

Minutes of the
 ACL Council Meeting
 held on 16 March 2018



at Weightmans, Fenchurch Street, London

Council Members Present: Iain Stark, Chairman (IS), (excluding items 5, 6 and 7 and 8),
 Francis Kendall, Vice Chairman (FK), David Cooper (DC),
 Claire Green (CG), Paul Bracewell (PB)

Steven Davies (SD) and David Wright (DW)
 attended via conference call

Also in attendance: Kirsty Allison (KA), Head of Education
 Diane Pattenden (DP), Head of Operations

The meeting started at 1pm

Item	
1	Minutes of the council meeting held on 12 January 2018
	1.1 The minutes of the council meeting held on 12 January 2018 were approved for publication on the website.
2	Actions following the council meeting held on 12 January 2018
	See attached list for carried forward and new actions.
3	Strategy to May 2019
3.1	IS confirmed that he will stand down as Chairman by May 2019 and that by this date there were three key tasks he would like to address:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To have the Bye Laws amended to reflect a stand-alone Association. In recognition of the clear mandate from the vote at the general meeting to maintain a status quo and not open membership, current categories of membership should remain, with some redefinition to include non-practising costs lawyers. ▪ To address the issue of pyramid membership and stop the position where for example practising costs lawyers who are not members of the ACL, read the <i>Costs Lawyer</i> and claim CPD for doing so. ▪ To undertake a feasibility study to establish exactly what the cost per head is of running ACL and ACLT in order that a breakdown of costs can be included with the 2019 renewal notice. IS stressed that alongside this, the benefits of membership should be clearly defined.
3.2	DC said that he felt that over the next year, it was important to put in place a strategy to raise the status of the Association through lobbying and that he would also like to see created, a catalogue of training products available to members.

3.3	SD added that member benefits were key to the stability of the Association. DW suggested that the membership benefits should include ways for members to achieve up to 6 hours CPD without charge. After discussion it was agreed that KA/SD would set up a trial webinar to test functionality.
3.4	IS asked if there had been any dialogue with CILEx regarding the potential for cross-qualification. KA confirmed that this commenced some time ago.
3.5	CG was in agreement with the need to revise the Bye Laws and suggested that income should be increased through the provision of education to members.
3.6	Following on from the key tasks proposed by IS: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DC will review and recommend amendments to the Bye Laws ▪ FK will consider PR activity in support of the tasks ▪ DW will review the website in respect of the tasks ▪ CG will consider potential benefits, aside from webinars ▪ PB will consider subscription 2019 rates.
3.7	DC raised the idea that the Association could include costs professionals from outside the UK. A discussion regarding this took place but it was not proposed that action should be taken at this stage.
4	Election of ACL Chairman
4.1	IS proposed that to ensure continuity, an election for his successor should be held in November 2018. All council members were in favour.
4.2	SD's and DW's term of office ends in October 2018 and IS proposed that elections are planned for August to replace them. All council members were in agreement. <i>IS apologised at this point for having to temporarily leave the meeting and FK stood in as chair of the meeting.</i>
5	CLSB's email on entry to the profession
	FK read out an email from the CLSB regarding a Costs Lawyer competency test and discussion followed. KA confirmed that the key aim of the working party is to look at the options for providing an accelerated route to qualification. A general discussion regarding the CLCT followed.
6	Manchester Conference
6.1	DP advised that all speakers had been confirmed. CostsMaster are confirmed as the main sponsor.
6.2	A discussion followed regarding whether it was appropriate to invite costs firms to have a stand. DP to email FK with details of sponsorship rates.
6.3	It was agreed to plan on 50 attending the networking drinks and a budget was agreed.
6.4	A council meeting had been planned for late afternoon on 17 May. It was generally agreed that this was not practical for most and that an alternative date should be arranged.
7	The <i>Costs Lawyer</i> - print v online
7.1	Council members generally agreed that the <i>Costs Lawyer</i> was a valuable member benefit.

	DP will look at the breakdown of costs to establish the saving of publishing online only. FK suggested that it may be preferable to reduce the number of e-bulletins. This led to a general discussion on marketing and PR costs. Editorial costs represent a significant proportion of the total cost and FK will speak with Black Letter regarding potential costs savings.
8	Education
8.1	SD asked if council members had any objection in sharing the ACLT 2015 paper on pricing with the working party. There were no objections.
8.2	KA reported that some interest has been shown by employers in an apprenticeship scheme but stressed that the profile of those seeking an apprenticeship was very different to those currently on the training course.
8.3	KA advised council members that a first year student has said that they may not be able to start unit 2 until a year later than planned and that this has highlighted a potential issue with current students requesting to postpone their studies if the current course units do not run beyond 2020. It was agreed that a statement needed to be made to current students (including those who have temporarily withdrawn) regarding this. KA to action.
8.4	DP to arrange for an update to be put on the website stating that the current course is under review and that anyone interested in undertaking the course should register their interest. <i>IS re-joined the meeting</i>
9	Remuneration for members delivering ACL seminars
	Council members agreed that subject to profitability, an agreed payment could be split amongst the trainers. DP to confirm the same to Paul Seddon
10	PR report
	FK reported that there no were no issues regarding PR. DP to check that the most recent PR reports are uploaded to the website.
11	London Annual Conference 2018
	IS suggested to council members that the London Conference could be run along similar lines to the annual Manchester Conference – ie as a one day event, followed by networking drinks. Attendance at the gala dinner in 2017 was lower than in previous years and the viability/necessity of putting on the gala dinner and seminars on the Saturday was questioned. After some discussion it was decided to poll members via the ACL website to establish whether members felt it was important to them to hold a gala dinner. DP to arrange.
12	Tax implications of merging ACL/ACLT
	The question of whether to merge ACL/ACLT was discussed. KA expressed reservations about keeping the companies separate. She was concerned about the perception of ACLT's viability if the companies were merged. IS said that ACL needed to be put on a sound financial footing following advice from its accountant and that this advice should be followed. DP to speak with the accountant asking him to address KA's concerns.
13	Operations Reports
13.1	The Legal Aid Seminar which took place in February returned a profit.
13.2	The Bill Format Seminars had mostly all sold out and that the 4 th London workshop was booked for 6 April.
14	Date of next meeting

	20 April 2018
15	Any other business
	IS advised that he would be meeting with the LSB (no date arranged) in order to placate them but that Steve Winfield had advised the LSB that there are no issues between ACL and the CLSB. He went on to say that he would be speaking with the LSB regarding achieving independence but needs to be guided by the CLSB.
	The meeting finished at 4.35pm