

James Riley

Solicitor

290780

[Sanction Date: 12 July 2024](#)

Decision - Sanction

Outcome: Rebuke

Outcome date: 12 July 2024

Published date: 16 July 2024

Firm details

Firm or organisation at date of publication and at time of matters giving rise to outcome

Name: Bakers Solicitors

Address(es): 15A Bernard Street, Glossop, SK13 7AA, England

Firm ID: 8005781

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by SRA decision.

Decision details

1. Agreed outcome

1.1 James Riley (Mr Riley), a director of Bakers Solicitors Limited (the Firm), agrees to the following outcome to the investigation of his conduct by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA):

- a. he is rebuked
- b. to the publication of this agreement
- c. he will pay the costs of the investigation of £300.

Reasons/basis

2. Summary of Facts

2.1 On 6 May 2023 the police investigated a report of an assault and abusive behaviour by Mr Riley towards his next-door neighbour.



2.2 On 18 March 2024, at Sefton Magistrates Court, Mr Riley pleaded guilty to assault by beating Contrary to section 39 of the Criminal Justice Act 1988.

2.3 On 24 April 2024 Mr Riley, at Liverpool Magistrates Court, was sentenced as follows:

- a. 12 month community order
- b. 50 day alcohol treatment order; and
- c. 5 days rehabilitation.

2.4 He was also ordered to pay:

- a. A surcharge of £114; and
- b. costs of £310.

2.5 Mr Riley promptly notified the SRA.

3. Admissions

3.1 Mr Riley admits and the SRA accepts that by virtue of his conduct and conviction, he failed to act in a way that upholds the public trust and confidence in the solicitors' profession and in legal services provided by authorised persons, in breach of Principle 2 of the SRA Principles.

4. Why a written rebuke is an appropriate outcome

4.1 The SRA's Enforcement Strategy sets out its approach to the use of its enforcement powers where there has been a failure to meet its standards or requirements.

4.2 When considering the appropriate sanctions and controls in this matter, the SRA has taken into account the admissions made by Mr Riley and the following mitigation which he has put forward:

- a. he promptly reported his conviction to the SRA and co-operated fully with its investigation, including the timely provision of all necessary information
- b. he has shown insight for his actions at the time of conviction and subsequently
- c. this is an isolated incident.

4.3 The SRA considers that a written rebuke is the appropriate outcome because:

- a. Mr Riley was directly responsible for his conduct; and
- b. the conduct was reckless as to the potential risk of harm.

4.4 A rebuke is appropriate to maintain professional standards and uphold public confidence in the solicitors' profession and in legal services



provided by authorised persons.

4.5 A rebuke is also intended to deter the individual and others from similar behaviour in the future. Any lesser sanction would not provide a credible deterrent to Mr Riley and others. A rebuke therefore meets the requirements of rule 3.1 of the Regulatory and Disciplinary Procedure Rules.

5. Publication

5.1 The SRA considers it appropriate that this agreement is published in the interests of transparency in the regulatory and disciplinary process. Mr Riley agrees to the publication of this agreement.

6. Acting in a way which is inconsistent with this agreement

6.1 Mr Riley agrees that he will not deny the admissions made in this agreement or act in any way which is inconsistent with it.

6.2 If Mr Riley denies the admissions above, or acts in a way which is inconsistent with this agreement, the conduct which is subject to this agreement may be considered further by the SRA. That may result in a disciplinary outcome or a referral to the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal on the original facts and allegations.

6.3 Denying the admissions made or acting in a way which is inconsistent with this agreement may also constitute a separate breach of principles 2 and 5 of the Principles and paragraph 7.3 of the Code of Conduct for Solicitors, RELs and RFLs.

7. Costs

Mr Riley agrees to pay the costs of the SRA's investigation in the sum of £300. Such costs are due within 28 days of a statement of costs due being issued by the SRA.

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