

Birmingham Law Society Employment Law Committee Meeting

Tuesday 14 June 2011 at 8.45 am

held at the offices of:

Irwin Mitchell, 31 Temple Street, Birmingham

MINUTES

1. Attendance

1.1 Those present were Mike Hibbs (Chair), Ranjit Dhindsa, Richard Steer, Andrew Cox, Roger Sheppard, Trevor Allsop, Eileen Schofield, Martin Chitty, Fergal Dowling, and Victoria Duddles.

1.2 Apologies were received from Linda Jones, Richard Santy, Victoria Garrad, Alan Jones, Tim Jones, and Tracy Worthington.

2. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

2.1 The Minutes of the last meeting on 10 May 2011 were approved. There were no matters arising not otherwise on the agenda save that the response to the Consultation Paper on the Reform of the Equality and Human Rights Commission had been submitted in time

3. 2011 BLS Equality Act Seminar for 23 June 2011

3.1 Members were encouraged to advise and cajole others to attend the Seminar. All speakers were fully briefed. Glenda was to be asked to re-circulate details and encourage attendance.

4. Consultation Papers – Consultation Modern Workplaces

4.1 The response to this was due for 8 August. Martin Chitty volunteered to produce a response to the questions on flexible parental leave. Ranjit Dhindsa volunteered to produce a response on flexible working, Andrew Cox, a response on working time regulations and Victoria Duddles a response on equal pay. Each of those are to be sent to Mike Hibbs by 4 July 2011 so that they can be circulated to all members of the committee before the next meeting at which comments and amendments will be sought and there will be a full debate before the responses are submitted in good time for 8 August.

5. Employment related Settlement Tier 5 and Overseas Domestic Workers Consultation Paper

5.1 It was acknowledged that the Government had sought to consult on this aspect but the members of the Committee felt unable to assist because this was such a specialist area. It was decided that we would not respond to this Consultation Paper.

6. Venue for next meeting on 12 July.

6.1 The next meeting will take place on **12 July** at Wragge & Co, Colmore Row

7. Any other business

7.1 Trevor Allsop reported on the revival of ELGAR at Number Five Chambers recently. This was to provide ongoing support for those who represented Claimants and included

members of the CAB, Law Centres, Trade Union Centre for the Unemployed and others with a view to mentoring, shadowing and case conferences. It was not intended that cases would be sent through ELGAR. Members of the Committee were invited to consider whether they could provide any support to the Group by providing accommodation, presentations to the Group or other support. ELGAR intended to meet quarterly.

- 7.2 There was a discussion about future speakers and Mike Lind from ADRNet was to be invited to the September meeting to talk about mediation in the workplace. There was a brief discussion as to whether Dave Kearns of Expert Investigation should be invited and it was agreed that perhaps this was not the appropriate forum for him. An invitation would be extended to the Acting Regional Employment Judge Kearsley to attend the October meeting.
- 7.3 There was some discussion of issues in Tribunals and members of the committee understood that one day cases were being listed in November or December in Birmingham and that in Bury St Edmunds there were problems with last minute changes of venue and cancellations.
- 7.4 There was a discussion about occupational health advisors and who the committee had used and found helpful. It was agreed that a lot of it depended on the individual doctor used but MOHS (Midlands Occupational Health Service), Priory Health Services and Medigold had all provided helpful reports to members of the committee. The umbrella organisation was the Institute of Occupational and Environmental Medicine which is to be found at Birmingham University.