



Issue #16 | Winter 2025

Consortium Quarterly

Welcome

Hello and welcome to the Winter edition of your CQ.

A belated Happy New Year to everyone.

I would like to extend a very warm welcome to our colleagues at the Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service who joined us in November.

This is our first newsletter since the new Solicitors Framework Agreement was launched on 1 August last year. You will find a copy of the Framework Agreement and very helpful guidance on using it on our website, after signing in under 'About / User Guide'.

I hope that you have had a look at the services offered by our new panel and partner firms. I really would encourage you to try them if you have not already done so.

As well as the Commissions portal on the website, to run mini competitions, we have also added a Directory of Key Contacts for all panel firms to the website under 'Added Value' to make it easier for members to get in touch with the lead contact for each Lot.

Here you will also find a document setting out the combined added value services for our two partner law firms, Browne Jacobson and Capsticks, do please take a look.

Our partner firms have put together a comprehensive 12 month Training Programme which started in December. Please have a look at the website and book onto anything that is of interest. All courses are free for members. The registration links are on the NWLC website, after signing in and will also be sent to members by email.

Don't forget there is also a library of past webinar recordings and slides on the website, including those from the recent Annual Training Event.

We are currently working on introducing a new Barristers Portal from 1 April 2025 so please keep an eye out for information on that over the next few months.

In this edition of CQ we have our regular, topical articles and a Legal Updater from our new Partner firms. We also have updates from our Junior Lawyers Group and you can find out more about what's new with the Consortium on pages 4-6.

As always, if you have any comments or suggestions about what you'd like to see in future CQ editions or about the Consortium generally, please do get in touch with me at Anne.Greenwood@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk.

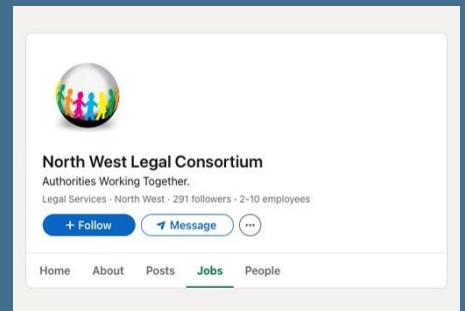
With best wishes



Anne Greenwood

**CHAIR OF NWLC
MANAGEMENT BOARD**

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What's new at NWLC

Fiona Pritchard highlights some of the latest developments at the North West Legal Consortium.

To contact Fiona please email: info@nwlegalconsortium.com



NWLC Solicitors Framework 2024-2028

The new NWLC Solicitors Framework Agreement commenced on 1 August 2024.

We have 15 panel firms across 5 Lots and two new partner firms.

Don't forget, there is a copy of the Framework Agreement and Guidance on how to use it on the NWLC website, after signing in [under 'About / User Guide'](#).

NWLC Partner Firms and Directory of Lead Contacts

Our new partner firms are Browne Jacobson and Capsticks.

Their Lead Partners introduce themselves on pages 11 and 12 and you will also find information on their added value roles for NWLC.

There is a full directory of lead contacts for all panel firms, by Lot, and more on the added value services offered by our partner firms on the website, after signing in, [under 'Added Value'](#).

NWLC Annual Training Programme

Details of the Annual Training Programme are now on the NWLC website.

All webinars and in person events are FREE for member organisations.

For webinar links and registration information please sign in and go to ['Courses, Book a Course'](#).

There are a few webinars and in person events still to be added over the coming weeks so please look out for these.



NWLC Junior Lawyers Group

Our Junior Lawyers Group met in December and enjoyed an excellent presentation on 'Political Nous' from NWLC Vice Chair, Jill Travers.

If you missed it, the recording and slides are available on the NWLC website, after signing in, under **'Publications – Documents and Webinars/Podcasts'**.

Lydia Wright, our JLG Board Member representative is busy working with our partner firms on the next meeting which will be 'in person' on 25 March and you can see Lydia's update on page 16.



NWLC Practice Managers Group

Anne Wright, our Practice Managers Group Board Member representative is working with our partner firms on a programme of virtual and in person events for this year. Details will be available soon.



New Member Organisation

Welcome to Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, our newest member.

