



Annual General meeting 2022
18th October 1:00 pm
Location: Provincial House, New Walk, Leicester & via zoom

Minutes

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2022

1. To receive apologies for absence

Present

Glynis Wright (GW)	Parvien Akhtar (PA)
Christl Hughes (CH)	Ajay Aggarwal (AA)
Matthew Olnier (MO)	Zainab Zaeem-Sattar (ZZS)
Greg Hollingsworth (GH)	High Sheriff of Leicestershire Mehmooda
Bhumika Parmar (BP)	Duke MBE DL (MD)
Neal Patterson (NP)	
Angela Titley-Vial (ATV)	Kauser Patel (KP)
Gina Samuel-Richards (GSR)	
Gayle Rowley (GR)	

Apologies

Mukesh Basra (MB)
Amir Ahmed (AA)
Dan O'Keeffe (DOK)
Deborah Burke (DB)

Welcome and address

The AGM began at 1.14pm with MO welcoming all those who were present.

2. To confirm the Minutes of the AGM on 30th September 2021 as a correct record and to consider any matters arising from them

MO asked the present attendees to confirm they had read the previous minutes of the 2021 AGM and found them to be an accurate record. MO gave the opportunity for any queries to be discussed. No questions were asked.

GW proposed the approval of the 2021 AGM minutes. ZZS seconded the minutes.

3. To receive the President's Report for the year 2021/2022

It has been a great privilege and honour to take office as President of Leicestershire Law Society (LLS). LLS remains one of the most proactive, diverse and outward facing and well respected of the local Law Societies.

I have, as mentioned below, had the benefit of seeing and attending other local Law Societies over the year. Leicester has, in my view a unique and exciting mix of people in terms of members, staff, Main Committee and Executive Board, Patrons and Business Partners that makes it a very special place to be. We should cherish and applaud what we have and all that has been achieved to date by you and everyone that has gone before. LLS is rightly admired throughout the Local Law Society sector.

As I took office we were just starting to come out of the worst of the Covid pandemic and lockdown. Leicester endured the longest period of continued lockdown of any city in the UK.

LLS and I were fortunate in that my 2 immediate predecessors Glyn wright MBE and then Christl Hughes MBE both did incredible work in successfully navigating the Society through the worst of Covid.

A significant part of my Task as President has been to bring the Society forward in the first year it has been possible to contemplate in person meetings and events for three years. We have had to steer a careful course at times during the year around the resurgence of Covid. First in the form of Omicron in the latter part of 2021 and into 2022 and then with further waves of the disease later in the year. The effects of the pandemic continue to reverberate throughout the profession in different ways.

Despite these challenges and with the expert help and enthusiasm of all involved with the Society we have had an excellent year. I thank everyone for their commitment and their work.

An important theme for me has been the need to continue to be an outward facing Local Law Society and that we do everything possible to ensure that members and students are supported. Whilst our profession is richly rewarding it can also be stressful, difficult and lonely at times. I firmly believe we are stronger together and that we must do all we can to look out for and support one another.

Business Plan 2022 to 2025.

Members of our team led by our excellent Executive Board Chair Greg Hollingsworth have finalised our new Business Plan for 2022 to 2025. It is an exciting and ambitious plan and I commend the team for all their work.

We have looked carefully at the way our membership fee rates are structured and we have drafted an overhauled and simplified membership fee structure.

One of the key objectives in the Business Plan is to increase membership year on year for the next three years. We will all need to play our part in realising that ambition but we are ideally placed to make it happen.

Social and other Media

The Society has enlisted the services of one of its key Business Partners Cross Productions in order to launch an enhanced social media campaign and presence since the start of my year.

Our editorial board has worked hard on publishing 2 very fine magazines thus far in my year.

Events

I summarise below the events held during my Presidency:

My first event attended was on my first day as President – an evening at the City Rooms to celebrate the retirement of four eminent local Judges. I was lucky enough to be able to give a short speech thanking the Judges for all their work over many decades.

We then had our combined LLS/LJD Winter Warmer evening at Bistro Live in December. This was a very enjoyable and well attended event.

