

Meeting of the Access to Justice Review Expert Group

held on Friday 27th June 2014
at 11:30 in the Meeting Room, 9th Floor, Cyril Le Marquand House, St Helier

Attendees

Mr T. Walker, Chief Minister's Department (Chair)
Mr T. Le Cocq, Attorney General
Advocate V. Dempsey, Law Officers' Department
Mr P. Matthews, Judicial Greffe
Mr M. Ferey, Citizens Advice Bureau
Ms A. King, Jersey Consumer Council
Advocate J. Speck, President, Law Society of Jersey
Mr N. Benbow, Law Society of Jersey
Mr D. Cadin, Bâtonnier

Welcome

1. The Chairman welcomed the Group to the third meeting.

Written Comments Received

2. The Group noted the written comments received during the period from 12 May until 20 June 2014. Comments had been received on a wide range of topics from members of the public, the legal profession and a number of representative organisations. Comments would be published on the gov.je website. A summary of the comments would be prepared for inclusion as part of the Interim Report. The summary would highlight the main themes contained within the written comments received and identify the principal areas of interest for future work.

Factual Description of the Legal Aid System

3. The Group considered a draft note which provided a factual description of the current legal aid system, including the legal aid vote. Some minor changes were identified and the note would be updated. The description would be included in the Interim Report.

Interim Report

4. A draft would be prepared of the Interim Report, which would include a summary of the written comments received and a description of the current legal aid system. It was noted that the members of the Panel had confirmed their wish to aim for publication of the Interim Report during July. It was agreed that the next meeting of the Group in the autumn will focus on the principal areas of interest identified in the written comments and will consider the methodology that might be followed in order to arrive at suggested recommendations for the Final Report.

Public Hearing

5. The Group noted that a Public Hearing would be held, probably on 11th July 2014, and that some of those who had submitted written comments would be invited to attend in order to expand upon the positive suggestions for change which they had put forward.

Forthcoming Advisory Panel Meeting

6. The Group noted that the Advisory Panel was due to meet again on 4th July 2014 and would consider the written comments submitted, the summary of the comments and factual description of the current legal aid system, and plans for the Public Hearing.

Royal Court Rules Review Group

7. It was noted that the Royal Court Rules Review Group had now completed the invitation to submit written comments and that the Group would consider how this work might be progressed. The Chairman of the Panel would continue to liaise with the Deputy Bailiff regarding the sharing of evidence between the respective reviews.

Any Other Business

8. The written comments received had highlighted a number of other projects which were underway elsewhere and which could make a positive contribution to improving access to justice. These other projects might be tracked in order to follow their progress and see where synergies might be achieved.

ENDS

02 July 2014