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Date: 2/06/2020

From: William Aylmer,

Notary Public of Ireland for the City & Counties of Dublin and the Counties of Wicklow, Kildare & Meath. Commissioned for Life.

Dear Sirs,

I have been in continuous practice as a solicitor since 1994. I am currently a partner in a two-partner firm practising in general practice in Smithfield, Dublin 7. I practised for nine years at a medium size 40-lawyer commercial firm in Dublin 4. I trained in provincial general practice in Carlow, 1991-94.

I served as a member of Council of the Law Society 2011-2017.

I believe that the current tri-profession system of notary, barrister and solicitor works well and that the legal services market in Ireland is too small to justify a unified profession of solicitors and barristers. There are very few firms in Ireland whose litigation practices are large enough to justify full time expert advocates. And from the practitioners perspective, lawyers wishing to specialise in advocacy would have very limited opportunities in a unified profession to develop such litigation expertise and experience, while all practitioners currently practicing at the Irish Bar have the same opportunities to obtain the best briefs and broadest litigation experience and to develop their specialist expertise.

Also, if unified, the best, most sought-after practitioners currently at the independent referral bar would no longer be available to be consulted or retainer by any and all firms of non-advocate specialist solicitors as they are currently, which would be to the detriment of those firms and their clients. Most users of legal services in the State could not afford to retain those large unified / multi-disciplinary firms.

Therefore, a unified profession would in my view be a retrograde step in terms of making legal services equally available and accessible to all.

Kind regards,

William



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