

SRA BOARD

CLASSIFICATION – PUBLIC



**SOLICITORS REGULATION AUTHORITY
Minutes of the SRA Board meeting
held on 12 September 2018 at 09.00
at The Principal York, Station Road, York YO24 1AA**

Subject to final approval by the SRA Board at its meeting on 24 October 2018

Present: Enid Rowlands (Chair)
Sharon Darcy
David Heath
Paul Loft
Geoff Nicholas
Dame Denise Platt
Chris Randall
Elaine Williams
David Willis

In attendance: Paul Philip, Richard Collins, Robert Loughlin, Jane Malcolm, David Middleton, Juliet Oliver, Crispin Passmore, Julie Brannan (for item 7) Dominic Tambling

1 APOLOGIES

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed Board members to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Julia Black, Barry Matthews and Tony Williams.
- 1.2 The Chair thanked Board members for attending the training on their responsibilities under the general Data Protection Regulations which had preceded the meeting.

2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 JULY 2018

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2018 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 elsewhere on the agenda.
- 3.2 The Chair noted that David Heath had declared a new interest having been appointed as Chair of the Policy and Public Affairs Board of the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries. Other 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.

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4 CHAIR'S UPDATE

- 4.1 The Chair reported that the reappointment process for Sharon Darcy, Barry Matthews, Geoff Nicholas and Dame Denise Platt had been completed and each would serve a second term as a member of the Board from January 2019 to December 2021. The campaign to recruit two new lay members of the Board would be launched within the next week and the Chair thanked David Heath for agreeing to sit on the appointment panel.
- 4.2 The Chair recorded her warm welcome for the appointment of Anna Bradley as the next Chair of the Board from January 2019 and thanked David Willis for his part in the appointment process. Arrangements were being put in place for Anna Bradley to meet Board members and for induction days at our London and Birmingham offices.
- 4.3 The Chair thanked Board members for attending the focus groups for the public and the dinner for stakeholders the previous evening. These were an important part of the Board's engagement strategy and were invaluable in hearing first-hand the views of the people we work with and for. The Chair also thanked Board members for the numerous activities they had been undertaking outside of Board and Committee meetings. These included support for our Pride activities, recording videos to support the Board member recruitment campaign and forthcoming attendance at our Black History Month dinner in Leeds.

5 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

- 5.1 The Chief Executive Officer introduced his report and covered a number of issues for noting. These included progress on the Modernising IT Programme and the Legal Services Board's consideration of our application for new standards and rules, which it had now been confirmed would take a further three months.
- 5.2 The Board also received an update on feedback from the Office of Professional Body AML Supervision (OPBAS) following its first regulatory visit to us in June 2018. Feedback had been positive with a small number of areas where further information was required. An action plan to address these was being developed and would be shared with the Board.

6 SRA RESPONSE TO THE SOLICITORS DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNAL CONSULTATION ON MAKING OF PROCEDURAL RULES IN RELATION TO APPLICATIONS TO THE TRIBUNAL

- 6.1 The Board was asked to consider our proposed response to the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal (SDT) consultation in line with our established strategic position.
- 6.2 The consultation asked for views on areas such as the standard of proof, which we have consistently argued should be the civil rather than criminal standard, agreed outcomes and costs.

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6.3 The Board discussed and agreed the response to the consultation, subject to some drafting amendments. The final response would be agreed by the Chair and submitted to the SDT before its deadline of 8 October 2018. We would also publish our response.

7 SOLICITORS QUALIFYING EXAMINATION (SQE) UPDATE

7.1 The Board noted progress with the development and delivery of the SQE, including the announcement of Kaplan as the SQE supplier on 1 August 2018. Plans for engaging with stakeholders, particularly training providers and law firms, including introducing them to Kaplan, had been further developed and were presented to the Board for information.

7.2 The Board also noted that Kaplan had begun work on a number of immediate priorities and some of this work would inform the Board when it made a decision on the timing of the introduction of the SQE at its meeting on 24 October 2018.

8 RISK MANAGEMENT WITHIN THE SRA

8.1 The Board was asked to review and agree the new Risk Management Framework which had been developed to more accurately reflect the approach to risk management taken by us as a result of our operations becoming more distinct from those of the Law Society over the previous 12 to 18 months.

8.2 The Framework had been developed with the intent of strengthening the existing procedures and provide greater clarity in risk areas such as governance, identification, escalation, roles and responsibilities, and reporting. The Framework had been discussed by the Finance and Audit Committee.

8.3 The Board made some suggestions for further development of the Framework but was otherwise content with the Framework and the controls being used to manage our risks.

9 REVIEW OF MEETING AND ANY OTHER BUSINESS

9.1 The Board received an update from committee chairs in relation to committee meetings that had taken place since the last Board meeting.

9.2 The Chair thanked Board members for their contributions. The next meeting of the Board would be on Wednesday 24 October at 24 Martin Lane, London EC4R 0DR