



The Law Society



Legal Aid Agency

Civil Contracts Consultative Group (CCCG) Minutes

20 September 2017

V3

Date:	Wednesday, 20 September 2017	
Where	102 Petty France, London SW1	
Chair	Hannah Payne Service Development/Commissioning [LAA]	
Minutes	Grazia Trivedi - [LAA]	
Present	Avrom Sherr – IALS Carita Thomas – ILPA Chris Minnoch - LAPG Eleanor Druker - Service Development [LAA] Emily Timcke – Bar Council Kerry Wood – Com missioning [LAA] Luke Crosby – Digital [LAA] Malcolm Bryant – Exceptional, Complex Cases [LAA] Nicola Jones-King ALC	Nimrod Ben-Cnaan Law Centres Network Paul Seddon ACL Richard Knight – Communications [LAA] Richard Miller – Head of Justice, The Law Society Robert Barker – ACL Sally Cheshire - HLP Steve Starkey – Civil Operations [LAA] Vicky Ling – Resolution Zara Topping - Digital [LAA]
Apologies	John Sirodcar – Contract management – LAA Sarah Jennings Family Legal Aid/LASPO Review [MoJ]	

1. Minutes from the July meeting were approved.

- Action 1 [Mar] *CCMS users' experience*. C Storer had distributed the output of LAPG members' survey to the group and the LAA would share the outcome of their analysis of the results with rep bodies in advance of a meeting on 3 October.
- Action 3 [Mar] *Clarify to providers the position re applications in cases where the practitioners acted for a child*. This had been clarified at the previous meeting and was therefore closed.
- Action 4 [May] *Universal Credit*. There was no update at this time. Action to be taken forward to next meeting. **Action 1 [May]**
- Action 12 [July] A meeting had been arranged for 3 October to discuss the top 10 CCMS issues
- Action 13 [July] *Cost Assessment Guidance*. The LAA operational team would undertake a local analysis of claims and share with the Association of Cost Lawyers' reps to decide what the guidance should say. A joint update to be given at the Nov meeting **Action 2 [Sep]**
- Action 14 [July] The deadline for submitting [FAS court assessed claims](#) on CCMS with a separate breakdown of fees had been pushed back to 30 October. The LAA would look at the impact on time taken by providers to comply with this requirement.
- Action 16 [Jul] No update yet on the proposal to mandate the electronic EC Claim 1 forms. **Action 3 [Jul]**.
- Outstanding CCMS action for Z Topping on Delegated functions. *Could a process be implemented allowing delegated functions to be a) dealt with by the provider and b) allow providers to retrospectively inform the LAA so that they did not have to wait for an amendment while it was outstanding*. The team had looked specifically at the declarations within the system and their impact on anyone using delegated functions, especially emergency followed by a substantive. Work had been done on this and would be up for discussion at the meeting in October.

2. LAA Updates

2.1. Client and Cost Management System [CCMS] update

A new portal had gone live; the system had been stable, much faster and users' feedback had been very positive so far. Rep bodies were asked to remind their members to a) maintain their passwords and b) be aware of the security implications attached to this; the Digital team planned some communications around the use of passwords **Action 4 [Sep]**. The launch of the new portal had been flagged via Twitter, LAPG, The Law Society, the Bar Council and emails to providers; rep bodies agreed that this communication campaign had been very successful. The Digital team stressed how much they valued providers' feedback which could be given by using the button on the portal or by emailing zara.topping@justice.gov.uk .

The LAA were going to close down one of their training websites (Justice Site) as usage figures were very low and the training was no longer relevant. Rep bodies did not think it was going to be missed, but felt that an alternative should be found. Z Topping agreed and would update the group on progress made at the next meeting. **Action 5 [Sep]** The CCMS training site would continue to operate.

A release was due to come out in relation to the merits section of the amendments interview. This would be followed by another in relation to the means side. Once the full upgrade to the

amendment interview was released, the digital team would confirm routes for declarations and clarify what the legal and governance requirements were for signatures on amendments.

2.2 Operations update. The report showed a very strong performance

Commissioning update. The civil tender for the face to face contract had been launched on 19 Sep. Rep bodies were asked to advise bidders to access the system as soon as possible to avoid running out of time. Bidders had to complete both the Selection Questionnaire [SQ], previously called PQQ, and the Invitation to Tender [ITT]. Countdown communications would be done on social media and e-alerts from rep bodies.

