

The Commissioner's views and comments on the draft Legal Services Bill

Legal Services Board (LSB)

"An announcement on the location of the LSB should be made without delay."

"The LSB needs a range of powers and sanctions and real teeth but to be used only where needed. Professional bodies who do a good job of day to day regulation need have nothing to fear from the LSB."

"Over consultation at every point will stifle the LSB's ability to be effective."

Office for Legal Complaints

"The OLC needs to demonstrate its independence from current complaints handling organisations. It needs to truly be a brand new organisation with new IT, new processes and systems and have an ethos of excellence in service delivery. It must not be simply an existing organisation with a new label."

"The Ombudsman role is currently the only truly independent part of the system and its independence is in danger of being lost."

Alternative Business Structures

"Will provide more choice for the consumer."

"A strong and well-resourced LSB is required to ensure sufficient protection for the consumer."

General messages

"I have long been an advocate of reforms. But the consumer must be at the heart of these reforms and have the same protection within the legislation as will be afforded to the legal profession."

"It is vital that key appointments for the OLC and the LSB are made as soon as possible."