

Meeting	OLC Board	Agenda Item No.	4
		Paper No.	124.3
Date of meeting	15 December 2022	Time required	10 minutes

Title	Executive Report
Sponsor	Paul McFadden, Chief Ombudsman
Status	OFFICIAL

Executive summary
<p>Performance across October and November was 7% short of Business Plan forecast and has taken LeO to 94% delivery of forecast to date (6313 against a forecast of 6702). Continued progress is being made in reducing the Pre-Assessment Pool (PAP), reducing by 23% across 2022/23 so far.</p> <p>Based on current and projected performance, revised end year forecasts show a reduced end year position, with a lower scenario of 91% and likely case 92.7%. It is clearly disappointing that we are not closer to Business Plan forecasts despite the progress that has been made. LeO continues to face a number of challenges, in particular high attrition and a buoyant labour market, and has factored in an early tail off of opportunities as FET's success completes review of the PAP at an earlier point than expected. The Executive are giving careful consideration to mitigation and to risk appetite and a clearer assessment of our ranges and forecast scenarios which take account of the multitude of factors behind our forecasting.</p> <p>Although disappointing, overall context and progress against a backdrop of significant change remains important. LeO has delivered 53.71% more closures year on year. We expect to resolve 6900 complaints by the end of December, exceeding last and previous years' performance on closures with a full quarter remaining. Board will also note a range of positive stakeholder feedback and confidence in LeO's progress as we engage on our 2023/24 proposals. This is a markedly improved position than last year's engagement.</p> <p>Although seeing some improving signs on attrition, with overall and investigator attrition reducing, investigator attrition remains at high levels and continues to represent our key challenge. We continue to see positive reductions in sickness absence which reflects the investment in focused support on complex employee cases and the absence management policy implemented in July.</p> <p>September has seen significant recruitment activity with new investigators and Level 1 Ombudsman coming on Board, albeit at levels lower than planned. LeO has moved to implement its Leeds Hub for a small number of the new staff, building on the success and lessons of the Cardiff Hub.</p> <p>Our consultation on Strategic and Business Planning and Budget closes on 14 December with an emerging verbal update on stakeholder responses being provided at today's meeting.</p> <p>Interim arrangements are being put in place for the management and delivery of ED&I priorities and as we assess more fully the appropriate longer term structure and balance across the external and internal ED&I priorities and as we prepare for permanent recruitment.</p>

This will see an increase in total EDI Budget and FTE across 2023/24 which we expect to deliver within the current proposed 2023/24 Budget.

GIAA's audit programme continues with planned Quarter 4 audits on Service Complaints and Performance Management Framework. We have received an initial draft report on the audit of LeO's Risk Management Framework which highlights significant progress in this area, a significant achievement which justifies the significant work that has gone into this area.

We are forecasting an end year underspend in the region of £143k – within the 1% MoJ tolerance – although we see potential opportunity to reduce this if further recruitment is delivered in Quarter 4.

Wider updates are provided for discussion and the Chief Ombudsman is happy to respond to wider questions or comments on updates provided in this report.

Recommendation/action required
OLC is asked to NOTE the paper.

Executive Report

LeO's Performance

LeO resolved 788 and 831 cases in October and November respectively against monthly forecasts of 876 and 875. 1619 cases were closed against a Business Plan forecast of 1751 which represents 92.46% of the Business Plan forecast for those months and 94% against Business Plan forecast to date for 2022/23 (6313 against a forecast of 6702).

The Pre-Assessment Pool (PAP) reduced for the ninth consecutive month in November and currently sits at 4514. This is a cumulative 23% reduction year to date but does put us behind Business Plan forecast of 4251 for the first time this year. Our trajectories show that the PAP will also increase in December as forecast given an expected reduction in closures due to the seasonal period.

November saw 499 closures by the Front-End Team, a 71% increase on the Business Plan forecast and the highest delivered to date. The rate at which resolutions have been delivered by FET means that opportunities in the PAP for early resolutions are expected to reduce earlier than expected and bring the FET numbers down across quarter 4 as the team focus on PAP proportionality from new cases only. This rate will start to align with current forecasts for FET into 2023/24.

