

**SRA BOARD****CLASSIFICATION – PUBLIC**

**SOLICITORS REGULATION AUTHORITY**  
**Minutes of the SRA Board meeting**  
**held on 7 July 2025 at Hilton Liverpool City Centre, 3 Thomas Steers Way,**  
**Liverpool L1 8LW**

Present: Anna Bradley (Chair)  
Claire Bassett  
Ann Harrison  
Rob McWilliam  
Simon Millhouse  
Claudio Pollack  
Lisa Mayhew  
Vikas Shah  
Liz Smart  
Nicola Williams

In attendance: Paul Philip, Aileen Armstrong, Liz Rosser, Alex Magloire, Patrick Bolster, Nimi Bruce, Kisha Punchihewa, Sara Gwilliam (for item 7), Dominic Tambling

**1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were no apologies.

**2 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING ON 30 JUNE 2025**

2.1 The minutes of the meeting on 30 June 2025 were approved as a true and accurate record.

**3 MATTERS ARISING AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

3.1 There were no matters arising that would not be covered on the agenda. All actions due were completed or in hand.

3.2 Interests were as previously declared and available to view on the SRA website. Members would declare any additional particular interest in an individual item if necessary.

3.3 The Board had not made any decisions since its previous meeting on 30 June 2025.

**4 CHAIR'S UPDATE**

4.1 Since the previous Board meeting on 30 June 2025 the Chair and CEO had attended a meeting of the Law Society Council and had also attended a meeting of TheCityUK Legal Services Group at which we had been encouraged to take a strong lead in promoting diversity within the profession.

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- 4.2 The Chair summarised the workshop discussions that had taken place earlier in the day (at annex 1). *NB: the summaries also cover discussion on 8 July 2025 which are included for completeness*

## 5 CEO REPORT

- 5.1 The Board was asked to consider an update on our priorities and any key developments that it needed to be aware of. The report also provided information on important external developments and our engagement activity with key stakeholders.
- 5.2 The CEO updated the Board on the proposal from the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEX) to redelegate the regulation of CILEX members and entities from CILEX Regulation (CRL) to us. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]
- 5.3 The CEO informed the Board about our work on high volume consumer claims cases where we had more than 80 investigations underway involving 74 firms. In respect of the high volume consumer claim case of SSB, we had completed our primary investigations and moved to the next stage in respect of six matters.
- 5.4 The Board Chair reported that she had written to the Ministry of Justice to follow up the roundtable discussion on 17 June 2025, setting out both what we would do ourselves and how we expected to engage stakeholders on key work that was outside our regulatory remit. We had also discussed our work on high volume consumer claims cases with the Legal Services Board and were planning on providing a further briefing. In discussion Board members suggested that we might post a statement on our website setting out our work to date in this area and our plans for future work.
- 5.5 The Board asked for advice on the likelihood of enforcement in high volume consumer claims cases leading to calls on the Compensation Fund and about how we distinguish between decisions about the dishonesty of individual solicitors and the wider firm issues and their impact on consumers.
- 5.6 The Board noted that the Supreme Court was expected to issue its judgment on car credit later in the month. The Board agreed that in order to mitigate harm to consumers we needed to be ready to issue guidance or similar as appropriate on the handling of motor finance claims cases.
- 5.7 The CEO updated the Board on our work to deal with outstanding issues related to the former firm WW&J McClure. Its caseload had been taken over by the firm Jones Whyte and we received a large amount of correspondence, including from MPs and lobby groups, about Jones Whyte's handling of those cases, mostly relating to whether the firm was contacting clients in a timely manner. We were working with the firm to put requirements in place and monitoring progress.
- 5.8 The CEO reported that we were carrying out 20 investigations into solicitors and firms related to the Post Office Horizon IT scandal. The first volume of the Final

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Report of the Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry was due to be published on 8 July 2025, and was expected to focus on the human impact of the scandal. The Board also noted that criminal prosecutions into Post Office Horizon cases may not begin until 2028.

5.9 The CEO drew the Board's attention to paragraphs 11 to 15 of his report about the continued increase in reports received per month about potential misconduct. In response to questions from the Board it was confirmed that we had not identified a reason for this increase and in particular, they did not relate to any specific area of practice.

