

Louise Piper
Solicitor
367891

[Agreement Date: 20 January 2025](#)

Decision - Agreement

Outcome: Regulatory settlement agreement

Outcome date: 20 January 2025

Published date: 29 January 2025

Firm details

Firm or organisation at time of matters giving rise to outcome

Name: Copleys Solicitors LLP

Address(es): Red House, 10 Market Hill, St Ives, PE27 5AW, England

Firm ID: 597066

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by agreement.

Decision details

1. Agreed outcome

1.1 Louise Piper, a solicitor formerly employed by Copleys Solicitors LLP (the Firm), agrees to the following outcome to the investigation of her conduct by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA):

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

2. Summary of Facts

2.1 Ms Piper was a solicitor at the Firm until September 2023.

2.2 Ms Piper was instructed on the cases of 'NB' and the case of 'CW'.

The Case of NB



2.3 Ms Piper was instructed for the defendants in a building dispute claim.

2.4 The court gave directions to prepare the case for trial, some of which Ms Piper failed to comply with.

2.5 The claimant's solicitor made an application to strike out the defence and counterclaim, because of the defendants' failure to comply with the court directions, which the court granted.

2.6 Ms Piper also failed to keep the defendants up to date during the progress of a claim.

The Case of CW

2.7 Ms Piper was instructed for the defendant in a case where the facts were admitted but quantum needed to be agreed.

2.8 Ms Piper failed to update her client as the case progressed.

2.9 Ms Piper told the Firm what had happened in both cases promptly and admitted her conduct.

3. Admissions

3.1 Ms Piper makes the following admissions which the SRA accepts:

- a. she failed to comply with court orders which placed obligations on her, in breach of paragraph 2.5 of the Code of Conduct for solicitors, RELs and RFLs ('the Code of Conduct')
- b. she did not make her clients aware of all the information material to the matter of which she had knowledge, in breach of paragraph 6.4 of the Code of Conduct.
- c. she did not ensure the service she provided to the clients was competent, in breach of paragraph 3.2 of the Code of Conduct.
- d. She was not open and honest when things had gone wrong or explained the impact to her clients, in breach of paragraph 7.11 of the Code of Conduct.

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 Ms Piper and the following mitigation which she has put forward:

- a. she has co-operated fully with the SRA investigation.



- b. she has shown insight and remorse for her actions and accepted responsibility for not her conduct.
- c. the conduct was isolated.

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

- a. Ms Piper was directly responsible for her conduct – she was aware of the court directions, the offers from the claimant in the matters and the hearing dates.
- b. in the case of NB there was a significant impact on the client as the counterclaim and defence were struck out.
- c. the behaviour was reckless as Ms Piper failed to update her clients, knowing that hearings were coming up and knowing that the counterclaim and defence could be struck out if she failed to comply with previous court orders.

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. Ms Piper agrees to the publication of this agreement.

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

6.1 Ms Piper agrees that she will not deny the admissions made in this agreement or act in any way which is inconsistent with it.

6.2 If Ms Piper denies the admissions 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

7.1 Ms Piper 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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