



Junior Lawyer's Division National Committee Meeting
12th July 2009

Conference

Attended by Committee members – AF, GA, LB and NB, and NBJL member, Anita Parker.

Very positive feedback. Attended break-out sessions on Instructing Counsel, becoming a Superstar Associate, and Influencing and Persuading people. All very useful and informative.

Plenary sessions were on motivation, the judiciary, and career alternatives in a recession. All were appropriately pitched and highly relevant. Some were more engaging than others!

At the committee meeting, it was suggested that next year there would be more interaction in the plenary sessions, and perhaps some in-built networking opportunities, rather than a series of straight talks.

Additionally it was mentioned that the existing structure of the Nat Exec and Nat Committee could do with being made clearer to participants at the conference. It was agreed that we may have become complacent in assuming that all attendees belong to and are actively involved in their local groups and therefore understand this.

There was a suggestion for the introduction of each NEC member as part of the plenary sessions, with the opportunity for attendees to question them on any issues they like throughout the day. Additionally, to capture those attendees who have somehow slipped through the net and do not know where their local group is (of which we know there are many, not least in Bedford!), there would be the opportunity for the local group reps to stand up and be introduced as well, with the idea that they could also then be approached throughout the day.

There were several issues discussed as potential break-out sessions for next year's conference and the programme was more or less written!

The Ball was also a great deal of fun and I would heartily recommend anyone to go next year!

The committee meeting discussed the issue of location and it was generally agreed that the conference should alternate between "in London" and "out of London" each year. This was largely because to go out around the country costs a lot and it can be hard to find venues suitable to accommodate us. Additionally it was felt that there was a nice prestige to attending such an event at the Law Society in Chancery Lane. However, it is also hoped that by going out to the localities we are making the event more accessible to local groups.

The intention will be to fully include the local JLD in the town / city selected for the 'out of London' years in the event. It was suggested that a good idea would be for the local JLD's to bid for the conference, ensuring that they would be engaged in the event and committed to promoting it locally, and that there was actually a desire for it to come to their area.

Raleigh

The expedition is going ahead at the end of October. Nicky Berry is one of the pilot volunteers and will be trying to raise money to go over the next few months.

More details will follow from Nicky on this as the details are clarified.

Economic Recession

Still more doom and gloom and no let up. Not much has changed since the last committee meeting on this. Groups are all suffering without sponsorship and firms are getting tougher on paying for their trainees' membership fees in groups where this has traditionally never been a problem. NBJL do not charge membership fees so this does not really apply to us.

Good sponsors still going seem to be Chadwick Nott and Wesleyan. Thistle Hotels are potentially welcoming for ball venues. That's it.

See webinars for help in the recession.

What do we want from the National Executive?

Agreed that local groups are more social-based and the national is there for more pastoral care and policy issues on our behalf. Most local members do not really have recourse to the National JLD until something goes wrong, such as the help regarding students fees and redundancy-related issues.

We will get a standard guide to constitution for local groups, and "how to" guides relating to sponsorship and running events. Hopefully some headway will have been made on this issue before the next committee meeting.

National Committee Meeting was viewed as a forum for local groups to help each other to recreate things, rather than re-invent the wheel in different areas of the country.

If any local groups are interested in setting up as a limited company (by guarantee) for liability issues, they should contact Birmingham (BTSS) for advice on how this has worked for them.

There are issues relating to people joining local committees just for the CV and not pulling their weight. (Not on NBJL of course!) In Merseyside, they have a constitutional rule that if you miss 2 consecutive meetings, you are off the committee. They also have a constitutional cap on no more than 2 committee members from each firm, to prevent obvious domination and skewing of focus of the group.

Webinars

They are well received and there will be more. Many subjects were discussed and a programme will follow.

They have been particularly popular in the recession and have received lots of live viewings with people sending in questions.

They will continue and expand on this success.

NBJL

Next event is a recruitment talk at Northampton University on 12th August. Please do come along and I'm sure you will not be disappointed with the invaluable advice and assistance on hand. This event will be followed by social drinks in a pub nearby as well. Venue TBC.

The NBJL Ball is on 7th November 2009 – Early Bird tickets will be available from Early August.

We are still trying to expand into Bedford and are keen to hear from anyone who would welcome this and would like to get involved to help us make it happen. Please contact Erin Terry at erinterry@woodfines.co.uk, for further details.

If you are interested in applying to join the NBJL Committee, our elections are scheduled for December 2009, and we welcome all interested parties! Contact one of the committee, or check out the website, for further details nearer the time.

**Northants & Bucks Junior Lawyers.
July 2009.**