

Nigel Spencer
The Law Society
113 Chancery Lane
London
WC2A 1PL

10 April 2014

Dear Mr Spencer

Law Society Preferred IT supplier.

The Legal Software Suppliers Association (LSSA) is concerned that the existing proposal for a Preferred IT supplier for the Law Society is not in the best interests of the Profession. LSSA member companies have decided not take part in the tendering process. A list of all suppliers endorsing this letter is set out at the end.

The reasons why the LSSA has adopted this stance are as follows:

- The proposed process is not transparent with insufficient clarity in the documents about the selection criteria, costs, and process for phase two. Similarly the process is being run on too tight a timetable to give potential suppliers the time to give the PQQ the attention it deserves, particularly in the run up to Easter.
- The existing proposal appears not to take into account the huge variation of professional needs reflecting those of different areas of law, size of firms, degrees of IT maturity and commercial models.
- There can be no one size fits all solution, every firm has unique requirements.
- We believe the current proposal to be inappropriate due to it being an anti-competitive intrusion into a vibrant and competitive market
 - potentially not compliant with SRA rules requiring firms to operate in appropriate and effective ways for the benefit of their clients.
 - misleading in that Practice and Case management software is not a simple commodity similar to those supplied by your existing commercial partners.
 - likely to lead to a reduction in the range of available products for Law Society members and an inhibitor to new entrants to the legal software market
 - unfair to smaller suppliers who may not be able to afford to take part
 - based on the selection of a Preferred Supplier by means of competitive tendering, a proposition deemed as unacceptable by the Law Society in relation to Legal Aid.

Whilst the LSSA considers the existing proposal to be unacceptable and impractical we are very keen to co-operate and collaborate with The Law Society in providing positive guidance to meet the needs of the members. The now abandoned Software Solutions Guide provided this in the past and was much appreciated by your membership. A modernisation or a development of this might again help the Profession in the complex area of software provision and could also provide revenue to the Law Society as it did previously. We also suggested an application by LSSA which was rejected without any reason.

In the light of the withdrawal of most of the main suppliers from the process we would urge you to reconsider your approach and look forward to further discussions.

Yours sincerely

Roger Hancock
Chief Executive



LEGAL SOFTWARE SUPPLIERS ASSOCIATION

River Cottage, Water Lane, North Witham, Grantham NG33 5LJ

Tel: 01476 860417

VAT Reg No: 670 5092 41

email: sec@lssa.co.uk

web: www.lssa.co.uk

This letter is endorsed by:

Cognito

Edgebyte

Linetime

Oyez

Peapod Legal Office

Osprey Pracctice

Thomson Reuters Elite

Tikit

Advanced Legal

Perfect Books

Easyconvey

Quill

Civica

Select Legal

DPS Software