We held a Solicitors and Accountants evening at Mattioli Woods in February of this year. It was a very nice evening made better by a rather wonderful classical guitar player.

In early March we held our Awards Shortlisting event at Nelsons. We had fundraising drinks at the bar and charity pool and jukebox. It was a splendid evening with shortlisted awards candidates being confirmed.

At the end of March we held for the first time in 3 years our Civic Dinner at the City Rooms. (It was first arranged for January but the Omnicron wave meant that it had to be pulled and re-arranged.) We were honoured to have with us Lubna Shula then National Law Society Vice President. Lubna gave a very powerful speech on the importance of Access to Justice and the Rule of law. We were treated to wonderful music from University of Leicester Choir. It was a special evening.

On 20 May and again for the first time in 3 years we held our Awards Night at Athena. Previous President Glynis Wright MBE had, in her year, worked incredibly hard in preparing for her Awards Night – only to have it cancelled because of the pandemic. We benefited from that hard work. The night was a huge success. We had a live band, a moving solo performance by Cristina Ruiz, a game of heads and tails, a charity casino and of course the (in)famous disco. Awards were given out to the winners. It was a celebration of all that is good about the Leicestershire legal community. Many people on the committee worked very hard to make the evening the success that it was and I am grateful to you all. I am grateful to the sponsors of the event and to Athena themselves – who were good enough to tide the event all the way over from 2020 to 2022.

I offer my special thanks on behalf of the Society to the Judges of the Awards. They give up their own time and provide the very best expert and independent scrutiny and oversight.

I have, as President, been honoured to attend a number of other Local Law Society awards evenings over the course of the year. I can say with perhaps less than total objectivity that Leicester's Awards night is by some margin the best.

In June of this year I arranged in conjunction with Leicester Community Legal Advice Service an afternoon event bringing together LLS and local agencies and actors involved in Social welfare and pro bono work in the city. I chaired the event. Attendees included Lord Bach, CAB manager, Representatives from Leicester City Council and CALS and Councillor Sarah Russel representing the office of Liz Kendall MP. Also present were representatives from the 2 universities including the president of University of Leicester Pro Bono Society. The purpose of the meeting was to build on and strengthen links between the various organisations across the city and beyond and to consider how best to coordinate action and information for those in the city who need it most. The meeting was a success with plans for further action outlined including arranging for a list of different providers in the city to be circulated through LLS.

In early July I did a sponsored skydive to raise money for my nominated charity Leicester Children's Holidays (more of which below.)

Later in July we held a networking event at Mattioli Woods in their very impressive Sky Lounge. Patrons, business partners, solicitors and students all attended a very lovely summers evening.

In Early September we held our first Charity Golf Day at Kirby Muxloe Golf Club. 7 teams of four took part. It was a great day. My thanks to Duncan and Angela Tittley-Vials for their inspiration and ideas on how to make the event work. My thanks also to Fraser Stretton Patrons for their very generous sponsorship of this event.

Later in September we held our annual Summer Garden Party at Trinity House De Montfort University. This has become an established event and favourite venue for us over the years. It was a super evening with a rag time jazz band, fine company and delicious food.

Finances

As we have come out of the ravages of Covid it has been very important to ensure that the Society's finances remain strong. We have been very careful to ensure that events have been, where possible, covered financially and that income and outgoings remain balanced. I am very pleased to say that we have just under 45K in the bank at the end of my year. The monies being held on account of the Annual Awards Dinner have now been spent. Outgoings have increased considerably as compared to the previous year – as one would expect given that we have been able to hold major events again. Overall however, incoming monies through membership, patronage, course fees and sponsorship throughout the year have balanced or exceeded outgoings.

Patrons

On behalf of LLS may I extend my sincere thanks to all of our Patrons who do so much for the Society. We are blessed to have their ongoing support.

At the start of my year we had to say farewell to Raj Modhi of Finance Lab. They have been stalwart Patrons of LLS for many years. I thank them formally for all they have done for LLS over the years.

We are proud to confirm three new Patrons for this year:

Mattioli Woods Financial Services

Fraser Stretton Property Management Services

Synergy Recruitment Services.

