

# Briefing LIVE 2026

## Tuesday 17 March, Underwood Lofts



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09:00 - 09:30	<b>BREAKFAST AND NETWORKING</b> Grab a coffee and croissant, and connect with your peers!
09:30 - 09:40	<b>WELCOME</b> <i>Richard Brent, head of content, Briefing</i> <i>Co-chair: Abby Ewen, chief operating officer, Browne Jacobson</i>
09:40 - 10:00	<b>ICE BREAKER:</b> The fun starts with a quick ice-breaker session designed to get you in the mood to collaborate, share and learn!
10:00 - 10:30	<b>OPENING KEYNOTE: The economic outlook – navigating uncertainty</b> Impact of geopolitics on macroeconomic environment, what does that mean for law firms and their client businesses? How can firms build meaningful mid-term strategies amid a perma-crisis of volatility, high risk and uncertainty? And where are the opportunities that law firms can seek to embrace to drive growth and profitability? <i>Andrew Harris, deputy chief economist, Fathom Consulting</i>
10:30	<b>Head to your roundtable session</b>
10:35 - 11:20	<b>ROUNDTABLE SESSION: Accelerating tech adoption to drive business transformation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determining the right mix and level of tech investment for your firm’s needs</li> <li>• Harnessing automation to improve agility</li> <li>• GenAI solutions: build, buy or hybrid approach – pros, cons and considerations</li> <li>• Delivering efficiencies in back office functions with AI</li> <li>• Data management to maximise the impact of tech transformation</li> <li>• Building an AI literate workforce and driving adoption</li> <li>• ROI: data, systems and process considerations, and how to assess impact on the bottom line</li> </ul>
11:20 - 11:45	<b>COFFEE BREAK</b>
11:45 - 12:15	<b>ROUNDTABLE SESSION FEEDBACK: Accelerating tech adoption to drive business transformation</b> A quickfire session giving delegates the opportunity to hear key points surfaced in all the roundtable discussions.

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<p><b>12:15 – 12:55</b></p>	<p><b>KEYNOTE PANEL: Unpicking value – understanding what clients REALLY need from their law firms?</b></p> <p>It’s an increasingly important differentiator, but what does delivering value really mean? What is the recipe to deliver more than just legal advice which will drive closer collaboration between law firms and their clients? How are firms delivering added value to the client they service – and how are they pricing to reflect that?</p> <p><i>Jennifer Paybody, global head of client growth and strategic clients, Clifford Chance</i>  <i>Mary Bonsor, GC relationships director, Mishcon de Reya</i>  <i>Sarah Gray, general counsel, Railpen</i>  <i>Chair: Andreea Dulgheru, editor, Briefing</i></p>	
<p><b>12:55 – 13:50</b></p>	<p><b>LUNCH BREAK</b></p>	
<p><b>IN PERSON STREAMED SESSIONS: The changing legal market</b></p>		
<p><b>13:50 – 14:30</b></p>	<p><b>PANEL: M&amp;A in the spotlight</b></p> <p>An increase in law firm mergers has highlighted the strategic role of M&amp;A as a route to scale, new markets and clients, cross territory capabilities and ultimately growth and opportunity. How will mega-mergers and mid-market consolidation impact the competitive landscape? What are the implications and options for smaller firms?</p> <p><i>Katie Cramond-Hill, director of business development, McDermott Will &amp; Schulte</i>  <i>Tina Williams, partner, McCarthy Denning</i>  <i>Dr Robert Millard, director, Cambridge Strategy Group</i>  <i>Chair: Richard Brent, head of content, Briefing</i></p>	<p><b>WORKSHOP: Change has changed</b></p> <p>In today’s law firms, leaders are often navigating uncertainty, increasing complexity, and a future state that is not always clear or fixed. This session explores the psychology behind why leading change in legal environments is uniquely challenging, drawing on behavioural science to examine common biases, mindsets, and leadership traps found in law firms. Through practical insights and real-world examples, participants will consider how to lead effectively when certainty is unavailable—and influence others when traditional change approaches no longer apply. The session concludes with an interactive workshop, giving delegates the opportunity to explore realistic scenarios, reflect on their own leadership responses, and test practical approaches for leading through ambiguity.</p> <p><i>Anna Taylor, senior change manager, Burges Salmon</i>  <i>Rachel Vallely, change manager, Burges Salmon</i></p>
<p><b>14:30 – 14:35</b></p>	<p><b>Head to your next stream session (check your badge for topic and location)</b></p>	

