

LEGAL PERSPECTIVES

Sheraz Akram

Director and head of corporate and commercial department, Douglas-Jones Mercer

Directors In Wales: 7

Staff in Wales: About 60

What challenges face law firms in Wales?

Continued shifts in legal aid, making previously profitable sections of a law firm's businesses unviable overnight. There is also the growing number of competitors, usually operating in England, which has been demonstrated by some large well-known law firms looking to increase market share within Wales. Welsh law firms need to face the challenges by making brave decisions and concentrating on what they do best. It is a case of get big or get niche, and quickly.

How does your firm plan to compete in the years ahead?

Our outlook is essentially to become a niche commercial services practice. We do not wish to be all things to all men and our strat-



KATHRYN ROBERTS

egy has paid dividends. DJM has also looked to expand its reach along the M4 corridor with its Cardiff presence opening earlier in the year. That has proved a successful move for us. We also constantly review the legal market in Wales to assess where our risks and opportunities lie. The right acquisition is always considered, albeit we are not a firm that acquires for the sake of acquiring.

Kathryn Roberts

Senior partner, Eversheds in Cardiff

Partners In Wales: 32

Staff in Wales: 480

What challenges face law firms in Wales?

Ensuring that we retain the very best people and that we can provide a first class service in a cost effective way.

How does your firm plan to compete in the years ahead?

Eversheds is very committed to its local market, but also has the advantage of being



HELEN MOLYNEUX

extremely well connected globally – we have 53 offices in 30 different countries. We need to continue to provide a first-class service but also be innovative in our approach to ensure that we continue to set the standards.

Helen Molyneux

Chief executive, NewLaw

Staff in Wales: 380

What challenges face law firms in Wales?

A fast-changing market, in which buyers are becoming more sophisticated and online servicing is becoming more and more prevalent. The challenge for Welsh firms is to ensure they can compete across borders – for work from across the UK and beyond. Lower servicing costs should make them competitive, as long as they can market themselves effectively in the first place.

How does your firm plan to compete in the years ahead?

We have completely redesigned our business model – rather than try to compete with big brands, we service their clients under their own brand and run law firms on their behalf. We have essentially become a legal outsourcer.



SHERAZ AKRAM