In-house Solicitor, Dominic Howell, gives us an insight into his role on pages 13-14.



NWLC Annual Training Event

Thank you to everyone who attended and supported our Annual Training Event in Warrington last October.

As well as some excellent keynote speakers, workshops and networking opportunities we raised £1,034.70 for the North West Air Ambulance Charity.

The workshop slides from the event are available on the website, after signing in, under '**Publications – Documents**'.

We are currently looking at suitable venues for this year's event (taking on your feedback) and hope to confirm the venue and date in the next few months.



NWLC Website – Are Your Team Registered?

The NWLC website is a fantastic resource for members.

It includes information about the Solicitors Framework Agreement, a barristers portal, a commissions portal to facilitate mini competitions, the free NWLC training programme, a library of webinar recordings and slides, and much more.

To access all this information and receive email updates from me, you do need to be registered so please contact me to make sure you don't miss out.

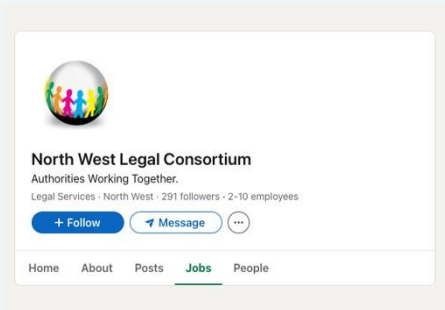
Jobs & LinkedIn

Check out the website jobs page at:

nwlegalconsortium.com/jobs

Have you seen us on LinkedIn?

linkedin.com/company/nwlc/



NWLC Member Vacancies and LinkedIn

Did you know that we advertise vacancies for member organisations free of charge on our website and our LinkedIn page?

If you are recruiting in your team, please send me a link to the vacancy and I will add it to our website for you.



Added Value – Spotlight on... Meeting Rooms

You may be aware that both partner firms offer free meeting facilities in their Manchester offices.

But did you know you can also use their meeting rooms in other locations free of charge, including Birmingham, Leeds, London, Nottingham, Exeter and Winchester? So, if you are looking for a location outside of the North West or have other meetings away from the office and are looking for somewhere to work for a few hours it is worth bearing them in mind, subject to availability of course.

Please let me know and I can put you in touch with the partner firms.

SAVE THE DATE! 25 March 2025

Stop-press news ... In person training and Junior Lawyers meeting

We are planning a double bill of in person training at the Chamber of Commerce in Manchester on Tuesday 25 March.

Full details and timings will be available shortly but there will be in person training on information law in the morning and a Junior Lawyers Group meeting in the afternoon with lunch for all participants.

Legal Updater from our Partner Firms

The Devolution White Paper explained – Part 1.

Following the government's publication of the Devolution White Paper, this insight delves into the fundamental underlying strategic and reorganisation proposals along with some of the more general proposals. Various methods of deepening devolution are proposed by the government and represent matters which, subject to consultation, the government plans to incorporate into a Bill, which is expected in 2025.

[Read more](#) →

Practical Guide to ... The English Devolution White Paper.

Recognising the urgency and the need for clear guidance, Browne Jacobson have developed this practice guide to provide insights and practical advice to assist councils in swiftly navigating the new landscape of unitary authorities and strategic authorities and is designed to support decision-makers in adapting to and embracing these historic changes, ensuring they are well-equipped to move forward confidently.

[Read more](#) →

The Devolution White Paper explained – Part 2.

In our part 1 article on the Devolution White Paper, we examined the underlying strategic and reorganisation elements of the government's proposals as well as some of the more general proposals. In this part 2 insight, we take a more detailed look at the proposals for devolution which the government made for specifically identified areas such as "Funding and Investment" and "Transport and Infrastructure".

[Read more](#) →

Court of Protection update for local authority lawyers.

Recent Court of Protection cases have highlighted the critical importance of a clear care plan and the necessity for local authorities to maintain openness, transparency, and compliance with court directions. These principles are fundamental in ensuring effective care provision and legal adherence within the care sector.

[Read more](#) →

The new NPPF and the effect on delivering social housing.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. This insight focuses on some of the specific changes that would affect delivering affordable and social housing.

[Read more](#) →

Taking account of supplier's approach to payment in major contracts procurement.

