

## **DASLS MAIN COMMITTEE**

*Extract from Minutes of main Committee meeting held on 8 December 2009*

The Committee is immediately responsible for:-

- Providing Leadership of and to the Society
- Providing leadership of and to the profession within our area
- Strategy
- Drawing all the Society's activities together

And is ultimately responsible for

- Managing the business in the interest of the members
- Receiving reports from, and supporting the work of, the Sub-Committees
- Overseeing, superintending and reviewing all aspects of management and operations
- Effective management of resources and ensuring that they are adequate

This framework was duly endorsed with the Committee seen as the hub of the Society

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## **DASLS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

- a) "The current officers of the Society are authorised to act as an Executive Committee for the main Committee to which it is accountable;
- b) "The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, Vice President, Junior Vice President, Immediate Past President, Honorary Secretary and Honorary Treasurer;
- c) "At any meeting, three officers present in person shall be a quorum;
- d) "The Executive Committee shall have power to decide on routine tasks and any other tasks as delegated and authorised by the main Committee.

*As per resolution passed by the main Committee at its meeting held on 16 May 2000*

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## **VICE PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE**

*Following Terms of Reference were considered and endorsed at the VPC meeting held on 8 May 2008*

"This Committee is active as the Society's "Think Tank". Amongst its role as a Think Tank is the consideration of, and response to, Consultation Papers either for submission or for the approval of the Committee. It also deals with matters that are not within the remit of any standing sub-committee of the Society and which require detailed consideration. Any new initiatives are subject to approval by the main Committee."

## **PRACTICE MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE**

This Sub-Committee's purpose is to support the management and leadership of DASLS member organisations, whether 'private practice' or 'in-house', and to assist the member organisations improve their performance and profitability. Its key areas of performance are:

- Provision of benchmarking information to member firms;
- Providing information to members about recent developments in practice, regulation and management;
- Provision of relevant training events ;
- Identification of strategic partners to deliver competitive services to legal practices;
- Encouraging debate within the profession about management and leadership issues;
- Promoting the Society's views to The Law Society, Solicitors' Regulation Authority and other bodies as appropriate on matters relating to the management and leadership of legal practice.

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## **CONTENTIOUS BUSINESS SUB-COMMITTEE**

### Terms of Reference

To maintain effective liaison with the local Judiciary and Courts.

To keep under review issues in civil litigation and criminal law, practice and procedure, including Legal Aid and keep DASLS members advised of changes.

To respond to Government and other bodies (eg Law Society, SRA, Legal Services Commission) consultations documents.

To consider matters referred by members, DASLS main Committee and other Sub-Committees.

To offer a forum whereby members with an interest in contentious work can meet and discuss matters.

### Measures of Success:

To hold an annual Forum in each of DASLS areas – North Devon, South Devon and Somerset.

To give regular updates through DASLS Newsletter and Buzz.

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The role of the **EDUCATION AND TRAINING SUB-COMMITTEE** is:

- to provide input on the content of the future training programme,
- to monitor the success (or otherwise) of courses that have been run by the Society.
- to respond to consultations regarding education & training as may arise from time to time,
- to keep members advised of changes to training requirements when they arise and arrange briefings and practical advice when required.
- to consider such other matters regarding education and training as maybe referred to them by the main committee from time to time

The objectives of the Education and Training Sub-Committee will be achieved by:

- encouraging delegates of courses to complete course evaluation sheets
- ensuring that the membership of the Sub-Committee is representative of the membership of the Society and the various legal disciplines, types of firm and geographical areas in which they work
- holding meetings of the Sub-Committee at least three times every year

The success of the Education and Training Sub-Committee will be measured by

- Maintaining a programme of over 60 seminars per annum.
  - Feedback measures – over 75% Good or Very Good.
  - Average attendance at training events – 20 delegates (excludes Support Staff / Paralegal Courses).
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## **INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE**

### Terms of Reference

To raise DASLS profile and represent DASLS members abroad.

To monitor DASLS' membership of the Federation of European Bars (FBE), to arrange appropriate representation at meetings, and to inform DASLS Members of FBE activities.

To maintain DASLS International Business Database to open new markets for DASLS members.

To provide suitable contacts and facilitate access to international legal services when DASLS members need to instruct a local lawyer abroad.

To organise lawyer/student exchanges and individual visits with lawyers from DASLS Twin Bars and to assist with placements abroad.

To raise greater international awareness by holding events that promote the services solicitors can provide.

When it is DASLS turn to host, to organise the annual International Lawyers' Meeting of the Twin Bars; and to coordinate input to meetings organised by the other Twin Bars in all other years, usually via working parties.

