

workgroup/Legal

Manchester / Summer 2025

*The event for GCs in Manchester
and the Northwest, run by:*



**Mike
Elston**

Chief Counsel,
Air



**Freyja
Handy**

Senior Vice President
& General Counsel



**Sam
Plant**

Chief Legal Officer,
UK & Ireland



**Nim
Cassidy**

General Counsel



**Pete
Horsfall**

Group General
Counsel



**Asif
Ibrahim**

Director of
Legal Services



**Amy
Wells**

General Counsel



Friday 6th June / 0900-1800 / Hyatt Regency Manchester



What's all this then?

Workgroup Legal Manchester is the event for GCs and Heads of Legal living in Manchester and the Northwest.

A “workgroup” isn’t just our namesake, it’s the main format of the day. Workgroups are GC discussion groups, run by GCs.

The day alternates between these wee group discussions, and full-audience panel discussions for the big juicy topics.

Registration 0900-0930
Lunch/dinner 1305-1400
Drinks + canapés 1640-1800
Optional evening dinner 1800-2100



GCs who attend:



INTRODUCTION

0930-0940

PANEL DISCUSSION

0940-1020

dwf

Please, sir. I want some more.



Are you cheeky enough to ask again and again for budget?

Us lawyers are rubbish at the budget game, so how do you learn to be annoying but effective, and win the long game?

What metrics, tactics, and timings do other GCs use to demonstrate the ROI of what we do?



Amy Wells

General Counsel



Mike Elston

Chief Counsel, Air



Asif Ibrahim

Director of Legal Services



Emma Roe

Global Head of Legal Ops & Tech Consulting



WORKGROUPS 1
1025-1115

ROUND-UPS
1120-1130

BREAK
1130-1200

Pick your first workgroup.

1

We're not just in Kansas anymore.

How do I keep my global team moving in the same direction? How do I keep the energy up, while managing the salary and progression differentials? And how do we keep tabs of all the legal change globally?



Pete Horsfall
Group General Counsel
Dechra



2

Easy as 1, 2, 4.

Are us GCs not as good at numbers as we think we are? Is our lack of financial literacy holding us back? Both in our relationship with the CFO, and in how we blow our own trumpet?



David Travis
General Counsel
Skipton Building Society



3

Not on the same page.

Why can't our contracts be more empathetic? How do we draft in a more user-friendly way and eliminate misunderstandings, to reduce turnaround time and avoid conflict down the line?



Sonia Williamson
Head of MLS Client Account
Management
Pinsent Masons Vario



4

Head in the sand.

Do you just bury your head in the sand, when it comes to the sheer volume of new compliance stuff? Do you wait for others to figure it out first, or should you attend every seminar going?



Nim Cassidy
General Counsel
STARK UK



5

"You do law, don't you?"

How do you talk about your role to your spouse? Should we help our family understand what we do, or be glad that they don't?



Mike Elston
Chief Counsel, Air
BAE systems



6

Are we the dinosaurs?

Is it us GCs who are holding back AI adoption? Are we using our bygone training to throw up barriers to better business cases, quicker turnarounds, and attracting more talent?



Zak Daliri
General Counsel
Corsearch



WORKGROUPS 2 1200-1250

ROUND-UPS
1255-1305

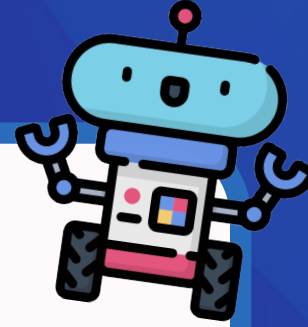
LUNCH/DINNER
1305-1400

Pick your second workgroup.

1

Battle of the bots.

Should we build or buy legal AI tools? Should we spend time to custom-build solutions internally, or spend money on an external tool? How are other legal teams figuring out which works best?



Alex Herrity
Director – Global Legal Solutions
adidas

2

My precious.

Which docs are you comfortable being used without your oversight? What contracts does the business actually want automated? Is your self-service there to help save Legal's time, or de-risk?



Freyja Handy
Senior Vice President &
General Counsel, Europe
ASM Global

3

What's your secret sauce?

What do other GCs pin their career success to? How have other GCs made their voice critical and commercial, not just legal?



Nim Cassidy & Mark Levine
Group General &
Director, In-House Legal
STARK UK & BCL Legal

4

"Can I borrow you for literally just 2 minutes?"

How do I stop informal legal requests coming Legal's way – bypassing our formal request processes – without making us less approachable?



Amy Wells
General Counsel
Burnley FC

5

No more Mr Nice Guy.

How do I fight the urge to be a good service provider, when I should be focusing on managing legal risk? How do I unlearn the relationship-building through responsiveness which made me GC?

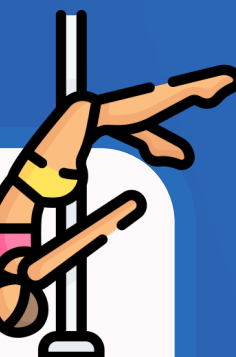


Andrew Hankin
General Counsel
Together Money

6

Too much information?