5.10 We had implemented new practices and processes to help to manage the increase and continued to explore other options. The Board asked for its thanks to be passed on to the team for its work in this area.

5.11 The Board noted the report.

## **6 MONEY LAUNDERING REPORTING OFFICER (MLRO) - YEAR ENDING 5 APRIL 2025**

6.1 The Board was asked to receive and consider the annual report of the MLRO for the year ended April 2025.

6.2 The Board heard an overview of the types of suspected money laundering identified and reported by our team to the National Crime Agency (NCA) by way of Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs).

6.3 In the reporting period, the MLRO had received 32 Internal Suspicious Activity Reports (iSARs) leading to 19 reports made to the NCA relating to £148 million in suspect transactions and arrangements involving the legal profession. From the previous reporting period ending April 2024, this represented a decrease in the number iSARs reports (36) and a decrease to the NCA reports (23) but a significant increase to the amount of money in suspect transactions and arrangements involving the legal profession (£75 million).

6.4 The Board also heard about the regular training that staff around the organisation received on money laundering and terrorist financing, both as part of the induction of new staff and regularly thereafter. This mandatory training also raised the visibility of the team and its work across the organisation.

6.5 In discussion Board members said that they were struck by the need for staff around the organisation to deal with potentially dangerous clients. The Board received assurance that robust procedures to ensure the safety of staff were in place but that these would be kept under review. It was suggested that the annual report to the Audit and Risk Committee should include information about what precautions we took to protect the safety of our staff.

6.6 External assurance and oversight exercises had been conducted on the MLRO function during the year in the form of a planned full inspection by our AML oversight body, the Office for Public Body Anti-Money Laundering Supervision (OPBAS) and included a quality review on a sample of SARs submitted by us. The MLRO had also

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engaged with the NCA which had carried out a similar piece of work to quality assure a sample of our SAR submissions. Feedback received had been that we consistently submit high quality SARs with our reports assessed to be detailed, clear, and accessible, as well as demonstrating good practice.

- 6.7 The Board also received the MLRO's declaration that they had experienced no restrictions, blockers, or resistance in undertaking their duties, including the ability to make independent and accountable decisions. They had unfettered access to the senior management team, including members of the Executive Team and CEO, and had experienced continued full co-operation across the organisation.
- 6.8 The Board Chair thanked the MLRO for their work during the year and reminded them that they were free to bring any matters of concern to the Board Chair or other members of the Board whenever they wished to do so.

## **7 2025/26 PRACTISING FEES AND COMPENSATION FUND CONTRIBUTIONS**

- 7.1 The Board was asked to consider the proposed practising fees and Compensation Fund contributions for the 2025/26 practising year.
- 7.2 The Board considered feedback received from our consultation on our Draft Business Plan and budget 2025-26. We had received only seven written responses but had also engaged in wide consultation through round tables and other events. There had been widespread support for our plans for prioritising work.
- 7.3 The Board noted that the overall Law Society group funding requirement for 2025/26, which included our budget, the requirement for the Law Society and external levies, was £148.4m and made the following determinations:
- a) the Practising Certificate Fee Determination [2025]
  - b) the Recognised Body and Recognised Sole Practice Fee Determination [2025]
  - c) the Licensed Body Fee Determination [2025]
  - d) the Determination of Compensation Fund contributions for individuals and firms [2025]
  - e) the Determination of Compensation Fund contributions for Licensed Bodies [2025].
- 7.4 The Practising Fees and Compensation Fund contributions were subject to final approval by the Legal Services Board. The Business Plan would be updated to take account of consultation feedback, and presented to the Board for approval prior to the beginning of the next financial year.

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#### 8 REVIEW OF MEETING AND ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 8.1 The Board was asked to consider Nomination Committee's recommendation that Nicola Williams and Claire Bassett should each be reappointed to the Board for further terms of three years, to make their terms six years in total. Nicola's reappointment would then finish on 31 August 2028 and Claire's on 31 December 2028. The Board agreed to both reappointments. *(NB: Claire Bassett and Nicola Williams left the meeting for this discussion)*
- 8.2 The CEO updated the Board on plans for Executive recruitment which had also been discussed by Nomination Committee the previous week. Plans would also be discussed with the incoming CEO, Sarah Rapson.
- 8.3 The next meeting would be held on 9 September 2025.