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PRICE INFORMATION IS ABOUT GOOD COMPETITION AND FAIRNESS

The Legal Services Consumer Panel has today welcomed the Competition and Markets Authority's interim report into the legal services market. The Panel strongly support the suggested remedies, especially those that seek to address information deficiencies in the cost and quality of legal services.

The CMA's report reinforces the Panel's report on Open Data from earlier this year, showing how the legal sector is trailing behind comparable sectors in giving consumers the information they need to make informed decisions. This led to over fifteen recommendations centred on improved transparency, including that Approved Regulators should require the publication of the average cost of legal services on the websites of approved firms.

Elisabeth Davies, Consumer Panel Chair said:

"Effective information is at the heart of effective competition. That's what the CMA's report clearly demonstrates and this is what the Panel has been calling for. Six years' worth of our Tracker Surveys have consistently shown that consumers just aren't shopping around enough; they can't access the information they need.

Far too many consumers, including some of the most vulnerable, are faced with the uncertainty of not knowing what their legal services will cost. This has to change and we look forward to seeing what measures will improve the information available."

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For more information, contact Lola Bello, Consumer Panel Manager, on 020 7271 0077

Notes to editors:

1. The Legal Services Consumer Panel was established under the Legal Services Act 2007 to provide independent advice to the Legal Services Board about the interests of consumers of legal services in England and Wales. We investigate issues that affect consumers and use this information to influence decisions about the regulation of legal services.
2. The Panel's membership is drawn from a broad range of backgrounds with expertise including market research, law, competition, consumer advice, campaigning, and communications.
3. The Panel's report on open data can be accessed here:
http://www.legalservicesconsumerpanel.org.uk/publications/research_and_reports/documents/OpenDataInLegalServicesFinal.pdf