How much of our lives should we share at work? Is it inappropriate, or – since covid – a part of the workplace now? Is overstepping and oversharing now the norm?



Nikki Ellison
General Counsel
Mixergy

PANEL DISCUSSION
1400-1440

Pannone

This time baby, I'll be bulletproof.



How do I stop the s**t hitting the fan?

Can we ever shield our businesses completely from reputational damage, or are we only ever arranging deck chairs on the Titanic?

Is it even possible - or even smart - to spend time preventing every risk? What are others' thresholds?



**Zak
Daliri**

General Counsel

CORSEARCH



**Freyja
Handy**

Senior Vice President
& General Counsel



**Sarah
Bazaraa**

Partner

Pannone

WORKGROUPS 3
1445-1535

ROUND-UPS
1540-1550

BREAK
1550-1600

Pick your final workgroup.

1

Men. Are we doing enough?

Why do so few of us men talk about gender equality? What small things can we do better, and how aware am I of the privileges and differences that got me here?

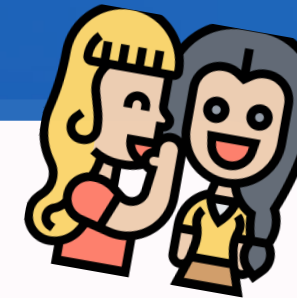


Sam Plant
Chief Legal Officer, UK&I
Müller

2

When I'm not in the room.

What do people say about me when I'm not in the room? What is my personal brand as a GC? Should I authentically stick to one brand, or adapt my persona based on who I speak to, externally and internally?



Victoria Jones
Head of Legal
BEAUTY BAY

3

Put your brave face on.

How do I keep morale up when times are tough? How do other GCs shoulder the burden alone, and decide how much you let on? How do you strike the right tone, without being silly positive?



Rich Manley
Solutions Director
Pinsent Masons Vario

4

My toy is shinier than yours.

Which tech have you seen the biggest ROI on? What metrics do you use to demonstrate the value add? What tools would you recommend most to other in-house teams?



Lucy Barron
Head of Legal & HR
Starlinks Global

5

Don't be precious, you might be thrown under a bus.

Are we too precious about our roles, to the detriment of what opportunities we can give our deputies? How do I coach and develop, so it won't be a baptism of fire?



Asif Ibrahim
Director of Legal Services
Manchester City Council

6

To me, to you.

How do I get other functions to take ownership over their contracts – both at the outset of negotiations and throughout the entirety of the contract lifecycle?



Norah Burns
General Counsel
Marlborough Group

PANEL DISCUSSION
1600-1640

DRINKS + CANAPÉS
1640-1800

Brabners

Has DE&I served its purpose?



Will the Trump administration and DE&I rollbacks undo what we've achieved?

Will we see UK businesses and law firms follow suit? Is the current DE&I trajectory dividing us?

Are we truly achieving a common purpose whilst valuing difference? Is there a better equilibrium?



Lida Khanverdi

Head of Legal,
UK&I



Sam Plant

Chief Legal
Officer, UK&I



Nim Cassidy

General Counsel



Helena Davies

Partner

Brabners

OPTIONAL EVENING DINNER*
1800-2100



Join us for good scran, post-event.

*better known as tea.

The Ivy Asia is Manchester's swankiest place to dine,
serving up a modern Asian-inspired set menu.

We'll head to The Ivy at 1800, after the drinks at the Hyatt.

Places limited to 12 General Counsel.

Drop Nicola a very nice email [here](#) to ask for an invite.

THE IVY
ASIA

You have 3 ways to get involved:



1. Sign up online for £350+VAT [here](#).
2. Attend all our GC events, as part of your [Workgroup Premium](#)* subscription.
3. Email Nicola [here](#) to ask for an invoice!

Please note - applications from those who do not lead an in-house legal team will be rejected.

However, sponsorship enquiries can be made via email [here](#), or contact us through the website.

*Workgroup Premium is a paid subscription, which gives you - and your deputy - passes to all Workgroup Legal events. Also includes free passes for your CMOs and CHROs to our CMO and CHRO events. Contact Peter [here](#).



Follow Workgroup on LinkedIn [here](#) for all event updates.



Workgroup Legal has struck a magic formula of delivering super content in a relaxed community environment. No sales, no industry scare stories, just a hand-picked group of talented GCs across multiple industries sharing advice and experience.



Zeno Capucci
General Counsel
Docplanner

I just want to say a HUGE thank you to you and the team for organising this event, it was **genuinely one of the best I've been to**. Such an enjoyable and informative day!



Lucy Barron
Head of Legal & HR
Starlinks Global

Workgroup Legal is my favourite event in the calendar - engaging, motivating and a brilliant way of networking with your peers... **Hands down the best event for in-house legal leaders**. Roll on next year!



Michael Astle
Vice President, Legal Affairs & DPO
Quotient Sciences

The effort put in [by Peter] in curating a relevant, focused and enjoyable day pays dividends. It's **unstuffy with a host of practical topics and a fantastic opportunity to network with fellow GCs** and Heads of Legal.



Nancy Walmsley
Group Legal Counsel
Murphy

