



## **LLG DIRECTORS REPORT FOR THE AGM 2023**

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**Please note the LLG Accounts are available on the LLG Website by going to [LLG Draft Financial Statement](#).**



## **President's Foreword**



**Helen Edwards**

### **LLG President 2022-23**

It has been a pleasure and privilege to have driven the strategic direction of the company over the past year.

LLG has been on a journey over a number of years, capitalising on the vision and innovation of each previous President to pivot the organisation into the now modern, agile, membership focused and nationally recognised body it is.

I have been excited to oversee several initiatives and sweeping reforms which have enabled LLG to grow further, be ambitious and influence the sector.

Internally it was important to address the wide disparity within the branches and implement a model to better serve the regions and engage the grassroots membership. Embarking on an extensive consultation, I am delighted that we have engendered the changes within the year of my tenure to bring this about for the future.

I am also delighted that we have achieved a more open and transparent appointment process to the Board of Directors, with a number of elections taking place in a variety of positions. We started this work last year, by opening several opportunities. This year, 8 positions were available which represents a significant percentage and ensures that we are building succession and creating a diverse and reflective board of directors.

It was fantastic to return to two 'in-person' conferences whilst offering opportunities to attend remotely. I was particularly keen to enable junior attendance and ensured



bursaries were available to provide those at the start of their careers the valuable opportunity of meeting their peers and learning from other colleagues.

One of my key themes was to focus on equalities, diversity, inclusion, and social mobility within the law. I have overseen the start of a detailed research on this theme and look forward to the next steps to safeguard the future of our profession.

We continue with our National Graduate Recruitment campaign and successful work experience week and this year, have appointed two fixed term interns to grow into future local government lawyers. To assist with a lack of succession at the MO level, we are on the cusp of launching our LLG Inspire programme which will provide future leaders with the skills they need to grow in the profession.

Externally we have increased the number of stakeholder bodies with which we engage and identified joint working opportunities. We were delighted that the government pledged increased statutory protection for Monitoring Officers which formed part of our Golden Triangle Campaign. We continue to press on the standards regime and the need for sanctions and were pleased to engage with the Ombudsman's 'Triennial Review'.

We have also expanded our work streams by engaging with stakeholders to press for the need for MO's to be at the top table. Public Interest reports continuously demonstrate governance failings where MOs are not at the top table, and this remains a key objective for LLG.

We have remained unrelenting in our campaign for remote meeting provision for local government over this past year along with ADSO. Launching a petition, submitting an FOI request, meeting with DHLUC and participating in multi-stakeholder meetings with the LGA. We will not be deterred, and I pass the baton to our incoming President, Rachel McKoy, who I know will be as steadfast as I have been in seeking permanent provision.

The local government world is a complex one to navigate. I leave my tenure very proud of the people I have met who show daily dedication and professionalism in all that they do.

Thank you to the board for all their support over the past year and thank you too, to the LLG Team who work tirelessly behind the scenes to give operational effect to our bold designs.

With very best wishes

**Helen Edwards**

**LLG President 2022-23**



## **Chief Executive's Comments**



As we reflect on 2022, many of the campaigns we are now tackling in LLG on behalf of our membership are showing signs of positive progress. Campaigns take time – we are not short term in our approach and understand that investment of time and resources must be sustained to make a difference.

One of our key strategic aims is to build succession to make our legal departments well-resourced and sustainable. Building on the success of national work experience week – now a staple feature of our calendar – 2022 saw us take first steps operationally to build a recruitment hub for graduate and apprenticeship vacancies that will massively increase the visibility of legal careers in local government. The launch of this recruitment hub is planned for mid-2023, and it will be free to use for local authorities. It's crucial that as a profession we look to grow our own, and we want to help any way we can.

As well as encouraging new entrants to the profession, we must invest in the development of our members if we are to grow their skills and retain them in the local government sector. 2022 also saw us design our online learning package to develop the monitoring officers of the future. Again, due for launch in mid-2023, this will hopefully help break the cycle of recruiters always looking for experienced monitoring officers and will allow our stars of the future to breakthrough.