I am also very pleased to confirm the continuing support of our other Patrons:

University of Leicester

De Montfort University

Severn Trent

Marsh JLT

DG Legal.

We also have the huge benefit of our ongoing relationship with our excellent Business Partners:

Freeline Creative software solutions

Cross Productions Social Media

Kazoo Computer Solutions

And Hitz Rao Photography.

Our Patrons and Business Partners form an integral part of the LLS family. We are privileged as a society to have them on board.

Training and Education and other events attended.

On behalf of the society I give my thanks to Olwyn Davies who has continued throughout the year to hold her ever popular Criminal Law courses.

In November of last year we held a very successful online panel session with a large number of University of Leicester Law Students.

Chair of the Equality and Diversity Sub Board Zainab held a fascinating and informative session with HH Judge Afzal OBE – who was kind enough to speak in detail about his experiences and his advice on living and working with a profound disability.

In January I arranged and attended an online training session with Law Care. Law Care are in my view an excellent organisation with a wealth of resources, support and guidance for those in the profession who may find themselves in need of help.

I have also met with members of the University of Leicester Pro Bono Society. Their President at the time, Meera Patel then attended and presented at one of our Main Committee meetings.

University of Leicester Pro Bono Society were kind enough to invite me to their annual dinner where I was allowed to address them as LLS President.

I attended and addressed a medical law lecture at University of Leicester and then met with students and staff afterwards.

I attended and spoke at the Leicester College Student Prize Giving day in June.

I along with my Vice President Gina Samuel Richards have attended a number of events at secondary schools and colleges to talk to students about careers in the law.

LLS enjoys very strong links with both of our City's Universities. I am proud that we have continued to build on those ties and with the wider academic/schools communities in the city and county. These pupils and students are after all our future.

Leicester Children's Holidays.

My charity for the year has been Leicester Children's Holidays. They are a wonderful local charity who provide much needed adventure holiday breaks to local kids who are struggling.

May I record my heartfelt thanks to everyone who has worked over the course of the year on various fund raising events and to everyone who has contributed - either at the awards event or at shortlisting or the golf day or indeed sponsoring me to fall out of an aeroplane. We have raised £5000.00 for the charity. The charity have thanked us as well for helping to raise their profile through the city.

Main Committee and Executive Board

May I thank all of the main committee members and all of the sub boards for all of their hard work and commitment throughout the year.

We as a Society have continued to respond to Consultations throughout the year on behalf of our members.

May I also thank the members of the Executive Board who have worked so hard throughout the year and supported me every step of the way.

May I thank in particular Christl Hughes MBE IPP who has continued to offer her support and guidance throughout the year.

Everyone gives their time freely and to everybody involved - you are what makes LLS such a great and exciting Local Law Society.

National Law Society

We maintain our links with the National Law Society (NLS). Sadly, we no longer have the benefit of Rav Hoth attending meetings regularly. We do have links with Beth Quinn at NLS and she has attended one of our Main Committee meetings this year. I have attended a number of online forums and discussion groups arranged by NLS.

Linda Lee

May I on behalf of the society and its members thank Linda for her continued regular contributions at Main Committee and elsewhere bringing the benefit of her wisdom and knowledge about National Developments. We are a richer Society for Linda's continued contribution.

Book Keeper

Many thanks to Dot our long standing book Keeper. She continues to provide a great service to the society and her input is much valued.

LLS Manager

I must extend my deepest thanks to Kauser Patel our manager. Kauser has worked tirelessly and effectively throughout the year as we have moved from pandemic lockdown to actually being able to hold events. She has brought to bear her considerable strategic knowhow, ability and enthusiasm with great results. We would not have been able to achieve what we have this year without the excellent work of Kauser and on behalf of the Society I thank her.

May I give my warmest wishes to the incoming President. I wish you the very best for your year which I am sure is going to be a great success. I promise to do all I can as Immediate Past President to support you over the coming year.

4. Membership Proposal

MO explained that the Main Committee had approved the Membership Proposal which supported the Business Plan and made the process less onerous on the Manager of the Society.

MO allowed for any questions.