The current forecast end year position has been assessed, taking account of all relevant factors and emerging data on current and predicted performance. This shows forecast scenarios at end 2022/23 of worst case (91%) and likely case (92.7%). It is clearly disappointing that we are not closer to Business Plan forecasts and that the end year position is reducing despite the efforts and progress that have been made. This has been a key focus for the Operational Leadership and Executive Teams over recent weeks. Our analysis shows a range of individual factors contributing to the shortfall across October and November which have been raised with OLC Board in previous updates. However, it is clear that the overriding factors affecting the forecast position are attrition and the reduced recruitment intake in November; and reducing FET opportunities from the PAP over Quarter 4.

Several measures are being assessed to ensure that all efforts and actions are taken to ensure that we deliver the best possible position. The extent to which this is achieved is dependent on several variables with attrition and the productivity achieved in our FET and BAU teams key.

Productivity expectations in BAU for the last quarter of 2022/23 & for 2023/24 have also been revised to recognise the effect of the FET on complexity of case holdings. Overall trajectories for 2023/24 aren't expected to be affected given opportunities for early proportionality that will continue into 2023/24 at a rate higher than the original forecasts set out for 2023/24. Operational Leaders have also been providing targeted support where the expected level of productivity is not being reached, with early indications showing that this is having a positive effect.

The current forecast position will inform our analysis and revision of forecasts for 2023/24, the assumptions for which were discussed at the recent Performance & Quality Task and Finish Group (P&Q). These are being re-assessed by the Executive to take account of P&Q feedback ahead of a further meeting early in the new year.

Although the revised end year performance picture is disappointing, keeping sight of overall context and progress against a backdrop of significant change remains important, and particularly so for LeO's people. LeO has delivered 53.71% more closures than at the equivalent point in the previous year and continues to shorten overall customer journey times. We expect to resolve 6900 complaints by the end of December, exceeding last and previous years' performance on closures with a full quarter remaining. Our central aim of reducing the PAP continues to be achieved on a sustained basis and our aim of reducing the PAP to a working level by the end of 2023/24 remains within reach.

What is clear is that LeO continues to face a number of challenges and risks that we have limited control over despite doing everything possible to minimise impact and mitigate against these. In particular, our trajectories continue to be affected by high attrition and a challenging recruitment market, in which it is becoming increasingly clear LeO is not competitive for the highly skilled staff required to deliver on complex investigations. We are giving further consideration to risk appetite, tolerances and a clearer assessment and presentation of ranges and scenarios when taking account of the various assumptions and factors lying behind our forecasts.

We welcome discussion of this with OLC Board and will continue to assess this over the coming period as we respond to stakeholder discussions and prepare the revised 2023/24 Business Plan.

LeO's People

Attrition continues to be a significant challenge, although there has been some continued improvement in key people metrics. Overall attrition continues to decrease, falling for the fourth consecutive month to 21.2% in November, a decrease of 2.5% compared to October. Investigator attrition has fallen for the second consecutive month, and now stands at 26.5%, a 0.9% decrease compared to October (27.4%). Corporate attrition stands at 26.7% for November (37.6% in October) with no leavers in October.

Positively, sickness absence levels have also continued to reduce for the fifth consecutive month, with November showing an average of 12.25 days of sickness per employee in a rolling year, compared to 12.75 in September and a high of 16.2 days per employee in July. This is clearly showing the impact of the absence management policy implemented in July and work invested in focused support on complex employee cases, many of which had absence as a factor. The main reason for sickness absence in November 2022 was mental health (59 days lost, 20.3%) , followed by surgery/post-operative recovery was the second largest cause of absence (48 days, 16.6%) and followed by Covid-related absence (20 days, 6.9%).

