

Part 1, Appendix 2 – Chief Executive's Report to Council on Member Experience

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Classification - Public Freedom of Information

Not applicable as this paper is public

Summary:

This paper provides an update on activities across the Member Experience directorate.

Recommendations / Conclusions:

This paper is for: noting.

Assessments. This should be either a summary of what is in the paper (cross-referenced to the relevant paragraph), or, if the issues are very straightforward, a full statement of the relevant position.

Financial:	There are no financial implications arising from the paper.
Risk:	This paper provides an update only on current activity.
ED & I	ED&I considerations form part of all our reviews of products and services, as we aim to make these accessible to all our members.
Organisational Values	This paper focuses on clarity and excellence to provide Council with a detailed update on how we are working to achieve success, including information on what we have been working on and how successful we have been.
Consultation	Senior members of staff across the Member Experience directorate.

Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic has impacted our ability to deliver certain services and the income associated with those services. However, we have also identified and taken opportunities to explore new ways of working, meet member need in alternative ways, and reduce costs.

Member Experience Transformation programme

- Testing of the Beta version of the new website continues, and we are on track to fully launch the new site in June.

Events

- We have cancelled all face-to-face events from mid-March until 31 October. In total, 99 events have been cancelled. We have implemented a solution to deliver digital alternatives to the face to face events (where possible), utilising the new Learning Management System to deliver webinars, podcasts and virtual conferences. Over 1,000 delegates have registered to attend to date.
- The cancellation of events has impacted on our ability to generate events and sponsorship income.
- We will re-assess the viability of face-to-face events after the end of the business year, as the Covid-19 crisis evolves.

Accreditations

- We continue to deliver Accreditations. The team has been busy supporting members with requests for extensions and has granted more than 250 as of mid-May. We have adapted Lexcel audits and are carrying these out remotely where appropriate.
- Initial applications and applications for renewals both slowed as businesses slowed and adapted to working remotely.
- We understand that Covid-19 has posed real challenges for members, particularly those providing conveyancing and criminal legal aid services. On this basis, we have decided to offer a suite of discounts targeted at those most in need. Further information on this is provided in the CEO Part 2 paper and the Covid-19 briefing and policy update, at item 5 of the agenda.

Learning & Development

- We continue to make good progress with Law Society Learning. We're using agile methodologies to deliver, have successfully onboarded new staff, and are functioning well. We have deferred the beta release until mid-May, in part due to the ongoing impact of Covid-19 on our partners.
- We are using the new platforms to develop digital alternatives (podcasts and webinars) to cancelled face-to-face events, where appropriate.

Gazette

- The Gazette achieved its two best-ever months for web traffic in Q2, reaching over 500,000 individual users in March and April respectively. Social media traffic was up by 32% and the newsletter open rate was over 28%.
- The magazine (both in print and online) has been central to disseminating the Law Society's Covid-19-related messaging and resources to members and other stakeholders through dozens of news, analysis and comment pieces each week. We created a new section on the Gazette website specifically for Covid-19 content.

- Covid-19 has required us to work differently. The last several print issues of the Gazette have been produced remotely, with all staff working from home. Some 2,000 solicitors have requested their print copy be distributed to their home addresses, another pleasing sign of engagement.

Publications

- Our distributor's warehouse closed on 31 March in line with the Government's Covid-19 guidance. We suspended all orders and switched off the payment facility on the online bookshop. While we had been tracking ahead of forecast to that point, demand reduced by as much as 90% going into lockdown, with workplaces, libraries, wholesalers and bookshops closed and no evidence of an increased uptake of eBooks.
- We had orders come in during the lockdown and were able to immediately fulfil and re-open operations. We re-opened the bookshop on 18 May and anticipate a gradual recovery and are now fully open.

Sales

- We have already felt a significant impact on advertising as the recruitment market contracts and sales underperformed against forecast. We expect this decline to continue, but to then recover as restrictions begin to ease.
- We are doing better than expected on Forms income, thanks to more active client management.
- Partnerships are exceeding forecast due to the retention of 100% of our commercial client relationships through the crisis.