MO proposed the membership proposal which was seconded by membership chair ZZS.

5. Rule change to reflect the membership proposal

In line with the Society rules, the membership section of the rules were proposed to reflect the above membership proposal.

ZZS proposed the rule changed and GW seconded them.

6. To receive the Accounts for the Year ended 31 December 2021

BP presented the accounts and stated in her role as treasurer of the Society she was happy with the position of the finances.

The accounts were proposed by BP and seconded by MO.

At the AGM it was noted that the Society was happy with the works delivered by accountants Celerica and were happy to continue to use them for the following year.

7. Elections

To elect Officers and Members of the Committee for the coming year 2022/2023;

(a) The following candidates were nominated to fill the offices of President, Vice President, Deputy Vice President, Honorary Treasurer and Executive Chair;

OFFICE	NAME	NOMINATED BY	SECONDED BY
President	Gina Samuel-Richards	Matthew Olnier	Christl Hughes
Vice President	Bhumika Parmar	Matthew Olnier	Gina Samuel-Richards
Deputy Vice President	Greg Hollingsworth	Gina Samuel-Richards	Matthew Olnier
Executive Chair	Greg Hollingsworth	Neal Patterson	Matthew Olnier
Honorary Treasurer	Bhumika Parmar	Greg Hollingsworth	Neal Patterson

MO gave a list of the members that will now occupy the seats for the Ex Officio, Main Committee (and their appointed years) and Co-opted members.

Ex-Officio 2021/22

1. Matthew Olnier
2. Gina Samuel-Richards
3. Greg- Hollingsworth
4. Bhumika Parmar
5. Christl Hughes

Main Committee 2021/22

1. Mukesh Basra
2. Nanita Kanabar
3. Parvein Akhtar
4. Angela Titley-Vial
5. Zainab Zaeem Sattar
6. Sameer Karim
7. Jessica H
8. Neal Patterson
9. Lisa Marie-Launders
10. Gayle Rowley
11. Glynis Wright
12. VACANT

Current Ex-Officio 2022/23

1. Gina Samuel-Richards
2. Matthew Olnier
3. Greg- Hollingsworth

4. Bhumika Parmar

Main Committee 2022/23

1. Mukesh Basra (only one not on a sub board)

2. Nanita Kanabar

3. Parvien Akhtar

4. Angela Titley-Vial

5. Zainab Zaeem Sattar

6. Sameer Karim

7. Jessica Huczmann

8. Neal Patterson

9. Lisa Marie-Lauders

10. Gayle Rowley

11. Glynis Wright

12. Amir Ahmed

Co-Opted

1. Lewis Addison
2. Chimdinma Nwaigwe
3. Kye Herbert
4. Christl Hughes
5. VACANT
6. VACANT
7. VACANT
8. VACANT
9. VACANT

MO congratulated all the new Co-opted members and stated their retirement date would be 2025.

MO congratulate the new appointed members and asked for the new President, GSR to put on the LLS Medallion.

8. To transact any other business.

None.

9. Incoming President's Address GSR

'Good afternoon to the High Sheriff and colleagues. Firstly, I would like to thank our outgoing President, Matthew Olnor for his steer of LLS over the past year.

It is with great pride that I stand before you making my inaugural speech at the beginning of what I intend to be a great year for the Leicestershire Law Society.

The Law Society is in its 163rd year and therefore it has only taken 162 years for someone who looks like me to take office as the President. I say that with honour, as it took The national Law Society 197 years, I think that is indicative of why Leicester has received the title of being the first diverse city in Europe.

My key challenges this year are to

- Increase membership, reflecting the legal community of Leic, Leics & R
- Reach out to the county and increase their involvement with the society
- Create a hub to encourage the relationship between Practices in the area and the young people of Leic leading to legacy planning and educating them that the legal practice in its many forms is achievable for them
- Finding efficiencies in the society's infrastructure
- Maintaining the society's reputation as being one of the most vibrant and active in the country

I take my first & 2nd key challenges to Increase membership, reflecting the legal community of Leic, Leics & R and Reach out to the county and increase their involvement with the society which can be tackled together. We can make our events more accessible and relevant to our friends in the county by holding meet and greet events in some of the Leics areas. This may also encourage them to come into the City to network and celebrate the vibrancy our society has to offer. I also note the Law Society's diversity framework delivered by Stephanie Boyce towards the end of her tenure. I will be working with our membership sub-board to see how we can translate this framework to benefit LLS and its members.