The Cabinet Office has issued two new procurement policy notes on a supplier's approach to payment in the procurement of major contracts, Procurement Policy Note 015 (PPN015) and Procurement Policy Note 018 (PPN018).

[Read more](#) →

The Employment Rights Bill – what you should be doing now.

Although a lot of detail on the Employment Rights Bill is still to be confirmed, some things are known and there are steps employers can take now to prepare for the changes. In this insight we look at some of the key areas proposed by the reform.

[Read more](#) →

The latest take on vicarious liability for kinship/connected person foster care.

Research and recent legal developments highlight the growing importance and complexity of kinship care.

Browne Jacobson provide an update for local authorities emphasises its benefits for child stability but also the increased legal and financial implications.

[Read more](#) →

Step-by-Step to the Procurement Act: Introduction.

Our step by step video series helps you to prepare for the introduction of the Procurement Act 2023. The series will take you through the Act, following the lifecycle of a procurement process from planning and pre market engagement through to contract termination. Capsticks will be monitoring the progress of the Procurement act closely and will keep you updated with any developments.

[Read more](#) →

Roundtable Report: Community engagement in high street regeneration.

Roundtable insights from lawyers, councils, think tanks, hubs and specialists on town centre regeneration through community engagement.

Amidst concerns over the challenges of defining and engaging the community and recent political and policy changes suggesting a shift towards national decision-making, participants emphasised the need for tailored approaches that secure community support.

[Read more](#) →

NWLC

Free Training

Programme 2025

Course name	Description
<p>Disclosure in Social Care Proceedings 26 February 2025, 12 – 1pm</p> <p>Delivered by: Capsticks Level: Intermediate</p>	<p>This webinar will cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The positive duties of local authorities to disclose all relevant material in their possession which might assist a party to rebut allegations against them and the consequences for local authorities which fail to discharge the duty to disclose.• The exceptional circumstances in which limitations can be declared by the court.• The Disclosure of Information between Family and Criminal Agencies and Jurisdictions: 2024 Protocol• Public Interest Immunity• Disclosure issues between Health Agencies & Local Authorities
<p>Avoiding Common Pitfalls in Procurement 05 March 2025, 12 – 1pm</p> <p>Delivered by: Capsticks Level: All</p>	<p>In this webinar experts from Capsticks will run through the main pitfalls they see throughout the lifecycle of a procurement process and the main topics in procurement challenges and how to avoid them.</p>
<p>In Person Training on Information Law 25 March 2025, AM time to be confirmed</p> <p>Delivered by: Browne Jacobson and Capsticks Level: To be confirmed</p>	<p>Full details to be confirmed.</p>

Course name	Description
<p>Challenges for Local Authorities involved in Public Inquiries 03 April 2025, 12 – 1pm</p> <p>Delivered by: Browne Jacobson Level: Intermediate</p> <p>Planning Law Update 23 April 2025, 12 – 1.30pm</p> <p>Delivered by: Capsticks Level: All</p>	<p>In this webinar hear from lawyers who are currently representing public bodies and government departments in ongoing public inquiries.</p> <p>Learn about the particular challenges they encounter in relation to time management, resourcing, document review strategies, responding to Rule 9 requests, technologies available and preparing witnesses to give live evidence.</p> <p>Take away some top tips on how you can prepare for and overcome those challenges. Whether you're a seasoned professional or new to the field, this session will equip you with the knowledge and skills to navigate the complexities of public inquiries with confidence.</p> <p>In this webinar, planning law experts from Capsticks will explore current planning issues such as the revised NPPF, the Planning & Infrastructure Bill together with any relevant case law updates.</p>
<p>Subsidy Control 6 May 2025, 12 – 1pm</p> <p>Delivered by: Browne Jacobson Level: Beginner / Intermediate</p>	<p>This webinar will give a broad overview of the Subsidy Control Act 2022 for those who need to have an understanding of subsidy control in their role. It will cover:</p> <p>An introduction to the subsidy control regime, how to identify a subsidy, exemptions and no subsidy arguments, applying the subsidy principles, transparency and the role of the Competition and Markets Authority.</p>



Our Partner Firms

Value Added

Browne Jacobson

Introducing Bradley Martin

Bradley is your lead contact for Browne Jacobson. He is a Partner in Browne Jacobson's Manchester office and leads the Government & Infrastructure team.