Legal education and training is a key operational delivery for us, and we have worked hard to bring relevant, focussed training for members to ensure they are equipped to do their job. Our one-day remote conferences are an excellent way to update knowledge and skills, and the development of our 'membership plus' subscription model during 2022 for launch in 2023 offers free access to these excellent events for a single upfront payment by a local authority.

ESG (Environmental, Social & Governance) is the latest buzzword in the corporate sector – at LLG we have the 'G' nailed with our annual governance conference and an unswerving focus on good governance within local government. Environmentally, we are working hard to grow knowledge and best practice with respect to climate change, with free webinars and slots at our conferences examining the overlap with different legal disciplines. Socially, we continue to focus on the wellbeing of our members through providing practical and thought-provoking sessions, as well as the opportunity to network and share experience. A positive approach to EDI during 2022 started with informative webinars and ended with us taking our first steps to build a comprehensive data set to define our membership. More on this to come. Importantly, we stepped up our bursary provision during 2022 to offer 10 bursaries to

junior lawyers to each of our face-to-face conferences, to enable them to start building the networks and the friendships that will stay with them throughout their lives. In this hybrid world of work, it can be harder than ever to build that foundation of strong relationships that can nurture you throughout your career.

2022 brought new challenges – rising energy costs, supply issues, political instability, post Brexit concerns, post pandemic economic issues, budget cuts, and a war in Europe, all of which impact on life within local government. LLG aims to be a constant force for good in a world of shifting sands; building trust and respect with stakeholders, working hard to solve your problems, and providing a community of support in challenging times.

**Deborah Evans**



CEO

**Board Directors (severed or serving since last AGM)**

For biographies [Click here](#)

Helen Edwards	President
Rachel Mckoy	Vice President
Aneeka Sarwar	Deputy Vice President
Quentin Baker	Immediate Past President
Fiona Anthony	LLGE Chair
Michelle Rowe	Branch Board Representative
Emma Harrison	National Lead Board Representative
Helen Lynch	National Lead Board Representative
John Purvis	Shadow Junior Lawyer Representative
Deborah Evans	Chief Executive Officer
Kieran McGaughey	Membership Director
Rochelle Tapping	Membership Director
Manisha Patel	Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Director
Matt Phillips	Welsh Branch Representative
Suki Binjal	Non Director Law Society Council Seat Member

LLG say goodbye to both Quentin Baker and Michelle Rowe at its 2023 AGM with grateful thanks for their immense contribution over the years and good wishes for their future endeavours.

**National Leads (served or severing since last AGM)**

- Rita Bange, Housing and Regeneration (retired)
- Helen Lynch, MO & Governance
- Emma Harrison, Adult Social Care & Health
- Tim Briton, Litigation & Licensing (retired)
- Stephen Turner, Litigation Deputy
- Kieran McGaughey, Partnerships & Procurement
- Alice Rowland, Procurement Deputy
- Felicia Epstein, Employment (retired)
- Rachel McKoy, Planning and Highways
- Sarah Harriot, Information Governance



Vacant- Children Services and Education

### **Branch Officers (served or severing since last AGM)**

Stephen Taylor, Southern  
Richard Ivory, Southern  
Kieran McGaughey, Northeast  
Alison Symon, Northeast  
Vanessa Whiting, Northwest  
Kelly Dawson, Yorkshire & Humber  
Francesca Whyley, East Midlands  
Sarah Hall, East Midlands  
Michelle Rowe, West Midlands  
Jane Hackett, West Midlands  
Fiona Anthony, Eastern  
Paul Turner, Eastern  
Linda Rees-Jones, Wales  
Sioned Wyn Davies, Wales  
Saira Tamboo, London

### **LLG's ACHIEVEMENTS**

#### **Campaigns & Lobbying**

##### **Remote Meetings**

- LLG continued with its participation through the LGA Digital Working Group which includes ADSO, NALC and SLCC to discuss ways forward to enable remote provision.
- LLG and ADSO met with DLUCH in February to discuss the issue of a lack of provision.
- LLG and ADSO submitted a Freedom of Information request to the government in relation to the Call for Evidence they held nearly two years ago. This was refused by the government on the basis of it being a vexatious burden and not in the public interest. A review is being submitted.
- LLG worked with NALC, ADSO and RTIP to provide a draft clause to insert into the Levelling Up Bill to provide remote meeting provision to local authorities. This came off the back of the 'Nandy' Amendments to insert provision for remote planning committees. Whilst not successful, LLG did get a mention in the House of Lords (a first) in respect of the need to allow local authorities to hold remote meetings and in respect of the government considering it was not in the public interest to provide information to LLG and ADSO following our FOI request.



