



Alternative Business Structures – Less than a Year to Go

Getting ready for the new regulatory regime...whether ABS or not!

21 October 2010, London

In association with
Legal Futures



Legal Futures is the essential guide to conduct, compliance and competence for lawyers, monitoring the changing legal market as we head towards ABS

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- 9.00** Registration and Coffee
- 9.30** Chairman's Welcome and Introduction
Neil Rose, Editor of LegalFutures.co.uk
- 9.45** The Legal Services Board's perspective on ABSs
- The timetable towards October 2011 and the first ABS beginning trading
 - Regulation catching up with changes already seen in the market
 - The licensing framework and embedding consumer protections
 - Governance and accountability within ABS
- Fran Gillon, Director of Regulatory Practice, Legal Services Board*
- 10.30** The New Code of Conduct and Outcome-Focused Regulation
- Outcome-focused regulation – what and why?
 - How outcomes work with the Principles
 - OFR and the new Code of Conduct
 - OFR and its application to the other rules
 - The big issues – what you need to concentrate on
- Bronwen Still*
- 11.00** Coffee
- 11.15** The ABS Models
- External investment
 - Law firms managed by non-lawyers
 - Law firms owned by non-lawyers
 - New vehicles for legal service delivery
 - Law firms floated on the stock exchange
 - Businesses providing legal and non-legal services
 - Commercial models for legal services
- George Bull, Baker Tilly Tax and Accounting Limited*
- 12.00** Getting your Firm in Shape
- Which firms will be considering ABS?
 - What will investors be looking for?
 - A clear focused business plan
 - Repeatable, reliable services
 - Strong management
 - Good finances
- Panel discussion: Neil Rose
Chris Marston, Lloyds TSB
Patricia Wheatley Burt, Trafalgar*
- 12.45** Questions
- 1.00** Lunch
- 2.00** Working with an External Investor
- The level of interest in external investment
 - The expected shape of the legal market
 - The implications for firms looking to bring in an external investor, including structure, ownership, valuation, partner reward and governance
- Giles Murphy, Smith & Williamson*
- 2.30** Working Smarter – the Alternatives to ABS?
- Picking a structure that suits your firm
 - Marketing management essentials
 - Client-focused businesses
 - Where are the future profits?
- Alastair Moyes, Marketlaw*
- 3.00** The Options for the Bar
- "If we want things to stay as they are, things will have to change"
 - NewCos – procuring and supplying services
 - JVs and SPVs as alternatives to merger
 - A virtual Bar – using home-working etc as an alternative to chambers
- Jason Rowley, 12 Kings Bench Walk*
- 3.30** Tea
- 3.45** Opportunities for Local Authorities
- Are ABSs the answer to shared legal services?
 - ABS models that can be used for local authorities
 - Potential risks
 - Practical problems in implementation
- Iain Miller, Bevan Brittan LLP*
- 4.15** Panel Discussion: How will Legal Services be Provided in 10 Years' Time? New Ways of Finding and Engaging Lawyers
- What is the future for solicitors' firms?
 - What will the new providers look like?
 - Will consumers be getting a better deal?
 - Can you survive if you don't want to change?
 - Meeting the challenges of technology
- Panel: Neil Rose
Richard Cohen, Epoq
Craig Holt, Quality Solicitors*
- 4.45** Chairman's Concluding Remarks and Questions
- 5.00** Conference Close

Alternative Business Structures – Less than a Year to Go

The nuts and bolts of Alternative Business Structures ("ABS") will impact on all firms whether or not they choose to go down the ABS route. The SRA is working towards ensuring a level playing field for all legal service providers and the new code of conduct will apply equally to all firms, whether ABS or not. It is therefore important to have an understanding of the new regime, and the likely consequences.

Firms need to make a positive decision on ABSs, whether or not they opt to go down that route. For those firms interested in ABSs, this conference will provide nitty gritty advice on how to attract external investment and what difference it will make if you are successful.

Even if your firm decides against the ABS route, the new legal landscape will affect the firm's business plan and decision making. How different will the marketplace for legal services be in 10 years' time, and how will this influence the direction of your practice? Leading commentators come together to offer their guidance on the way ahead.

