

Robert Lawson

Lawyer manager

636404

Agreement Date: 2 December 2022

Decision - Agreement

Outcome: Regulatory settlement agreement

Outcome date: 2 December 2022

Published date: 18 January 2023

Firm details

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

Name: Clyde & Co LLP

Address(es): The St. Botolph Building, 138 Houndsditch, LONDON, EC3A 7AR, England

Firm ID: 460690

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by agreement.

Decision details

1. Agreed outcome

1.1 Mr Robert Lawson KC, a barrister and a partner of Clyde & Co LLP (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.

2. Summary of Facts

2.1 On 27 May 2022, Mr Lawson mounted a kerb whilst driving. He was subsequently arrested by the police and was charged with:

- a. Driving after consuming so much alcohol that the proportion exceeded the prescribed limit contrary to section 5(1)(a) of



the Road Traffic Act 1988 and Schedule 2 to the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988.

- b. Driving without due care and attention contrary to section 3 of the Road Traffic Act 1988 and Schedule 2 to the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988.

2.2 On 21 June 2022, Mr Lawson pleaded guilty to the above offences at Chelmsford Magistrates' Court.

2.3 Mr Lawson received the following sentence:

- a. He was disqualified from driving for a period of 18 months, to be reduced to 13.5 months if he passed a rehabilitation course.
- b. He was disqualified from holding or obtaining a driving licence for 18 months, to be reduced to 13.5 months if he completed a course approved by the Secretary of State).
- c. He was ordered to pay a fine of £1,380.
- d. He was ordered to pay costs of £105.
- e. He was ordered to pay a victim surcharge of £190.

3. Admissions

3.1 Mr Lawson makes the following admission which the SRA accepts:

- a. That by virtue of his conduct and conviction for driving a motor vehicle when his level of alcohol was above the prescribed limit, he failed to behave in a way that upholds public trust and confidence in the solicitors' profession, 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 an appropriate outcome in this matter, the SRA has taken into account Mr Lawson's admissions and the following mitigation which he has put forward:

- a. This was an isolated incident.
- b. Mr Lawson pleaded guilty at the earliest opportunity.
- c. Mr Lawson has expressed regret for his actions and has shown insight and remorse in respect of his conduct.



- d. Mr Lawson promptly reported his conviction to the SRA and co-operated fully with its investigation.
- e. No harm was caused to persons or property because of the offence.

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

- a. Mr Lawson demonstrated a disregard for the potential risk of harm.
- b. Mr Lawson was directly responsible for his actions.

4.4 A rebuke is appropriate to uphold public confidence in the solicitors' profession and in legal services provided by authorised persons. If no sanction was imposed, it would not sufficiently address Mr Lawson's conduct or provide a credible deterrent to Mr Lawson and others.

4.5 The SRA considers that the impact of Mr Lawson's misconduct was low. No damage or harm was caused to other road users and so the impact was not significant. Whilst the conduct was intentional or arose as a result of recklessness, it was an isolated incident.

4.6 In deciding on a rebuke, the SRA has considered the mitigation put forward by Mr Lawson at paragraph 4.2 above.

4.7 Mr Lawson promptly reported his conviction to the SRA and has fully co-operated with the investigation. He has shown insight and remorse into his conduct. No harm or loss was caused to other persons or property. In light of this, the SRA considers a rebuke would be appropriate.

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 Lawson agrees to the publication of this agreement.

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

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

7. Costs

7.1 Mr Lawson 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.