

Minutes of the ACL Council Meeting
held on 30th September 2025
Online, via Teams
10am



Council members present: David Bailey-Vella (DBV), Victoria Morrison-Hughes (VMH), Julian Caddick (JC), Kris Kilsby (KK), Amy Dunkley (AD), Nathan Cameron (NC) & Jane Risley (JR)

Also present: Carol Calver (CC) Head of Operations

The meeting started at 14:00

Item	
1	Welcome and apologies
1.1	DBV welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received from Nicholas Lee and Sharn Khaira.
2	Minutes of the council meeting held on 28 th August 2025
2.1	It was unanimously agreed that the draft minutes of 28 th August meeting were an accurate reflection. Redacted items were approved.
3	Actions arising from the council meeting held on 28 th August
3.1	Actions were reviewed and updated.
4	Chairman's Report
4.1	Sarah Hutchinson, Chair of ACLT is to step down at the end of this year – fulfilling her final contract term. Tracy Savage, soon to end her term with Barbri Global as Learning Director, has been appointed as the new ACLT Chair as of 2026. <i>Redacted due to confidentiality</i> . Sarah H will support in a transitional role. It was also suggested that the Board terms of Ian Gilbert and Ben Nethercott be extended for a further 12 months <i>redacted due to confidentiality</i> .
4.2	DBV informed Council that <i>redacted due to confidentiality</i> Sharn Khaira would step down from Council during October. David formally thanks Sharn for her work and commitment to date and hoped she could return to Council in the future.
4.3	The CLSB have requested a collaborative AL Session with the ACL – CC to liaise and move forward.
4.4	DBV shared his intent going forward for the Chairman's Cup award to be decided collaboratively by Council. A new award has been created - the ACL Achievement Award, which will be awarded as and when to someone who has promoted the profession or assisted the Association.
5	PR & Marketing Committee Report
5.1	NC provided an update on planning for the London Conference, detailing speaker and sponsors.

5.2	Progress with sponsorship of the Modern Law Awards 2026 is improved by close contact from Operations – criteria for judging of Costs Lawyer of the Year has been suggested and approved.
6	Policy Committee Report
6.1	KK intends to re-launch the Pres G/S working party during October providing an update in time for the London Conference.
6.2	Work is ongoing for the provision of chartered status / protected title with liaison and assistance from the CLSB and LSB. <i>Redacted due to confidentiality.</i> In light of Mazur and the subsequent interest this is generating, the ACL should continue to promote the importance of qualified costs lawyers. The CLSB have confirmed their guidance remains the same.
6.3	AD detailed a potential ambiguity in the LSA regarding costs drafts people being able to attend hearings so long as they were carried out in Chambers, and what a definition of Chambers might be in reality. A further query of the definition of costs litigation was discussed. JC referred to <u>The Association of Law Costs Draftsmen Order 2006</u> which refers to: <i>“The Association of Law Costs Draftsmen is the professional body representing and regulating law costs draftsmen working in England and Wales. Costs draftsmen draw up and analyse bills relating to all aspects of the legal costs included in solicitors bills in relation to cases in all courts. They also appear at court hearings where assessment of such bills takes place.... ... The Association seeks designation as an authorised body so that it can grant the right of audience and the right to conduct litigation in legal costs matters to properly qualified and trained members so that such members can act independently of solicitors in costs proceedings and can address the court during assessment hearings”</i>
6.4	<i>Item redacted due to confidentiality.</i>
6.5	AD also reminded Council of a potential 3 month consultation on reforms of the Solicitors Act, anticipated later this year / early 2026.
7	Education Committee Report
7.1	JR provided a summary following the latest ACL Training board meeting. The apprenticeship scheme continues to take much of MJ’s time, risk assessments are ongoing with a potential concern that enrolment numbers are lower this September due to firms waiting for the scheme to launch. <i>Redacted due to confidentiality.</i>
7.2	TestReach have accepted full responsibility for online disruption experienced by students during June exams and all related costs will be met by them.
7.3	Student feedback has been received for full review by the ACL. Tutors will work with the ACLT to discuss and agree improvements to course content and delivery.
7.4	JR and BN (Ben Nethercott) to attend November in-person meeting with Station Road forming part of review and planning, to provide Costs Lawyer perspective and oversight on upcoming campaign.
8	Finance & Internal Policy Committee Report
8.1	JC guided Council to vote on changes to the Legal Aid Group constitution. Changes proposed by Julian Caddick and seconded by Kris Kilsby. Changes are formalised through appendices to the ACL By-Laws.
8.2	JC has created additional appendices for the remaining special interest groups, formalising the leadership and terms for each – Council to sign off in October.

8.3	JC provided an update on finances, with investment value continuing to strengthen.
9	Operations Report
9.1	CC confirmed the ACL will go out for nominations for two vacancies on Council in October. AD term ends in November & Sharn stepping down early.
10	Any other business
10.1	n/a
11	Date of next meeting
11.1	The next meeting is Tuesday 28 th October – 10am to 12pm, via Teams