

## **CITY OF LONDON LAW SOCIETY**

### **EMPLOYMENT LAW COMMITTEE**

**Held remotely and in person at  
Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom (UK) LLP  
on Wednesday 5 March 2025  
at 1.00 pm**

### **MEETING MINUTES**

#### **In person/remote:**

1.	Helena Derbyshire (Chair)	Skadden, Arps
2.	Damian Babic (Minutes)	Skadden, Arps
3.	Kevin Hart	CLLS (The City of London Law Society)
4.	Rebecca Harding-Hill	BCLP
5.	David Sims	DAC Beachcroft
6.	Sian Keall	Travers Smith
7.	Jane Mann	Fox Williams

#### **Apologies:**

1.	Michael Leftley	Addleshaw Goddard
2.	Matthew Rous	CLLS (The City of London Law Society)
3.	Paul Griffin	Norton Rose Fullbright
4.	Nick Robertson	Keystone Law
5.	Anne Pritam	Stephenson Harwood
6.	Chinwe Odimba-Chapman	Clifford Chance
7.	Elaine Aarons	Withers
8.	Mark Greenburgh	Greenburgh
9.	Colin Leckey	Lewis Silkin

1. Apologies were noted from those who were absent.
2. The minutes from the last meeting were approved.
3. Discussion of Government's employment law reforms and whether there has been any impact on hiring (or hiring practices) in the City

The Committee discussed the Government's proposed employment law reforms and generally agreed that so far there had not been an impact on hiring in the City. The Committee considered whether this might change as the reforms get closer.

4. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives and President Trump’s “war on woke”

The Committee agreed that changes to approaches in diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in the United States were already having an impact on larger employers in the City (in particular banks and financial institutions) and suspected that this would filter down to smaller and medium sized employers in the UK over time. The Committee had experience of employers focusing on DEI issues, in particular how DEI initiatives are labelled and marketed going forward.

The Committee also considered conflicting obligations on organisations between local regulatory obligations in the UK and the changes to approaches to DEI in the United States. The Committee also considered the employee relations issues that might arise as a result of these issues and the change in approach to DEI.

The Committee considered what the CLLS could do in relation to this issue and agreed that the Committee should go and read around the issue and re-group at the next meeting.

5. Discussion of *Higg’s v Farmor’s School* [2025] EWCA Civ 109

The Committee considered the case and the impact on the existing law in this area. The Committee discussed the proportionality test that was considered in the case and agreed that the case was helpful in considering the issue of balancing religious beliefs with other protected rights in the workplace.

6. The Chair discussed potential applicants for the Chair and Vice-Chair positions. The Chair said that she would start to reach out to individual Committee members about both positions. The Chair also discussed potential new applicants for the Committee including potential in-house members of the Committee.

7. KH fed back to the Committee about the meeting that was held with the CEO and Chair of the CLLS and the Chairs of the specialist CLLS Committees on 5 December 2024. KH summarized some of matters that were discussed at that meeting, including:

- (a) A summary of the meeting that was held by the CLLS with Heidi Alexander, Minister of State. At that meeting the CLLS offered assistance to HM Government which was well received. KH reiterated that if the Committee wanted the CLLS to approach ministers, officials, or other stakeholders, on any issues affecting the Committee, the CLLS lead would do so.
- (b) A summary of the work on the English Law Paper put together by City grouping/City UK to ensure ministers, ambassadors, etc... are up to speed on presenting the benefits of English law at an international level.
- (c) A summary of the survey that had been carried out with “Roll On Friday” with feedback on mental health and what younger members of the profession were thinking in this area.
- (d) The work that the CLLS has done in preparing for further discussions of solicitors’ conduct and the way the profession represented its clients, particularly following publication of the Post Office inquiry report due in 2025.

- (e) The role of in-house lawyers in the work of the CLLS and their inclusion in the work of the specialist Committees.
- (f) The restructuring of the CLLS (now that the main CLLS Committee would become the Board of the new CLLS) and the interaction between the Board and the specialist CLLS Committees.
- (g) The renewed focus of the CLLS to work more closely with the City of London Solicitors' Company.