### The Golden Triangle

- Lobbying for full statutory protection for Monitoring Officers has been successful in that the government has committed to creating specific legislative provision in their response to the CSPL's 'Ethical Review'.
- Work has commenced with SOLACE, Grant Thornton and ALAS in respect of research and best practice in leadership and culture within local government. Roundtables are scheduled in April.
- Work with Browne Jacobson has commenced on the commissioning of a piece of research to look at the downgrading of legal and the monitoring officer and how this impacts numerous public interest reports.

### LGA's Debate not Hate

- LLG has worked alongside the LGA to support their Debate not Hate Agenda. Strategically, LLG are linking the debate not hate work with our standards work and the call for sanctions, as better councillor behaviour can role model better public behaviour.

### Digital Case Management Systems – Criminal Courts

- HMCTS have promised to release information on how authorities can access the system and have advised they are waiting on confirmation to start. It has been widely reported in the press that the system has been marred with problems and that the court reform agenda was overly ambitious.

### Kinship Carers- Parliamentary Evidence Outcome

- In October, The Ministry of Justice announced legal aid changes for some kinship carers and parents. The Family Rights Group has long campaigned for reforms to the legal aid regime for parents and kinship carers and enabled LLG to give oral evidence to a parliamentary select committee on this issue. This has now resulted in legal aid changes for kinship carers in that special guardians who are applying to take on the care of children will be eligible for means and merits tested legal aid in private law court proceedings.

### **Consultation Responses, Guidance & Evidence**

- The CfGS have published their Call-in Guidance with support from Bevan Brittan, LLG and ADSO.
- Proposed changes to the Mental Capacity Act 2005 Code of Practice and implementation of the Liberty Protection Safeguards Including the Liberty Protection Safeguards.
- ICO Consultation on Prioritising Access to Information Complaints
- Draft Statutory Guidance on the United Kingdom Subsidy Control Regime
- Reviewing contracts with Russian state-linked suppliers





## **Stakeholder Engagement**

- The Law Society
- The Solicitors Regulations Authority
- The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman
- The Bar Council
- The Centre for Governance & Scrutiny
- The Association of Electoral Administrators
- The Association of Democratic Services Officers
- The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy
- Society of Local Authority Chief Executives
- National Association of Local Councils
- The Local Government Association
- The Society of Local Council Clerks
- Socitim
- DLUCH
- Institute for Licensing
- Royal Institute of Town Planners
- SOLAR (Scottish Local Authority Lawyers)
- LASBA (Irish Local Authority Lawyers)

## **Training & Events**

### Member Training

LLG's webinars and podcasts covered policy, consultations, practice, process and procedure and were free to the membership to attend.

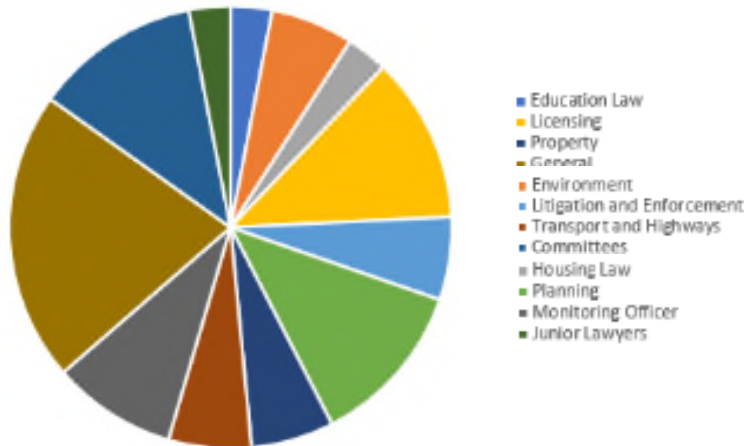
- In 2022 LLG held 14 webinars with 1030 attendees and 42 podcasts.
- In 2023 to date LLG held 10 webinars with 577 attendees and 10 podcasts.
- LLG also held a Wellbeing week which comprised 5 webinars over 5 days in conjunction with our Corporate Partners during January 2023.