In my 3rd key challenge to Create a hub to encourage the relationship between Practices in the area and the young people of Leic leading to legacy planning and educating them that the legal practice

in its many forms is achievable for them. In my own firm, we are working with one of the DMU Law Societies to create a project to enable students and graduates from harder to reach communities to gain access and work experience in law firms. We are currently 6 weeks into a 6 month pilot, but hopefully I will be able to give more information at the end of the pilot as to how this would work, how other firms could take part and the achievements of the project. I am hopeful that all firms, regardless of size will see the benefit of being proactively involved in mentoring, coaching and training the next generation of lawyers.

I do not say this because of charity, but because of legacy planning. According to the 2021 census, Leicester has a significantly higher younger people population (up to 35 yo) above the national average. In the next 30 years, Gen Z are going to make up 1/3 of our workforces. This next generation are the most diverse generation so far. This means within the legal community we should have our pick of the best and brightest over the rest of the country. As a City with a vast variety of businesses and industries, we need to work on retaining such talents within the City, and therefore being of benefit to our firms. Young people are tempted by the bright lights and fast pace of London, Manchester and even Birmingham, but some come to Leic for university and fall in love, such as our Mayor, Peter Soulsby and our very own Greg Hollingsworth. Leic has a lot to attract, so let's make our businesses welcoming and attractive by running schemes to keep the best and the brightest.

As to 4th key challenge, Finding efficiencies in the society's infrastructure I have spent over 20 years in Governance, whether that be in the voluntary or education sector. I am aware of the importance of having documentation in place to assist each incoming President and to ensure the good running of the Society as a whole. To that end, I will be working with Kauser and the executive committee to ensure we are as strong as we can be, developing on our governance documentation and reviewing the way the society delivers.

And, my final challenge, Maintaining the society's reputation as being one of the most vibrant and active in the country As a Society we should be very proud of our reputation. We have a full calendar this year including my first event on 26th October, where LLS will be celebrating BHM for the first time. The event is a soiree of Caribbean food and music, with educational elements of the Black community's contribution to law. We will have the usual, Civic dinner, Summer Garden Party and magnificent awards dinner. However, I will also hold panels to encourage our member firms to look at emerging lawyers in a different way, to celebrate women in law and to look at leadership. My

social events are to encourage new members to get involved in with the Society and to raise awareness and funds for my charities. Therefore I will be exploring events such as axe throwing to let off steam and experiential driver days. I have also, with DG Legal & the UoL, jointly invited Lady Hale to visit Leicester for a speaking event to promote both the Equal to Everything and the Spider Woman books.

I will be following on from the work Matthew started last year in reaching out to Colleges and secondary schools in order to encourage the next generation to consider potential careers in law. I will also be working with our 3 universities to educate students on the lives of lawyers. I am hopeful both the executive and membership committee will continue to support this work.

Of course, I would be remiss not to mention the Rule of Law. As a legal community we must continue to hold onto the Rule of law and rights of individuals, this may mean being an ally of striking barristers and criminal law solicitors asking for fair pay; or lobbying for an increase in legal aid to enable access to justice. But also in our own practises, recognising our biases and challenging discriminatory practices which are still an issue for the legal and business community.

My charities will include Focus, a young people's charity empowering young, disenfranchised individuals; the Sickle Cell Society, raising awareness on how this disease affects the young and adult population; and Zynithia's Trust, an initiative to break the cycle of poverty for vulnerable women. This year I will do things a little bit different in not just raising funds for these worthy causes but to raise awareness of the work they do and introduce them to businesses to help with legacy funding beyond what we can achieve within 1 year.

Obviously, I can't deliver this year without your buy-in, as you're here, I'm expecting you are in.'

GSR thanked MO and everyone for their attendance and announced the close of the AGM.