Recruitment activity has continued across both the Operational and Corporate areas. In operations, we have completed recruitment for the new December cohort which is made up of 19.51 FTE, or 20 investigators. This new recruitment round has been carried out in response to higher attrition rates and whilst this new cohort will support closures in 2023/24, this is a significantly lower number than our recruitment expectation (34 FTE). The 14.5 FTE shortfall directly contributes to the reduction in expectations on year end outturn outlined above. We will be further recruiting nationally in February 2023 with an April 2023 start date. The recruitment market remains buoyant, causing challenges in both attrition and recruitment to replace.

We have now recruited to 3 of the 6 roles within the new HR structure with the new HR Business Partner and Strategic HR Business Partner taking up post in October. The Senior HR Services Business Partner joined the business on 10 November. Recruitment to the remaining HR Business Partner, HR Co-ordinator and Payroll/HR Administrator posts is still ongoing with these posts being covered by agency staff. Very positive feedback has been received on the new team with work already underway to implement our new HR Business Partner model and to undertake comprehensive review of all systems and processes on the BAU side of the function (starting with payroll).

A full update on progress towards People Strategy priorities was provided at the Remco meeting in November. Focus for the remainder of year is on our current business-critical, key people-related challenges: to reduce attrition and to attract and retain highly skilled and motivated people across all areas of the business. Many of the activities linked to these priorities complement each other and also build on progress made to date across other areas of the Strategy.

On pay, LeO received MoJ confirmation that the pay remit for 2022/23 had been approved with the 2% pay increase actioned by HR for the November payroll run, backdated to April 2022. Board are presented with an update on the pay benchmarking exercise which has now commenced.

We launched a new Leadership Development Programme in November with initial sessions focused on setting objectives and holding effective development conversations well received. These sessions are a helpful precursor to roll-out of our Personal Development Review (PDR) process in December.

Work is also being progressed to consider LeO's engagement with its people. This will include a review of terms of reference for the Staff Council and the way in which the Staff Council and staff networks work together effectively. This will be considered more fully in January and will be subject to Executive review and consultation with the relevant parties.

LeO's focus on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Interim arrangements are being put in place for the management and delivery of ED&I priorities with the ED&I Manager leaving LeO in December. An internal expression of interest competition for an ED&I Manager will be launched prior to Christmas with a view to an appointment being in place in January. This will be for a 6-month period as we

assess more fully the appropriate longer-term structure and balance across the external and internal ED&I priorities and as we prepare for permanent recruitment. This recruitment will include an additional ED&I officer position to support the ED&I Manager with an assessment to be made on the balance of activity between our internal people focus and external priorities.

Our current ED&I Officer will also continue in her role for an additional 6 months from March as we undertake this assessment, bringing continuity and recognising the valuable contribution she has made in this area over the last year. The Head of People Strategy and Services will support in this area in the interim and, with the Chief Ombudsman and other Executive Team members, will continue to play an active role as Executive Sponsor of the various LeO networks.

These arrangements will increase the resource attached to ED&I across LeO, something which has been agreed as a priority on reflection with Executive Team and the outgoing ED&I Manager. We expect to manage this within existing 2023/24 Budget proposals.

A significant range of activity and events have or are taking place over November and December with our Staff Networks promoting awareness of important cultural, religious, international and health related events. This includes various blogs through November by LeO colleagues recognising or celebrating awareness days/months including Men's health, International Men's day and Movember; National Carer's week and Carers rights day; and Disability History month.

November saw the successful launch of the new LeO Women's Network with 20 members in place from the first meeting and nominations for 2 co-chairs to be revealed shortly. Our BAME network announced a change in name to the Race, Ethnicity and Cultural Heritage (REACH) network – a change intended to better represent and celebrate the rich and diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds and experiences of LeO's staff.

Network co-chairs will shortly be preparing end of year round-up blogs reflecting on activities/initiatives launched over the year and what their vision is for the next quarter to continue ensuring LeO is a fair, equal and inclusive organisation.

