



SRA BOARD

CLASSIFICATION – PUBLIC

SOLICITORS REGULATION AUTHORITY
Minutes of the SRA Board meeting
held on 28 September 2020 at 15.30 by Microsoft Teams

Subject to final approval by the SRA Board at its meeting on 20 October 2020

Present: Anna Bradley (Chair)
David Heath
Peter Higson
Paul Loft
Geoff Nicholas
Dame Denise Platt
Selina Ullah
Elaine Williams
David Willis

In attendance: Paul Philip, Robert Loughlin, Jane Malcolm, Juliet Oliver, Liz Rosser, Tracy Vegro, Julie Brannan, Chris Handford, Dominic Tambling

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

1.1 The Chair welcomed Board members to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Barry Matthews and Tony Williams.

2 MATTERS ARISING AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 There were no matters arising for this meeting that would not be covered under item 3.

2.2 Interests were as previously declared and available to view on the SRA website.

3 ESTABLISHING SRA LIMITED AS A CHARITY

3.1 Following discussion at the Board meeting on 15 September 2020, the Board discussed a paper that described the benefits and risks of seeking charitable status for the SRA.

3.2 The Board considered the advantages which would arise from a move to charitable status which included:

- allowing us to take advantage of our new identity as a separate entity with our own legal personality through enhancing our accountability to the Charity Commission for the public interest nature of our role
- strengthening our accountability to the public, and profession, for the way in which we use our funds
- allowing us to take the benefit of tax reliefs available to charities so we can:

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- i. ensure that we are able to reduce the cost of the SQE for candidates
 - ii. allow us to maximise the use we can make of the funds available to us for the benefit of consumers of legal services and reduce the cost of regulation for the firms and solicitors that fund our work
- providing clarity and certainty on the management of our tax position and therefore providing the necessary assurance to the Law Society
- 3.3 The Board also considered the risks associated with this approach and agreed that they were manageable and that, given the advantages set out above, we should go ahead with an application for charitable status.
- 3.4 The Board also discussed the risks of not achieving charitable status and the ways in which the implications of this might be managed. Further work would be done to develop a contingency plan if this proved to be the case.
- 3.5 The Board:
 - a) agreed that we should move to establishing SRA Ltd as a registered charity, delivering the full range of regulatory and education functions of the SRA (including the SQE)
 - b) approved the charitable Articles of Association for SRA Ltd, subject to checking one point raised by Board members, and to delegate to the Chair the agreement of minor changes.

NB: annex 2 of this paper will not be published because it includes legal or other professional advice on sensitive or confidential matters.

4 REVIEW OF MEETING AND ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 4.1 There was no other business. The next meeting would be held on 20 October 2020.