CLA and housing possession contracts would be launched shortly. Capacity issues:

- Housing and Debt in North Hertfordshire. A targeted expression of interest [EOI] had received five responses. Clarification was underway after which we expect to be able to issue at least one schedule.
- Housing and Debt in Buckinghamshire. An EOI was going to be published shortly.
- HPCDS in Milton Keynes. An EOI was going to be published shortly.
- The LAA were working to resolve issues relating to Immigration in East and West Lancashire and North-East Wales.

Immigration in Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire. A schedule was in place but no work was being carried out from it. Outreach was also being conducted in this Access Point by a provider in Peterborough.

2.3 Exceptional and Complex Cases [ECC]

Official stats were going to be published shortly to cover the latest quarter.

In relation to Grenfell Tower cases, there had been a number of queries about means as some providers thought that the means test did not apply to victims of the fire but it did. Also, providers were still sending emails to the teams' personal accounts and rep bodies were asked to request their members to use the dedicated email box contactECC@legalaid.gsi.gov.uk

Following a meeting with the Inquest representative bodies the LAA were asked to review the operational guidance on the legal help waiver for inquests; it was decided that the section on the ECF Provider Pack for ECF Inquest would be amended rather than producing a separate document.

Action 6 [Sep].

M Bryant to find out the turnaround time for single advocates CCFS [or events] cases **Action 7 [Sep]**

Post meeting note: The turnaround time for single advocates CCFS or events is 20 days – we are currently in target for those cases .For 2 advocate cases again the turnaround time is 20 days but we are out of target at 40 days with a recovery plan to get to 20 days by end of November 2017

3 **Progress report on interpreters' fees** It was agreed that this issue needed to be clarified in the electronic handbook. E Druker to update C Thomas within the following 2 weeks **Action 8 [Sep]**

4 **AOB**

- The LAA was going to publish the Legal aid statistics quarterly bulletin for the period April to June 2017 in a new format consistent with the rest of MoJ. The same information as before

was going to be available but with a streamlined commentary and alongside a [data visualisation tool](#), which allowed users to investigate the data in an easier and more intuitive way. Anyone wanting help with the tool could email the LAA statistics team at statistics@justice.gov.uk Rep bodies asked for a demonstration of the tool at the next meeting. **Action 9 [Sep]**

- Check whether guidance was available to help use the tool. **Action 10 [Sep]**
- Sarah Jennings replaced David Martin as the lead on Family Legal Aid/LASPO Review at MoJ.

Post meeting note Sarah Jennings no longer works in legal aid.

Actions from this meeting		Owner	deadline
AP1 [May]	Update on Universal Credit	Wensley-Payne	22 Nov
AP2[Sep]	Update on progress made to Cost Assessment Guidance amendments Post meeting note the guidance amendments have been shared and Paul has circulated to his committee members. There is no real urgency on this so this action can remain open until Paul and his members have had time to comment more fully.	S Starkey/P Seddon	Take forward to next CCCG
AP3[Jul]	Consider the proposal to mandate the electronic EC Claim 1 form	L Crosby	22 Nov
AP4[Sep]	Flag to providers the importance of maintaining their passwords on CCMS and the security implications attached.	Rep bodies/ CCMS programme	22 Nov
AP5[Sep]	Update on CCMS training website	Z Topping	22 Nov
AP6 [Sep]	Circulate the amended ECF Provider Tactic Inquest	M Bryant	22 Nov
AP7 [Sep]	Find out the turnaround time for single advocates CCFS [or events] cases Post meeting note: The turnaround time for single advocates CCFS or events is 20 days – we are currently in target for those cases. For 2 advocate cases again the turnaround time is 20 days but we are out of target at 40 days with a recovery plan to get to 20 days by end of November 2017.	M Bryant	Closed
AP8 [Sep]	Email the group with an update on the review of the interpreters' fees section of the handbook	E Druker	30 Oct
AP9 [Sep]	Invite Richard Field to the next meeting to demonstrate the visualisation tool.	Wensley-Payne	Closed
AP10 [Sep]	Check whether there is guidance to use the data visualisation tool	Wensley-Payne	22 Nov