

Minutes of the
 ACL Council Meeting
 Held on 14 December 2017



Held at Weightmans, Fenchurch Street, London

Council Members Present: Iain Stark, Chairman (IS), Paul Bracewell (PB) David Cooper (DC), Steven Davies (SD), Francis Kendall (FK) Claire Green (CG) (by phone link) , David Wright (DW)

Also in attendance Diane Pattenden (DP), Head of Operations

The meeting started at 1.15pm

Item	
1	Minutes of the council meeting held on 16 November 2017
	1.1 The minutes of the council meeting held on 16 November 2017 were approved without change.
	1.2 Items 3.4, 3.7, 3.12 and 8.3 (part of) to be redacted prior to publication on the website.
2	Actions following the council meeting held on 16 November 2017
	See attached list for deleted, carried forward and new actions.
3	Consultation with members/EGM
	<p>3.1 Council members had been asked to prepare 200 words on why the ACL needs to change. Views were shared and a discussion followed. DW felt that the Association needed to offer more tangible benefits and share more with members about what went on 'behind the scenes'. He added that the Association needs to be open to change and fully understand the changing requirement of members. He also stressed the need for the website and social media to be kept up to date. PB felt that the council should seriously consider opening up the membership and be more transparent about what the council does, particularly with regard to committees that council representatives sit on. DC agreed and suggested that the pool of approximately 4,000 costs practitioners should be capitalised on for the benefit of the Association. He stressed that whilst doing this, the status of a Costs Lawyer must not be diminished. CG agreed that the membership should be widened, but expressed concern, feeling that there was need for change and that change needed to come from within.</p> <p>3.2 IS said that the EGM is a 'call to arms' to members. He felt strongly that the membership should be opened up to costs practitioners and that the starting point was to sever links between regulation and representation – ie sever ties with the CLSB. IS acknowledged that it had been clear from the open forum in October that members were concerned that the identity of Costs Lawyers should not be lost and felt that the value of Costs Lawyers would not be diluted, due to the requirement for them to be regulated and</p>

	<p>to hold a practising certificate.</p> <p>3.3 IS asked council members if they had any objection to severing the MOU with the CLSB or had any questions. A full discussion regarding ownership, management and independence from the CLSB followed. No council member raised any objections.</p> <p><i>3.4 IS Proposed that ACL should sever the MOU with the CLSB, to ensure true regulatory independence.</i></p> <p>PB seconded this and all council members voted in favour.</p> <p>3.5 <i>IS proposed to open up membership of the representative arm.</i></p> <p>SD seconded this and all council members vote in favour.</p> <p>3.6 The above proposals will be put to members for discussion at the EGM.</p> <p>3.7 Arrangements for the EGM were discussed and is was agreed that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The meeting will be held in London on 21 February ▪ Members will be able to vote by proxy ▪ A Bill Format seminar will be held on the same day. Registration at 1.30pm for a 2pm start. The EGM will start at 4.30pm. For planning purposes it will be assumed that there will be a maximum of 40 delegates for the seminar and up to 50 for the EGM. The seminar to be charged at £50 plus vat. Delegates should be encouraged to take a laptop/ipad with them for the training. ▪ An email should be sent out asap with notice of the meeting and seminar ▪ The notice and proxy forms should be emailed to members in January and should only be sent to members who have renewed their membership for 2018 ▪ IS will be chairing the meeting. Other council members will sit with members but are asked to contribute to the discussions and assist in passing roving microphones to attendees ▪ DP to arrange with UBQUIS to record and minute the meeting. <p>3.8 DW asked council for their opinion on offering members 2 – 3 webinars at no additional cost as a benefit of membership. All agreed that this should be given consideration and the possibility of using some of the speakers at the conferences was discussed. Webinars could be put on the website and available to members only. IS said that Kirsty Allison should be involved. To be discussed further at the January council meeting.</p> <p>3.9 IS suggested that ACL pays for all council members to be accredited. All council members agreed. DP to arrange with the CLSB.</p>
4	New Format Bill
	Tom Winyard has done some further work on the ACL Bill. IS will speak with him to see if ACL can showcase his version of the ACL Bill at a networking drinks event after the EGM.
5	London Conference 2018
	5.1 After discussion on whether to hold a gala dinner on the Friday of the London conference it was agreed to book dinner for a maximum of 100 (with a lower number

	<p>being guaranteed to the venue). Council members and members of the Judiciary only to be offered a hotel room.</p> <p>5.2 It was agreed to look for a venue to hold a maximum of 200.</p> <p>5.3 DP to look at potential cost savings – particularly with regard to AV</p> <p>5.4 The date to be after 18 October/early November – avoiding school holidays.</p> <p>5.5 CG to ask Master James when the training day is in October to avoid conflict with the Conference.</p>
6	Manchester Conference - 18 May 2018
	<p>6.1 DP reported that there were 5 confirmed speakers and that she was waiting on 6 further replies to invitations.</p> <p>6.2 DP to ask District Judges to speak plus take part in the panel.</p>
7	PR Report
	FK advised that there was nothing significant to report
8	Operations Report
	<p>8.1 DP advised that she had not received any emails or phone calls from members objecting to the increase in the membership subscription rate.</p> <p>8.2 DP sought clarification that the Legal Aid Group should be self-funding. IS confirmed that this was the case and that the LAG should only incur costs that were in line with and no more than income from the Legal Aid Seminars.</p> <p>8.3 DP advised that she had received several queries from members asking when the 2018 diary would be mailed and 2 complaints that it was not being published.</p> <p>8.4 80% of members have not added their areas of specialism to their listing in the directory on the website. These members have been identified and an email has been sent to them asking them to log on to the website and update their details.</p> <p>8.5 In recent years, regular advertisers have reduced or stopped advertising and DP suggested that efforts should be made to secure new advertising in the Costs Lawyer.</p>
9	Education
	SD gave a brief update. IS asked that KA should be kept informed about what the CLSB are consulting on.
10	Date of next meeting
	<p>12 January 2018.</p> <p>Dates of 21 February, 23 March and 20 April were also agreed.</p>
11	Any other business
	<p>11.1 DW to speak with KA about webinars and specifically about one to introduce the electronic bill – along the lines of a 15 minute introduction to the Electronic Bill.</p> <p>11.2 DP to speak with Senior about the ease of uploading webinars to the website</p> <p>11.3 CG has received an email from Paul Seddon regarding the statement of costs. PS has</p>

	<p>pointed out to DJ Lethem that the statement of costs for summary assessment does not include Costs Lawyers and has made representations that it should. DJ Lethem has agreed with PS that he should try to get this changed. Council members agreed that PS should email the secretary to the Civil Procedure Rules Committee on behalf of the ACL. CG will ask PS to draft a response for council to approve.</p> <p>11.4 CG advised that Murray Heining has recently made a freedom of information act application in relation to fixed fees. MH has highlighted some areas that he feels ACL should be concerned with. CG ask if ACL should get involved at a policy level. IS said that there has not yet been a consultation and that at the moment it is not an issue for ACL. CG to forward details to IS. This will be an agenda item for the January meeting.</p> <p>11.5 FK suggested that companies who support the Association could be offered space for an 'advertorial in the Costs Lawyer'. Neil Rose could help with the content. All agreed that the idea should be pursued. FK to speak with NR.</p> <p>11.6 After the initial training in London, dates and venues for further bill training will be decided.</p>
	The meeting ended at 3.55pm