

News from the Board

Reflections on our June 2020 Board - Anna Bradley

25 June 2020

We covered a broad range of topics in this week's Board, but of course the impact and implications of Covid-19 was a constant theme.

We are acutely aware of the challenges many legal services providers face as a result of Covid-19. The Board heard that our dedicated website section has already received more than 120,000 visits, and that we are taking a pragmatic approach; being flexible where we can, while making sure the public remains properly protected. The Board was pleased to hear there had been positive feedback from our staff about the way we have communicated with them on coronavirus.

Covid-19 was there again in our discussion of the Quarter 2 (February - April) performance report. Understandably engagement with firms and individuals is tougher in the current climate, with the result that we are not meeting all our service standards. We hope that the new telephony system we have just put in place will help. It means that contact centre can take calls in the usual way while staff work from home. We also discussed the measures being taken to address problems in communicating with a small number of firms. We went on to note the increased interest in our social media activity, website and the new series of short virtual events.

The future of the Solicitors Indemnity Fund (SIF) was back on our Board agenda. We discussed the future of the SIF in 2016 and then again this year [<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/how-we-work/our-board/>]. The Law Society requested that we review our approach in the light of Covid-19 and we agreed that the SIF Board would commission new advice on affordability, so we were able to review that and consider next steps.

The Board also had a good workshop discussion about the responses to the recent consultation on our Compensation Fund

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/consultations/consultation-listing/comp-fund-reform-2020/?s=o>].

We were pleased to hear that new information had been provided by some of the consultees and we asked the executive to consider modifying our approach in several respects as a result. We will make final decisions in the July meeting.

Finally, there is still time to comment on our business plan and budget

[<https://www.sra.org.uk/sra/consultations/consultation-listing/business-plan-2020-21/>]; the consultation was launched earlier this month. This is the first time we have consulted on our plans in this way and I am keen to hear your views.