

**Minutes of a meeting held at 2nd Floor Markwell House
on Wednesday 09th August 2023**

Members Present:	Ruth Costain (Chair)	RC
	David Trace (Vice Chair) (<i>via Teams</i>)	DT
	Colm Andrew	CA
	Paul Coppell	PC
Officers Present:	Christine Clucas	CC
	Martina Jay	MJ/LACO
	Alex Powell (Note Taker)	AP
Apologies:	Howard Connell	HC
	Pam Pringle	PP
Absent:	Bob Ayre (<i>Technical issues</i>)	BA

27/23	WELCOME AND MINUTES	
	<p>RC opened the meeting, apologies had been received from PP and HC.</p> <p>The Minutes of the meeting 12th July, having been previously circulated, were approved.</p>	
28/23	MATTERS ARISING	
	<p>16/23 (a) (i) Tribunals – CC advised that she and MJ are working with drafters from HM Attorney General’s Chambers to facilitate the introduction of Rules for the Legal Aid Appeals Tribunal (LAAT) as there are none at present. It was hoped that this together with changes to administrative processes would alleviate the issues caused by the recent LAAT decision in relation to Financial Means. In addition, any changes to regulations would need to form part of a wider review of changes required.</p> <p>Having previously noted their concerns (Min 16/23 (a) (i)), and indicated a desire for the Financial Means related issue to be resolved ASAP, it was reiterated that it was the policy of this Committee that due to the problems the Tribunal’s decision will cause, systemically, financially and for parties and given the processes which already exist for persons to seek review of a Financial Means determination, the change should be made now and not await other matters.</p>	CC

29/23	MATTERS REQUIRING ACTION AND DECISION		
	(a)	Update from the Legal Aid Certifying Officer (MJ)	
		MJ reported that she and AP had attended a meeting of the Family Court Users Group on 20 th July and addressed mediation and contact funding.	
	(b)	Update on Staffing/Operational Matters (CC)	
	(i)	CC provided an updated on the progress of HM Attorney General's Legal Aid Review which should be considered by the Council of Ministers in September.	
30/23	CORRESPONDENCE FROM HIS WORSHIP, THE DEPUTY HIGH BAILIFF		
		<p>The Committee had received correspondence regarding Criminal Legal Aid Regulations 1993 – Financial Eligibility from James Brooks, the Deputy High Bailiff.</p> <p>The Committee agreed they recognised that this was an issue which needed to be addressed and considered that it formed part of HM Attorney General's Legal Aid Review.</p> <p>AP was asked to send a response to His Worship on behalf of the Committee.</p>	AP
31/23	CODE OF CONDUCT AND REGISTER OF MEMBER'S INTEREST POLICY		
		<p>The above documents, having been circulated prior to the meeting, were approved and signed off by the Chairman.</p> <p>It was agreed that the policies will be available online at: https://www.gov.im/about-the-government/departments/the-treasury/social-security-division/legal-aid/la-committee/ .</p> <p>Further to the ratification of the Committee's Attendance Policy at their last meeting, (Min 25/23) RC proposed that the format of Committee Minutes should reflect whether members had submitted apologies in advance and, if not, an absence should be recorded – agreed.</p> <p>PC suggested that, at the beginning of each meeting, members be asked to declare whether any agenda items potentially caused a conflict of interests – agreed.</p>	AP

32/23	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
	PC gave apologies for the next meeting which is due to take place on Wednesday 13 th September at 14:00.	

The meeting closed at 15:08

Minutes agreed

**By
Chair**



Date

11/10/2023