Strategic and Business Planning 2023/24

The 2023/24 Strategy, Budget and Business Plan consultation launched on 2 November and concludes on 14 December.

Two engagement events have taken place; an external event on 9 November and an internal staff event on 10 November. Both sessions provided an opportunity for LeO to present more detail on the development of the draft plans and proposed budget, and also provided attendees the opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions about the planned focus for 2023/24.

The external event was attended by a number of regulatory and professional body representatives, who shared their increased confidence in LeO in its recovery journey and provided encouraging feedback on the improvements that are being delivered.

There was a clear recognition that overall performance is improving and that the continued commitment to transparency has played an important role in ensuring stakeholders remain confident that LeO is delivering against its published trajectories. Discussions were also focused on how the on-going cost of living crisis is affecting other organisations and what should be done to mitigate the impact on the profession and on consumers. It was widely felt that if an inflationary uplift is necessary to deliver the priorities outlined for the next financial year, then the ongoing performance improvement which is being seen would make the budget ask on regulators more palatable. There was encouraging feedback around progress and confidence, including:

- "Performance is improving and it's really positive to see this"
- "I'm quietly confident in LeO...it's undergone lots of change in the last 2 years"
- "Early resolution has been extremely beneficial"
- "I'm much more confident"

The internal event was attended by over 150 members of staff with questions focused on the implementation of the People Strategy and associated queries around the proposed pay remit of 8%. Staff were reassured that whilst the pay ask cannot be guaranteed and will be subject to MoJ pay award guidance, LeO's Executive and OLC Board were supportive of seeking an uplift to reflect the ongoing cost of living increases.

The Programme Management & Assurance and External Affairs Teams have been working to develop and define the detailed deliverables sitting underneath the priorities detailed within the Business Plan consultation. This includes wider engagement with management team colleagues to ensure appropriate input and that timings and activities are captured accurately and, and whether they will be delivered through business as usual or projects.

The OLC Chair, Chief Ombudsman and Head of Operations met with the LSB Board in November to consider initial comments on the Budget Acceptance Criteria and Business Plan and LeO's mid-year position. This was first stage of scrutiny and challenge on the Business Plan and Budget for next year. The meeting raised a number of questions and points of challenge around attrition, salary and LeO's people focus; outsourcing; demand assumption; focus on priority 3; and EDI focus. There were real positives acknowledged in the proposals presented and the overall progress being made by LeO.

The main and more substantive feedback message was around LeO's 2022/23 end year position, reasons for shortfalls in forecast this year, the reasons for this and efforts being made to address. The Executive have been reflecting on this and where the 2023/24 proposals should be developed and enhanced in response, including around our assessment and presentation of forecasts and associated ranges better reflecting the assumptions and factors behind them.

Finance

At October OLC Board an underspend of between £99k and £145k was reported – the range reflecting the fact that we were awaiting the acceptance of recruitment offers. As at the beginning of December, we are forecasting an underspend of £143k – within the 1% MoJ tolerance. The latest forecast reflects the actual new recruits that started in November and emerging issues such as the appointed new solicitor withdrawing.

The Executive continue to explore and implement all appropriate measures to drive down this underspend. This includes additional managed recruitment in operations in Quarter 4 which, if achieved, will offer the opportunity to reduce significantly. Some of the options we have explored have not proved to be possible but we continue to encourage ideas for using this resource appropriately and minimising the underspend.

November YTD Case Fee income is £259k under budget (£541k vs YTD budget of £800k) reflecting the fact that the increased closures achieved have largely come from front end initiatives which do not attract a case fee. Some of this income will be recovered if the balance shifts back towards investigation closures. Based on this current position this could be a shortfall of nearly £400k. Any short fall in case fee income will affect the levy income. Increasing the levy by £400k would add 2.9% to the budgeted levy.

Discussions are on-going between the LeO and LSB Heads of Finance around our 2023/24 budget proposals and how we would handle a situation where the LSB approve a budget which anticipates a higher pay remit than MoJ ultimately approves through the pay remit guidance.

