



## **General Meeting of the Society for Advanced Legal Studies**

**IALS Conference Room, Charles Clore House**

**Monday the 12<sup>th</sup> of September 2016**

**17:00 – 17:45**

### **1. Apologies and Welcome**

**Apologies:** Harry Rajak, Avrom Sherr

**Welcome:** Jules Winterton, Julian Harris, Chris Hale, John McLinden, Colin Bamford

**In Attendance:** Conor Wyer, Holly Peterson, Lucy Brady

### **2. Statements by the SALS Executive Committee on the proposed changes**

JW states the objectives of the meeting: to discuss the SALS Governance Proposal, and begins by giving a few words on the history of SALS and the background to the proposal:

- Clarifies that SALS is a separate organisation that is aligned with IALS, whose objectives are to assist the academic mission of IALS and broaden its connection to the legal profession, continuing the work of an earlier organisation: The Friends of the Institute of Advanced Legal Studies
- Referring to the SALS Governance Proposal item 7. JW underlines the Executive Committee's commitment to reciprocal support between IALS and SALS, and emphasises the value placed in SALS by its members
- Clarifies the goals of SALS: to provide a mechanism by which former students and staff are able to maintain a connection to IALS throughout their career, and to support the wider goals of IALS as a national centre for legal research and education

JW states commitment to maintaining its existing policy structures: the continuity of its membership, SALS Fellowships, the basic entry requirements, and the publication of *Amicus Curiae*.

JW clarifies that the changes contained in the SALS Governance Proposal are intended to provide a simpler and more effective administrative system for SALS. It was felt that limited resources and administrative support had made it difficult for IALS staff to organise SALS activities, leading to the decline referred to in item 3. of the SALS Governance Proposals.

Referring to item 9. JW outlines the role of the University of London Development Office in assisting with this change, highlighting the support they will provide in both helping to administer membership records and in fundraising for the Institute, which would allow for the removal of the entry fee for SALS membership (item 8e.).

It is emphasised that the primary outcome of this support would be to free up Institute resources, allowing them to focus on enhancing SALS activities.

JW Closes by stating that the work of the Development Office will be fulfilling a need which has existed for SALS, and adds that, had these resources been available at the formation of SALS, it is likely that the proposed structure would have been the one that was adopted.

JH and JW discuss further details of IALS's collaborative work with SALS going forward. It is established that decisions for academic activities undertaken by SALS will be determined by the SALS Advisory Group – it will then be the role of IALS to use its resources and management capacity to bring forward.

CH seconds points raised by JH and JW, and adds that the proposed re-structuring of SALS follows a natural process of review and reassessment that organisations like SALS need to periodically undertake.

### **3. Questions and comments invited from SALS membership**

Queries are raised regarding SALS engagement strategies, particularly in its relationship to the Bar, underscoring the value of what SALS represents as a means of forming connections between the Bar and academia, but stressing that due to existing commitments it is difficult for Barristers to invest time in activities like those SALS is proposing without additional incentive, citing the prospect of CPD points as a strong factor in this decision-making process.

The IALS Global Law Library is cited as a unique and immensely valuable resource, and support is expressed for allowing SALS members access, as it represents a useful means of building a relationship with SALS members and associates of the Institute.

Concerns are discussed over the emphasis on SALS as a venue for fundraising outlined in item 9d-e., which could potentially deter members, requesting further clarification on how it would be conducted if the proposal goes ahead.

-JW emphasises that fundraising activities by the Development Office are to be kept separate from the academic work of SALS, underlining that the SALS Advisory Group will play a central role in determining the direction of these activities, and will therefore ensure academic focus is maintained

-HP provides further elaboration to the role and activities of the Development Office, underlining the importance which it places on stewardship and relationship building through the kinds of activities determined by the Advisory Group, adding that it is necessary for these to be conducted successfully before fundraising is possible; she concludes that she recognises the concerns of the members, but stresses that the proposal represents a mutually beneficial arrangement for both the Institute and the SALS Membership

-CH seconds the importance placed on the library and academic forums provided by IALS, and clarifies that this has always been at the centre of SALS's work, but he and JW concur that more drive is needed for this to be used to benefit the larger legal world, and cites the involvement of the Development Office as a means of achieving this

Members cite the need for balance between focus on academics and the judiciary, advising that caution should be exercised in choosing this.

-JW concurs, and adds that reflecting this balance through the composition of the SALS Advisory Group would be useful in ensuring this is maintained

Timing of events is brought up, and it is stressed that this is something which would need to be considered carefully. It is advised that events take place in the evening, as Barristers are unlikely to be available for daytime and weekend events even with the possibility of CPD points.

-JW notes this, and adds that this is a pattern already followed by IALS events and symposia, and cited the existing crossover between SALS and IALS events

-HP adds that communication for the events currently hosted by IALS would also benefit from greater crossover with SALS under its new governance structure, and the support of the Development Office

HP's comments regarding communication are seconded, and it is pointed out that IALS maintains a recognisable brand within the legal world, although there is now more competition than at the time of SALS's founding.

JW concludes this section of the meeting by thanking members for their contributions, and expresses hopes that these types of conversation continue through the SALS Advisory Committee.

#### **4. Members vote on the SALS Governance Proposals**

JW calls for a vote on the proposal from the assembled members present, all of whom vote in favour.

LB confirms 28 postal votes counted in favour, with none against.

The proposal is accepted *nem con* with a total of 33 votes.

#### **5. Closing remarks and thanks**

JW expresses thanks to all who attended, and for the constructive feedback provided by SALS members present, which will be helpful in carrying the process forward.

The meeting is concluded at 17:45