### LLG Legal Training

- In 2022 LLG held 41 training events with 736 delegates attending.
- In 2023 to date LLG held 16 training events with 218 delegates attending.
- LLG held two hybrid conferences; The Spring Conference in Durham and the Governance Conference in Birmingham.
- LLG delivered courses on topics such as Planning, Elections, Licensing, Prosecutions, Scrutiny Committees and Data Protection.



Topics Covered:



**LLG launched Membership Plus in its 2023 renewal season to enable members entry to 6 training courses per year as part of their package.**

Current members 3983.

### **Social Media**

LLG has grown its social media membership over the last two years dramatically. LLG now has; -

- 4,900 LinkedIn connections (+1,425 last year)
- 1,357 Twitter followers (+131 last year)

### **Press**

LLG continues to have a presence in the local government legal press.

Notable articles appear as follows; -

- [Kinship carers need access to legal aid provision](#)
- [Helen Edwards appointed President of Lawyers in Local Government](#)
- [Government issues procurement policy note on cutting ties with Russia and Belarus](#)
- [LLG invites applications for Deputy Vice President, Regional Directors and Junior National Lead](#)
- [Local Authority Insight Series: Monitoring Officers](#)
- [Concerns expressed at continued delay in Government response on local authority remote meetings](#)
- [President of National Association of Local Councils tables amendments to Bill that would allow holding of remote meetings](#)



- [Lawyers and democratic services officers criticise Government refusal of freedom of information request on remote meetings ‘call for evidence’](#)
- [LLG sets out six categories open for nominations in 2023 Awards](#)
- [Local Authority Insight Series: Monitoring Officers](#)
- [Concerns expressed at continued delay in Government response on local authority remote meetings](#)
- [LLG invites applications for Deputy Vice President, Regional Directors and Junior National Lead](#)
- [Kieran McGaughey published an article in LGL entitled The new subsidy control regime: a death knell for “local aid” in the UK?](#)
- [LLG mentioned in the House of Lords by Baroness Scott of Needham Market \(15/03/2023\) “Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill” – RE: Freedom of Information Request with ADSO.](#)
- [LLG received a mention in the Welsh Government Consultation – Summary of Responses Alleged Misconduct of Local Authority Senior Officers.](#)
- On 31st May, Kieran McGaughey took part in Oxford University’s, Oxford POGO Club session Podcast on Procurement Bill.
- [Keeping on top of electoral reform](#)
- [Pending KM Contracts Article, HM Pensions Article and pledged Human Rights Reform and Kinship Care Pieces.](#)
- [Local government groups issue model motion for councils to show support for choice to hold remote and hybrid meetings](#)
- [Lawyers in Local Government issues statement on Ukraine](#)
- [Lawyers in Local Government issues guidance on reviewing contracts with Russian state-linked suppliers](#)
- [LLG and Law Society express concern at Government plan to replace Human Rights Act with Bill of Rights](#)
- [Local government groups issue model motion for councils to show support for choice to hold remote and hybrid meetings](#)
- [Kinship carers need access to legal aid provision](#)
- [Government issues procurement policy note on cutting ties with Russia and Belarus](#)



### Our Corporate Partners

LLG's Corporate Partners are an essential support to LLG's provision of training, support and networking. LLG could not provide the level of membership benefit we do without their continued support. Our grateful thanks to our corporate partners and their excellent work.





## The LLG Team

Deborah Evans, CEO

Helen McGrath – Head of Public Affairs

Ann Harlow – Head of Business Services & Training

Lucy Duncan – Training Manager

Jack McCann – Legal Events, Project & Technical Co-ordinator

Daria Porwisz – Legal Training, Policies & Project Co-ordinator

Rachel Carruthers – Business, Finance and IT Co-ordinator

Dennis Hall – Bulletin Editor

Janet Hooper – Welsh Policy Officer

Aafreen Sau – Membership Coordinator

Andrew Whitfield – Executive Assistant to the CEO

## LLG In Pictures