In terms of finance team performance more generally, aged debts (over 60 days) have increased to £50k. This largely reflects the lower level of activity in managing debt due to staff illness. We will monitor this, and ensure that adequate focus is maintained on chasing aged debts. Improved performance on payment of invoices has been maintained over October and November. In October we paid 95% of invoices on time (24 days on average) and in November 91% on time (27 days on average).

Risk Audit & Governance

The Executive continue to monitor 2022/23 strategic risks and issues on a monthly basis. The latest assessment will be taken to ARAC in early January. Following the ARAC meeting in October, the Executive committed to keeping a watching brief on Strategic Issue 1 (Pre-Assessment Pool) and Strategic Risk 1 (Performance), noting that the seasonality falling within Quarter 3 may impact both. The Quarter 3 performance position and current year end forecasts will also clearly be factored into this assessment. The Executive are due to meet mid-December for a full review of risks and issues in readiness for the ARAC meeting in January.

October ARAC was updated on the Risk Manager's work on further developing risk tolerance, with input from risk owners, and this next phase focused on a wider range of LeO metrics as detailed in the October ARAC. Risk control effectiveness work has also started aligning to previous audit actions.

GIAA's audit programme continues with planning for the Quarter 4 audits on Service Complaints and Performance Management Framework completed in readiness for the audit fieldwork commencing in the new year. We have received an initial draft report on the audit of LeO's Risk Management Framework. The draft findings detail the significant progress and improvement since the previous risk audit in 2019/20. This is a significant achievement given the position in the previous audit which recognises the significant work that has gone into this area. The CO and Head of Programme Management and

Assurance will share the final report with ARAC and Board colleagues following our comments on the findings and as soon as this becomes available.

Service Improvement, Quality and Legal

Work continues to ensure that the standard of service that we provide to our customers is maintained across all areas of our service.

LeO's quality committee met recently with members of the Executive and Operations to discuss the findings of the Quarter 2 quality assurance reviews and to flag that delay and communications remain the key issues that impact on the quality of LeO's casework and the overall satisfaction of LeO's customers. The Quality Team has subsequently been working closely with Operations colleagues to better understand and address the issues that impact on our communication with customers. Work is ongoing to ensure that our guidance and expectations around communication are clear and customer focussed as well as to ensure that our standard templates and style of correspondence (across FET and BAU workstreams) are accessible and user friendly.

Quality reviews for Quarter 3 are currently ongoing and the team will be using the outcomes of those reviews to help drive future improvements and to assess whether historic interventions have had any positive impacts. We also await the end of process customer satisfaction survey results for Q2 from our external provider. This review will provide us with an insight into the impact of FET processes on customer satisfaction and highlight areas for future focus and improvement if required. The team have been collaborating with Operations colleagues on a review of the existing QAF guidance to ensure that the framework provides new starters, particularly, with the right combination of support and autonomy whilst also helping underperforming more established staff with the framework to improve their individual performance. The team have also been heavily involved in the Scheme Rules review ensuring that the processes are in place to assess the application of the new scheme rules once they come into force and that ombudsman discretion is consistently and fairly applied moving forwards.

Within the Service Complaints Team we have successfully appointed two new part time customer experience specialists which means the team is now fully staff and can turn its focus to reducing the time that it is taking to have service complaints addressed. Although the induction of the new staff will mean that there is a small delay before the team is operating at full capacity the addition of new staff means that work has already been done on triaging complaints in the team inbox and progressing those waiting for a stage 1 response. The team are also working towards migrating service complaints to our case management system which will provide greater capacity for analysis of the themes and trends underpinning incoming and resolved service complaints whilst also enabling greater reporting potential to be available. The issues which were aired in the Service Complaints Adjudicator's report around delays and poor communication in LeO's casework remain but with greater resource the team can invest more time in providing feedback to individual staff and the business as a whole to help drive service improvement.