To develop and nurture links with lawyers in other countries on an informal basis through personal contacts while consolidating the existing links with the core Twin Bars on an annual basis through arranging a weekend programme linked with the Legal Sunday Service.

To monitor developments in Zimbabwe and offer practical support to the Law Society officers there and their members in their efforts to uphold the rule of law.

### Measures of Success:

Referrals from DASLS International Business Database.

Increased use by DASLS members of the existing Network of International Lawyers – a valuable resource providing recommendations they can trust.

Regular updates through Newsletter and Buzz

- (i) to increase DASLS members' knowledge of other legal systems, and
- (ii) to widen the service which DASLS members can offer their own clients (thus preserving their own client contact).

Representation and active participation through DASLS membership of the Federation of European Bars.

Attendance numbers of DASLS members at international lawyers' meetings and, if DASLS are the organisers/hosts, contribution to DASLS funds.

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## **NON CONTENTIOUS BUSINESS SUB-COMMITTEE**

We see our role to review and study in depth the developments across the wide gamut of all non-contentious areas of law. This includes the property conveyancing procedure, planning and matters relating thereto. We undertake the same responsibilities within the realm of private client, wills and probate. In addition we consider non-litigious areas of employment law and company law, where the need arises. We do not wish to restrict our remit and actively encourage both our solicitor members and outside related bodies to suggest any non-contentious fields requiring assistance and further debate. We try to anticipate changes in these markets and assist and promote solicitors as the leading providers of quality legal services. Our committee members are very active and we represent expertise from across the many different non-contentious disciplines and different types of firms, including the world of academia.

We respond to consultation documents from outside bodies, including, inter alia, the Government, Law Commission, Chancery Lane and HM Land Registry.

Where considered necessary we convene working groups, within our committee, reflecting diverse specialisms, to tackle specific projects. Sometimes in conjunction with Chancery Lane – we held a joint seminar on the introduction of HIPs, for example, that was widely attended within Devon and Somerset. A working group is currently working on the standardization of conveyancing documents such as Leasehold Enquiries before Contract, and Special Conditions in the Contract for Sale. The Leasehold Enquiries have been generally accepted by our members and national outside agencies such as ARMA, LIPAG and the EHF who have promulgated our document to their members nationwide. We have worked closely with the Plymouth Land Registry in developing the Chain Matrix. Our private client members have conducted extensive surveys of our members comparing the effects on firms of replacing the old EPAs with LPAs. We are currently preparing a response for Chancery Lane to their request to gather data locally on unregulated will writers, both for, and against. Also on the growth of bereavement advice outside the profession. We consult our members, outside agencies and other local law societies on a regular basis to assess their needs and garner information. The results of our projects are published in the DASLS Newsletters and Bulletin and regularly communicated to Chancery Lane.

We invite outside speakers from time to time, for example the Plymouth District Land Registrar, or a specialist in all aspects of care for the elderly, to keep the committee, and consequently our members up to date. We also arrange visits for our committee members to the Land Registry, Coroners' offices and we hold cross party forums with outside agencies to discuss issues that we have in common and need debate.

We hope to remain innovative and flexible in our approach to all matters non-contentious, in order to raise the profile of our profession to the benefit of all.

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## **SOCIAL SUB-COMMITTEE**

### **Mission Statement and Aims**

The Social Sub-Committee's mission is to raise the profile of DASLS both locally and regionally and reflect the interests of its members through organising events that give members of all ages the opportunity to network and socialise with one another in a non-formal environment.

It will focus on providing varied fun and friendly events that challenge traditional perceptions of a local law society and the legal profession whilst working to engage younger members and other professional members in DASLS work and services.

It aims to organise at least ten events per year (with at least one free to all members) with a mix of competitive challenges (DASLS Challenge Cup) and other more social occasions. The programme should be varied and when possible actively require people to mix with colleagues from other firms.

Measures of success:

- ☺ 10 Events in each calendar year.
- ☺ Overall positive feedback from events.
- ☺ Genuine competition for the DASLS Challenge Cup.
- ☺ Discernable increase in average individual attendance at events over twelve month period.
- ☺ Discernable increase in number of firms and geographical areas represented at events.
- ☺ Active participation of members in, and work of, the Social Sub-Committee.

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## **MEDIATION SUB-COMMITTEE**

To take an active interest in mediation, to promote and develop it amongst the profession as an alternative to litigation, and to share experience, skills and training opportunities.

Measures of success:

10 Mediations referred to DASLS mediators over the next 12 month period  
80% of mediations successfully mediated.