He works for lots of local authorities across the UK but focuses on those in the North West (having spent some time earlier in his career on secondment at Stockport Council).

His specialism is public procurement law but his team acts on a range of matters for local authorities including commercial contracts, disputes, development projects and grant funding.

As the Lead Partner for the NWLC, if you have any queries in respect of the framework, he is the person to ask.

Outside of work, he is keen on anything active from running and hiking to scrambling and climbing...anything which gets him into the countryside.

Delivering Added Value for Members

Since the start of the new framework we have been working closely with the team at Browne Jacobson.

They pulled out all the stops to help us deliver the Annual Training Event in October.

They have also produced this template for the CQ, contributed courses to the Training Programme and are involved in delivering our Junior Lawyers and Practice Manager groups programmes for the coming year.

Their help has been invaluable in the above projects and in many other ways to ensure we keep delivering added value for our members.



Capsticks

Introducing Tiffany Cloynes

Tiffany is a Partner and Head of Local Government at Capsticks. She is a recognised leader in her field by clients and legal press, often described as a "regeneration ace" and "an extension of an in-house project team". Underpinning this experience, Tiffany has substantial expertise acting on large scale, complex regeneration and infrastructure projects as well as extensive knowledge and practical experience of public and administrative law. Including Procurement, Subsidy Control and Vires.

Tiffany's other major job is a Kennel Maid to four dogs Dottie (Labradoodle, a criminal genius aged 13), Bobby (Italian Spinone aka slobbery couch potato of 7 year old), Rosie (a voluptuous brown Labrador 6 years old) and Maisie the minx a 1 year old Spanner. The boss is Mabel the cat (10 years old)!!

Delivering Added Value for Members

Since the start of the new framework we have been working closely with the team at Capsticks.

They are responsible for coordinating the NWLC Annual Training Programme and worked hard to help us deliver the Annual Training Event in October, particularly organising the raffle for the North West Air Ambulance Charity.

They are also involved in delivering our Junior Lawyers and Practice Manager groups programmes for the coming year.

Their help has been invaluable in the above projects and in many other ways to ensure we keep delivering added value for our members.



In profile

Dominic Howell

Introducing the in-house Solicitor
from our newest member
organisation, Lancashire Fire
and Rescue Service



What is your current role and how long have you held this position?

I am the in-house Solicitor for Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service and have been in post since August 2017.

What does your role currently involve?

I deal with many varied matters from Inquests, to employment law related matters, contracts, prosecutions and a host of other queries. I am also the Service Data Protection Officer and have oversight of Misconduct within the Service. Definitely a jack of all trades (and master of none).

What's at the top of your in-tray today?

Writing training material in relation to the new duty on employers to take reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment.

What are the biggest challenges facing you at present?

My workload is unpredictable and comes in peaks and troughs. I am currently suffering through a notable peak!

How do you see your role and the work of your team changing in the next decade?

The biggest change may come if local government adopts the mayoral model as has been reported in the press recently. Exactly how this would affect my role is unclear at present however.

How do you relax?

Exercise mainly – swimming, running and gym.

What is the one thing about you that would come as a surprise to most people?

I have never bought a lottery ticket. I really don't want to be a millionaire!

Junior Lawyers Group Update



Our Junior Lawyers Group Lead and Board Representative, Lydia Wright, outlines the plans for the group this year.

As a new year begins, we look back on 2024 which saw the first junior lawyers webinar, under the new Solicitors Framework, take place in December. This was an informative talk by Jill Travers (Director of Law and Corporate Services at Wirral Council) on 'Political Nous for Junior Lawyers', for which we received very positive feedback.

Our annual training event, which took place in a new venue in Warrington in October 2024, provided an opportunity for networking and discussion with colleagues, as well as meeting lawyers from our two new Partner Firms, Capsticks and Browne Jacobson. We hope to provide a more specific junior lawyers session at our annual training event in October this year and would welcome any suggestions you have for this.