A biannual report on enforcement and the activity of the Legal team is being presented to Board but the team continue to not only defend formal and informal legal challenges

but also successfully mitigate the risk of legal challenge through providing ongoing advice on our most high risk cases and the application of our processes.

The Quality, Legal and Service Complaints Teams have all been working very closely with operations colleagues and the EDI Manager over recent months to further strengthen our approach to the application of reasonable adjustments. We have noticed a slight increase in the number of complex cases where customers have a wide range of reasonable adjustments and we have introduced a multidisciplinary team (MDT) (which calls on individuals from across the business) to look at the steps we can take to enable those customers with complex reasonable adjustments to access our service. We will be using the learnings from cases reviewed by the MDT to help inform the need for organisation wide training and guidance and it will help us mitigate the risk of future legal challenge as any result of a failure to provide a reasonable adjustment. We are in the final stages of launching a new process around the identification of cases which need to be prioritised on the back of customers' protected characteristics, but have an interim process in place to ensure that these cases are spotted and addressed in the meantime. Our plans for enhanced data collection and reporting around EDI will also provide us with greater insight into the proportion of our customers who need a reasonable adjustment to be able to access our service and we will be updating our case management system to ensure that it is easy for our staff to identify the cases where a customer needs a reasonable adjustment and ensure that we take appropriate steps on those cases. By way of example, we have already taken steps to remove certain customers from our automated email updates (whilst waiting in the PAP) where they have been clear that they are unable to access written correspondence and will be updating those customers individually to ensure that they are sighted on our wait times in a way that meets their needs.

Scheme Rules review

The work relating to the implementation of the revised scheme rules is still on track for go live in April 2023. LeO's IT team have now developed and built all of the necessary changes into the case management system - these changes will enable us to record the application of the new rules and track the impacts and consistent application of them. We are now going through the UAT process to ensure that the developed changes work as expected and do not have any unanticipated adverse implications. The comms strategy continues from both an internal and external perspective. LeO representatives have attended a number of conferences and seminars in recent weeks to discuss the Scheme Rules in terms of what our customers will see in the coming months, what we plan to do to raise awareness of the changes and the implications of the changes. The feedback from all of those sessions continues to be extremely positive, although our customers are now starting to think about the practical implications of the changes and the steps they will need to take to inform their staff and their own customers.

Plans are being implemented for updating all of our guidance, factsheets and templates to ensure that they cover the new scheme rules but at the same time maintain our existing suite of information on the current scheme rules (and will continue to do so whilst cases in the PAP are processed under those old rules). As noted above the

Quality Team have developed plans for a quality assurance framework to oversee the application of the new rules and we are working with our external IT developers to build a solution that will enable us to capture EDI data of customers who seek to access our service by way of the online complaint checker tool so we can see whether the changes to the Scheme Rules, particularly in relation to whether time limits have (or are likely to have) had any adverse impact on levels of demand or access to justice for any group(s) of customers.

We are working to finalise a suite of reporting for both internal and external stakeholders which we plan to be able to bring to January's Board meeting for discussion. This reporting will enable us to show, and provide assurance around, the impacts of the new rules on levels of demand and access to justice amongst other things.

External & Stakeholder Engagement

Since the October OLC Board meeting, a LeO's stakeholder engagement has been focused mostly around the consultation on draft Business Plan and Budget for 2023/24 as outlined above.

Engagement on the Scheme Rules changes has also continued. With assistance from regulators, a letter has been sent to service providers which details the key changes that will be implemented from 1 April 2023 and outlines the intention to provide further guidance, including FAQs, in the new year. Legal press articles have also been published and articles have also gone to the Manchester Law Society magazine and Today's Media magazines (inc. Today's Conveyancer, Today's Wills and Probate and Today's Family Law).

Throughout November, meetings with key stakeholders have also provided an opportunity to discuss the draft Business Plan and Scheme Rules changes in more detail.

