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| <b>Meeting</b>         | OLC Board Meeting | <b>Agenda Item No.</b> | 10         |
|                        |                   | <b>Paper No.</b>       | 146.8      |
| <b>Date of meeting</b> | 29 April 2026     | <b>Time required</b>   | 10 Minutes |

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|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Title</b>                  | PIDCo Meeting Update            |
| <b>Sponsor</b>                | Rachel Cerfontyne, PIDCo Chair  |
| <b>Status</b>                 | OFFICIAL                        |
| <b>To be communicated to:</b> | Members and those in attendance |

| <b>Executive summary</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |            |
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| <p>The purpose of this paper is to update the OLC Board on the points discussed and the outcomes and actions arising from PIDCo's meeting of 27 February.</p> <p>PIDCo reflected on the progress and impact of PIDCo since its launch at the start of the year and discussed ways to improve the impact of these decisions in the future.</p> <p>PIDCo were asked to consider six recommendations for public-interest publication.</p> <p>After due consideration of LeO's recommendations, comments from the interested parties and the regulators, PIDCo decided to approve the publication of all of the six proposed decisions.</p> <p>The next meeting of PIDCo is scheduled for May 2026.</p> |            |
| <b>Recommendation / action required</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |            |
| Board is asked to note the content of the paper                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |            |
| <b>Equality Diversity and Inclusion</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |            |
| <b>EDI implications</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>Yes</b> |
| The decisions relate to cases across a wide range of practice areas and involve customers from different backgrounds; as such, they touch on EDI issues.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |            |
| <b>Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Fol)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |            |

| Paragraph reference                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Fol exemption and summary |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| n/a                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                           |
| <b>Value for Money (VfM)</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                           |
| <p>Publication of public interest decisions is intended to improve standards across the profession and, over time, reduce demand on LeO's services so resources are used effectively. It will also help inform the debate on wider decision transparency, including associated costs and resource implications.</p> |                           |

## PIDCo update

### 1. Introduction

The OLC's Public Interest Decisions Committee (PIDCo) met on 27 February to consider LeO's recommendations for publication of Ombudsman final decisions in the public interest.

PIDCo considered six ombudsman decisions and approved all six for publication.

### 2. PIDCo meeting

#### **General**

Elaine Banton was appointed to replace Patricia Tueje on the Committee following her standing down as an OLC Board member.

This meeting was Elisabeth Davies' final PIDCo meeting before standing down as OLC Chair.

#### **Reflections on publication generally**

PIDCo reflected on the work completed over the past year, with over 20 decisions having been published at that time, and the impact of published decisions as part of LeO's second objective.

- Legal press coverage after each round of publication has been positive; coverage is mainly factual (numbers, practice areas and themes) rather than detailed analysis of individual decisions.
- LeO's website: the relevant section received over 2,500 views from around 1,500 users; individual decisions were downloaded over 300 times in total over the six-month period reviewed.
- It is too early to conclude whether publication is improving the standard of customer service being provided or educating consumers on expected standards.
- Excepting for the decisions published in the first round, there has been minimal post publication challenge from any of the service providers.

The Executive will consider ways to increase the impact of Public Interest Decisions (e.g., publishing by theme/area of law and/or making decision summaries more accessible).

PIDCo remained keen for future published decisions to reflect examples of best practice rather than purely poor practice; it was noted that widening the current criteria (which focus on service failings and adverse customer impact) would likely require consultation.

## **Recommendations for publication**

PIDCo considered six cases for public-interest publication, covering a range of practice areas and service-failure themes.

Three service providers raised objections, which PIDCo considered in full with the benefit of input from LeO's legal team.

PIDCo approved publication of all six decisions relating to the following legal service providers:

- Laytons – property – failure to register a property
- Charles Fraser – property – failure to undertake full and proper enquiries of a purchase
- England & Derbyshire – litigation – failure to protect a client's right to bring a claim
- Keystone – litigation – poor handling of a claim
- Allchurch – property – failure to protect an investment in a development property
- Heselwood & Grant – litigation – poor advice around discontinuing a claim

In line with the indicative criteria in LeO's publication policy, PIDCo was satisfied that each case identified either very serious service failings, a severe impact on the customer, or both.

The next PIDCo meeting is scheduled for May 2026.

## Public Interest Decisions Committee - Annual report of activity

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|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Name of contributor</b> | <b>Rachel Cerfontyne</b> |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|

| <b>Membership and attendance: Chair of Public Interest Decisions Committee (PIDCo)</b>                                                                                                                                                                             |     |
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| Rachel Cerfontyne                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 4/4 |
| Elisabeth Davies                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 4/4 |
| Patricia Tueje*                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 3/4 |
| Elaine Banton **                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 1/4 |
| <p>* Patricia Tueje stood down as OLC Board member part way through the year and therefore did not attend all PIDCo meetings</p> <p>** Elaine Banton replaced Patricia Tueje as the non-lay member of PIDCo and therefore only attended 1 meeting in this year</p> |     |

| <b>Terms of reference</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
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| <a href="https://www.legalombudsman.org.uk/media/ydqpfwkm/public-interest-decisions-committee-terms-of-reference_december-2025.pdf">https://www.legalombudsman.org.uk/media/ydqpfwkm/public-interest-decisions-committee-terms-of-reference_december-2025.pdf</a> |

| <b>Key activities and focus areas in 2025/26</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
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| <p>The OLC Public Interest Decisions Committee was reinstated at the start of 2025/2026 in line with the OLCs commitment to make better use of the powers conferred on it by s.150 LSA 2007 to publish a “report of the investigation, consideration and determination of a complaint made under the ombudsman scheme”.</p> <p>The committee convenes on a quarterly basis to consider recommendations from the Chief Ombudsman of cases that he/she considers to be in the public interest and would warrant publication.</p> <p>Over the course of 2025/26 the Committee considered 31 proposals for publication and in doing so reflected on representations from any party to the complaint who wished to object to publication.</p> <p>The Committee approved publication of 27 decisions. Due to the timing of PIDCo meetings, 21 have been published in year and six will be published in 2026/27</p> |