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<p><b>14:35 – 15:15</b></p>	<p><b>PANEL: Lifting the lid on PE investment in legal</b></p> <p>Law firms are increasingly considering private equity to unlock capital, accelerate growth, drive transformation and solve succession issues. This discussion will look at key considerations for firms, dissect practical real-world PE examples, investigate the role of PE investment in technological acceleration, and consider how PE investment will change the legal market in the next decade.</p> <p><i>Edward Thomas, managing director UK, Investec</i>  <i>Jo Woods, chief finance officer, HGF</i>  <i>Richard Thompson, partner, CBPE Capital</i>  <i>Duncan Hannigan, head of sales EMEA, Elite</i>  <i>Chair: Richard Brent, head of content, Briefing</i></p>	<p><b>Beyond productivity: How AI can reshape law firm operations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why AI excitement hasn't translated into operational change</li> <li>• The real operational gap holding firms back</li> <li>• What can law firms discover when they examine their data?</li> <li>• From assistance to responsibility: the next phase of AI</li> <li>• The rise of 'Decision Intelligence'</li> <li>• What leaders should measure to make AI truly proactive</li> </ul> <p><i>Karen Jacks, chief technology officer, Bird &amp; Bird</i>  <i>Natalie Blackhurst, head of product enablement - legal, sa.global</i>  <i>Chair: Andreea Dulgheru, editor, Briefing</i></p>
<p><b>15:15 - 15:35</b></p>	<p><b>COFFEE BREAK</b></p>	
<p><b>15:35 – 16:05</b></p>	<p><b>KEYNOTE ADDRESS: Mind the (generational) gap</b></p> <p>Today's workforce spans four generations, all with different expectations of culture, behaviours and outcomes. At the forefront for many teams now sits Gen Z whose values and behaviours are challenging what leadership and culture looks like. In this talk, David will show how leaders must move beyond stereotyped assumptions to adopt a strategic, culture-first approach that enables them to inspire across generations, align hybrid teams, and deliver results. He will explore how to adapt leadership styles and performance cultures to not only engage Gen Z but strengthen collaboration and retention across all generations. <b>This is about making your organisation fit for the future of work, fit for the world we are in, not the one we wish it still was.</b></p> <p><i>David Haylor, CEO and founder, Haylor Leadership</i></p>	

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<b>16:05 – 16:50</b>	<b>KEYNOTE PANEL: How change is transforming talent, skills and workplace models</b> AI and hybrid working are re-shaping law firms at pace. Our expert panel will dissect the impact this will have a law firm’s most important asset – its people. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What skill sets will both future lawyers AND business support functions need?</li><li>• How are firms approaching upskilling the multi-generational workforce to foster collaboration, flexibility, and productivity?</li><li>• Can technology be a game-changer for talent recruitment and retention in firms with salary limits?</li></ul> <i>Greg Baker, senior lawyer, AI and innovation, Linklaters</i> <i>Adam Curphey, director of innovation, Macfarlanes</i> <i>Jon English, director of product initiatives, LexisNexis UK</i> <i>Fay Copeland, co-chief practice transformation officer, Lewis Silkin</i> <i>Chair: Abby Ewen, chief operating officer, Browne Jacobson</i>
<b>16:50 - 17:00</b>	<b>CLOSING AND THANKS</b> <i>Richard Brent, head of content, Briefing</i> <i>Co-chair: Abby Ewen, chief operating officer, Browne Jacobson</i>
<b>17:00</b>	<b>DRINKS RECEPTION</b>