On 7 November the Chief Ombudsman met with the new Chair of the Law Society's Regulatory Processes Committee and RPC members to discuss LeO's performance and priorities for the organisation going forward. This was also followed up attendance at the most recent Regulatory Processes Committee on 23 November, where the Deputy Chief Ombudsman and Head of Operations updated the Committee on performance trajectories and plans for ensuring the profession were adequately informed of what the Scheme Rules changes meant for them and their clients. The meeting was very positive, with feedback focused on the Committee's support for the direction of travel LeO is going in and the success of the changes that have been implemented.

On 29 November, the Chief Ombudsman alongside other LeO colleagues attended the Legal Services Consumer Panel meeting, to discuss the changes to the Scheme Rules, the Business Plan and Budget for 2023/23 and LeO's ongoing performance. The Panel Chair congratulated LeO on the huge effort to get LeO's trajectory to where it needs to be and emphasised their desire for a more strategic focus on learning and insight work under priority three. Discussions focused around the future ambition for priority three and the importance of this priority in line with the other two. LeO committed to engaging

further with LSCP as it develops its engagement strategy and concluded the meeting by stating it would like to “congratulate LeO on the hard work and all you’re doing”.

LeO has continued to welcome key stakeholders to Edward House, with a visit from the Chief Executive of the Ombudsman Association, Donal Galligan, taking place on 7 December. Discussions with Operations Managers helped bring to life some of the process changes which have taken place in within LeO over the last 18 months and provided opportunities to explore closer working relationships with the Ombudsman community, particularly in relation to developments of Government policy and any associated responses. The OLC Chair and Chief Ombudsman also met recently with Professor Stephen Mayson and Professor Chris Hodges on some of this policy thinking across the legal and Ombudsman / dispute resolution sectors, also covering the consultation on the 2023/24 OLC Budget and Business Plan.

LeO has also continued to attend a number of conferences and seminars during November and December, including attendance at the Society for Licensed Conveyancers Conference, the Solicitors Regulation Authority’s COLP/COFA conference and the LegalEx Conference. All events are attended by large sections of the profession and key speaking roles for LeO’s staff provided attendees with updates on changes to the Scheme Rules. LeO also held a workshop with the consumer organisation Which? on 2 December to talk to their staff members on the work of the Legal Ombudsman. Strengthening relationships with consumer organisations has been a key priority for LeO and continued engagement with national organisations will help with increasing awareness of key organisational changes- such as the revised Scheme Rules- and how these may impact on consumers of legal services.

The OLC Chair and Chief Ombudsman have continued to engage with the LSB and MoJ since the last Board meeting - including meeting with the LSB on 29 November as part of the Business Plan assurance process. The Chief Ombudsman and other Executive members will continue to engage with the LSB and MoJ across December, including the Q3 Business Assurance Meetings that will take place on 13 December.

Key External meetings and events attended/to be attended by the Chief Ombudsman and LeO Executive - November and December

Date	Meeting	Purpose	Online/in-person
01 Nov 22	Bar Council Complaint Handling Seminar	Potentially a focus on vulnerable customers following our overview of complaints publication	Online
02 Nov 22	SLC Conference	Annual conference	In person
7 Nov 22	Meeting with Law Society's Regulatory Processes Committee	Meeting with the new Chair of the Committee and to discuss Scheme Rules timelines	Online
08 Nov 22	SRA COLP/COFA Conference	Present in a lunchtime breakout session and run a stand	In person
22/23 Nov 22	Legal Ex	Speaking slot to discuss Scheme Rules changes	In person
23 Nov 22	Law Society's RPC Committee meeting	Attendance to discuss performance, Scheme Rules and Business Plan.	Online
29 Nov 22	Legal Services Consumer Panel meeting	Attendance to discuss performance, Scheme Rules and Business Plan.	Online
5 Dec 22	Talk with Which?	Talking to consumer body Which? about the work of the legal ombudsman.	Online
7 Dec 22	Ombudsman Association visit	Opportunity to gain a firsthand insight into LeO's new ways of working.	In-person
13 Dec 22	Business Assurance Meeting	Quarterly meeting with the LSB and MoJ.	Online