Executive Chair's Report

Dated: 4 October 2022

For the past 12 months, the Exec Board has been made up of the following members:

Chair:	Greg Hollingsworth
President:	Matthew Olnier
Vice President:	Gina Samuel-Richards
Treasurer/Deputy Vice President:	Bhumika Parmar
Immediate Past President:	Christl Hughes MBE
Patron Sub-Board Chair:	Glynis Wright MBE

Number of Meetings

Over the past 12 months, the Exec Board has met six times.

Business Plan

During the year, the Exec Board has updated and reviewed the Business Plan for the LLS. This involved Greg Hollingsworth, Gina Samuel-Richards, Christl Hughes and Angela Titley-Vial undertaking a review of the business plan with a view to updating it. The business plan has been approved by the President, Matthew Olnier, and the Exec Board with a view to presenting it to the Main Committee. The business plan is intended to continue to keep the LLS at the forefront of both the legal and business community within Leicestershire and Rutland.

Membership

A review of the Membership Fee structure has also been undertaken in order to simplify the fee structure, and encourage the return of larger firms who were former members who may have been discouraged by the level of fees.

During the past 12 months, the Exec Board has also focussed on trying to increase engagement with the members and the wider business community. This has included a new partnership with Cross Productions to increase the visibility of LLS on social media. This is an ongoing project which is due to run for a period of 12 months (and will be subject to a review at the end of the year).

Patronage

With the assistance of the Patrons Sub Board, the Exec Board has also focused on engagement with the Patrons. The Patrons are an essential part of LLS and an important part of the funding of our activities. The President, Matthew Olnier, has been very proactive in liaising with the Patrons, and with the very valuable support of the Patrons Sub Board Chair, Glynis Wright MBE, patronage has grown in the last 12 months.

The Patrons as at October 2022 are:

University of Leicester

De Montfort University

DG Legal

MARSH

Severn Trent

Mattioli Woods

Synergy Personnel Services

The business partners as at October 2022 are:

Hitz Photography

Kazzoo IT Solution

Freeline Creative

Cross Productions

This compares to 6 Patrons as at September 2021 and 4 business partners at that time.

Finances

The LLS Treasurer, Bhumika Parmar, has continued to work with the Society Manager, Kauser Patel, to maintain a strong financial position for the LLS. The Exec Board regularly monitors the financial position of the LLS, including reviewing the financial position on a monthly basis to ensure the stability of the financial position. As it stands, the society does appear to be on a sound financial footing but it is important to remain vigilant in ever changing times.

Events and Courses

Following the relaxing of social distancing during the last 12 months, the Society has been able to re-establish many of its events during the past 12 months. The Awards Dinner was held at Athena in May 2022 and was well received by members and guests. The Exec Board would like to thank Kauser Patel for her efforts in arranging such a successful event.

University Engagement

During the past 12 months, the LLS has run a course for the University of Leicester. This included presentations from Matthew Olnor, Gina Samuel-Richards and Glynis Wright MBE to the students of the University of Leicester. This was an online event and was well attended and well received. It is likely that the event will be repeated in the future both for the University of Leicester and De-Montfort University for the benefit of their students.

The Society remains committed to engaging with our two Universities and their students to promote the profession as a whole.

Our President – Mr Matthew Olnar

A special word of thanks to our President, Matthew Olnar. Matthew has worked extremely hard during the past 12 months to deliver an exceptional presidential year. Matthew has reported regularly to the Exec Board on his engagements which have been extremely extensive.

Matthew has been a real credit to the LLS, and the Exec Board extends its thanks to Matthew, and to our Vice President, Gina Samuel-Richards, who has supported Matthew throughout the period.

I would also add my personal thanks to both Matthew and Gina for their enthusiasm and dedication to the Society.

Summary

Overall, the 2021-2022 year has been much more positive after challenging years of the Pandemic. The highlights have included the Awards Dinner and the Civic Dinner.

I would like to thank my fellow Exec Board members for their hard work and a special mention to our Society Manager, Kauser Patel, who has been of great support to me and the Exec Board.

Greg Hollingsworth (Executive Chair of the LLS)

4 October 2022