Chairman:

Neil Rose is an experienced freelance journalist. Formerly deputy editor of the *Law Society Gazette*, he now edits his own website, LegalFutures.co.uk, as well as the *Legal Executive Journal*, *Litigation Funding and Costs Lawyer* magazines. A qualified solicitor, Neil also writes a weekly column for the *Guardian's* law website.

Speakers:

George Bull is not only the UK Head of Tax for Baker Tilly but also head of the firm's Professional Practices Group. Previously head of a law firm's commercial services department, George has worked closely with partnerships for many years. He is primarily involved in providing leading-edge business and taxation advice to the legal profession. George is an honorary member of the Law Management Section of the Law Society, the Steering Committee of the LLP SORP and the Business Law Committee of the ICAEW. He regularly broadcasts, lectures and writes on all aspects of professional practices.

Patricia Wheatley Burt, Trafalgar – The People Business Limited, has over 20 years experience working in the commercial and professional sectors. Projects include mergers and acquisitions, performance management, pay structures, HR strategies, designing and delivering tailored development programmes and Executive Coaching. Patricia also writes and is increasingly in demand as an energetic, challenging and charismatic speaker at awaydays, conferences and other corporate or in-house events.

Richard Cohen is Chairman of Epoq Legal Ltd. A qualified solicitor, Richard founded Landau & Cohen Solicitors, before joining Epoq in 1998 as Joint CEO and now Chairman. He is serving on the SRA Working Group for the introduction of ABS's, the Legal Services Policy Institute and the Legal Services Consumer Panel. Previous speaking engagements include the English Law Society, American Bar Association and Society for Computers and Law.

Fran Gillon is Director of Regulatory Practice at the Legal Services Board (LSB), which regulates bodies such as the Law Society and the Bar Council. She has a wide range of policy responsibilities including developing the regulatory framework for ABSs, policy on first tier complaint handling and developing the LSB's enforcement policy. She started at the LSB in May 2009. Prior to that she worked at the postal services regulator, Postcomm, for four years and before that she worked for the energy regulator, Ofgem. She has also worked for the Local Government Ombudsman and in local government.

Chris Marston is Head of Professional Practices at Lloyds TSB Commercial, which looks after businesses with annual turnover of up to £15 million. His role is to ensure that the bank's solicitor customers receive the right level of service, delivered by specialist relationship managers, and financial products designed to meet the needs of a changing profession. Chris is responsible for maintaining a high level of understanding of sector issues among Lloyds TSB's specialists, and he speaks and writes regularly on financial issues affecting the legal profession.

Iain Miller is a partner with Bevan Brittan and head of the Commercial Litigation team in London with an extensive public law practice. He also acts in relation to all aspects of professional conduct and discipline. He is one of the SRA's principal advisers on the frequent public law challenges to their decision-making policy. He also acts for both the Law Society and the Legal Complaints Services and is an editor of *Cordery on Solicitors* and co-editor of *Butterworths Guide to the Legal Services Act 2007*.

Alastair Moyes holds an MBA from Cass (City) Business School and is a member of the Chartered Institute of Marketing. Following a career in business publishing and management consultancy Alastair joined Marketlaw in 2004 bring a fresh approach to the database and on-line areas of marketing management for law firms. With fellow director David Monk he wrote *Marketing Legal Services: Succeeding in the New Legal Marketplace* (Law Society) and is a regular contributor to the *Law Society Gazette*.

Giles Murphy is Head of the Professional Practices Team at Smith & Williamson, the accountancy and financial services group. He acts for a wide range of professional practices and has advised on a wide range of financial issues relating to partnerships. Giles is also leading Smith & Williamson's advice to clients on the implications of the Legal Services Act 2007 drawing upon Smith & Williamson's own experience of incorporation and obtaining external investment in 2002.

Jason Rowley is Chief Executive of 12 King's Bench Walk. He is a solicitor and was previously Managing Partner of Vizards Wyeth solicitors. He is a Deputy Costs Judge at the Supreme Court Costs Office and was President of the Forum of Insurance Lawyers 2002-2003. He is an Editor of *Kemp & Kemp: Personal Injury Law, Practice and Procedure*.

Bronwen Still is a solicitor who was in private practice with a high street firm before joining the Law Society in 1980. She worked in many capacities for the Law Society including as head of the Professional Ethics guidance team. Her last role as head of the Policy team with the Solicitors Regulation Authority has meant she was involved in drafting both the current Code of Conduct and the new Code which will come into force next year.

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