Planning is underway for our 2025 programme, which we hope will provide more opportunities for learning and networking. We have endeavoured to focus our events on the feedback we received from our survey back in 2024, and following on from our virtual event in December.

Our first in-person event will take place on 25 March 2025 at the Greater Manchester Chamber of Commerce, hosted by our partner firms Browne Jacobson and Capsticks. This session will include talks on career development, as well as an opportunity to network with junior lawyers from both local authorities and the partner firms. We will be emailing more information on this event in the coming weeks.

Our second event will be a virtual webinar, taking place in June. This will include a talk by Browne Jacobson on 'Email Engagement – how to write emails that get results', which was the top voted topic at our recent virtual event. Browne Jacobson have summarised the webinar: 'With more than 52,000 hours being spent on writing and reading emails this workshop explores how to write an email that actually gets results. It explores the 6 biggest email mistakes and how to avoid them, a 3 step checklist that puts the reader at the heart of the email so they are more likely to respond and the secret to writing emails that are conversational while still being professional.'

We are currently planning the remaining events that will take place in 2025, so we hope to be able to provide the full programme in the coming months. We look forward to seeing faces old and new at our future events and encourage you to reach out should you have any feedback or suggestions for the group going forward.

We would like to thank you for your patience last year, when we undertook the Solicitors Framework procurement, and hope we will be able to build new relationships in the future as we plan our programme with our new partner firm colleagues at Capsticks and Browne Jacobson.

In the meantime, if you are a junior lawyer and are not already a member of the Junior Lawyers Group and would like to sign up, if you would like to help organise future JLG events, or if you have any suggestions for the group, please email me at lydia.wright@warrington.gov.uk

We look forward to seeing you all soon!



Lydia

**Solicitor, Warrington
Borough Council**



Join our **Corporate Crew!**

Join our exclusive group and promote your business as a North West Air Ambulance Charity supporter.

We rely solely on public and corporate support, receiving no government or NHS funding. Your membership directly enables our crew to bring the hospital to the patient and provide lifesaving care across the North West.

Your support will be saving lives, but you'll also enjoy a range of benefits:

Social spotlight • Be featured on our website • Monthly impact updates
Reach passionate supporters • Invites to exclusive member events
Branding and sponsorship opportunities • Corporate volunteering

Email corporate@nwairambulance.org.uk or call **0800 587 4570** today to speak to our team about joining our Corporate Crew or arranging a discussion about how we can support your CSR objectives.

**Corporate
Crew** 

 **NORTH WEST
Air Ambulance
CHARITY**

The latest from LLG

Helen Bennett, Executive Director of Policy & Governance at LLG, with thoughts and views on current issues for local government lawyers

DVP Nominations

The nomination date for applications for Deputy Vice President have now closed. The LLG Board will determine whether the nominations received meet the criteria to go forward for election and members will be advised of the next steps in due course.

LLG AGM

The LLG AGM will take place on 24th April 2025 and members can register to attend on the Events page of the LLG Website.

LLG Governance Review

LLG have concluded its Governance Review which broadly indicated good governance in place within LLG systems. However, striving for continuous improvement, we are taking steps to increase the Terms of Office for directors from 2 years to 4 years. We will also implement a Board Chair position which will be advertised shortly.

Articles

LLG have determined that given there have been so many changes to the Articles over the past 4 years, we will undertake a wholesale review.

The review will take 11 months to complete and there will be lots of consultation opportunities with you, the membership throughout that period. Proposals will be taken to the AGM in 2026 as a special resolution.

Professional Body for Monitoring Officers

LLG continues to drive forward in the creation of a professional body for monitoring officers. We are currently at the structure and operational design phase but are unable to confirm with certainty the precise date when the Body will commence. However, we remain committed to establishing the Body as soon as practically possible.

Recruitment

LLG are currently seeking candidates for the following positions:-

- National Lead for Shared Services
- Training Director

Both positions can be found on the news section of the [LLG Website](#).



Helen Bennett

**EXECUTIVE
DIRECTOR OF
POLICY &
GOVERNANCE**



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**Browne
Jacobson**



Consortium Quarterly

For further information about any of our services, please contact our Consortium Development Manager, Fiona Pritchard at info@nwlegalconsortium.com or visit our website:

nwlegalconsortium.com