice?
Christina Blacklaws, President, The Law Society
Steve Hynes, Director, Legal Action Group
Richard Atkins QC, Chair, The Bar Council
Catherine Baksi, Freelance Legal Affairs Journalist and Author, *Legal Hackette's Brief*
Questions and comments from the floor with **Lord Bach**, Author, *Bach Commission: The Right to Justice* and Vice-Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Legal Aid
- 10.15 - 10.20 **Chair's closing remarks**
Lord Bach, Author, *Bach Commission: The Right to Justice* and Vice-Chair,
All-Party Parliamentary Group on Legal Aid
- 10.20 - 10.40 Coffee
- 10.40 - 10.45 **Chair's opening remarks**
Lord Bach, Author, *Bach Commission: The Right to Justice* and Vice-Chair,
All-Party Parliamentary Group on Legal Aid
- 10.45 - 11.10 **The administration of legal aid and advice - operational priorities**
Malcolm Bryant, Head of Exceptional and Complex Cases, Legal Aid Agency
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.10 - 11.30 **Further options for reform: policy development outside England and Wales**
John McDaid, Chief Executive, Legal Aid Board, Ireland
Questions and comments from the floor
- 11.30 - 12.30 **Responding to the demand for alternative sources of legal advice - new providers, mediation, technology and strengthening public legal education**
Further to the Bach Report's call for a national public legal education and advice strategy, what steps should be considered to better educate the public and make certain that those who are in need of legal aid and who qualify for it use the system correctly? For example, in instances where service-users do not have access to legal advice, how can the Government's provision of funding for alternative pathways such as online guidance or mediation be effectively used? Given the importance of early legal help when undertaking litigation, how can proposals for 'legal support hubs' best promote access to alternative sources of advice at the first stages of a case, in order to support both the service-user and the efficiency of court procedures? How effective has the supply of pro-bono services, voluntary and university providers been in satisfying increased demand in the sectors cut by LASPO - such as social welfare and private family law cases - and what can be done to ensure that those who are in need of legal advice are aware of other options at their disposal?
Pamela Fitzpatrick, Director, Harrow Law Centre
Julia Salasky, Founder and Chief Executive Officer, CrowdJustice
Mary Banham-Hall, Managing Director, Focus Mediation
Tom Franklin, Chief Executive Officer, Young Citizens
Eileen Pereira, Chief Executive Officer, Personal Support Unit
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.30 - 12.55 **The post-implementation review of LASPO - key areas of discussion and their implications for policy**
Nick Goodwin, Director, Access to Justice Policy, Ministry of Justice
Questions and comments from the floor
- 12.55 - 13.00 **Chair's and Westminster Legal Policy Forum closing remarks**
Lord Bach, Author, *Bach Commission: The Right to Justice* and Vice-Chair,
All-Party Parliamentary Group on Legal Aid
Helen Crocker, Senior Researcher, Westminster Legal Policy Forum