

**Note of the Solicitors Regulation Authority Board meeting
held on 12 April 2017 at 13.00
at The Grange Holborn Hotel, 50-60 Southampton Row, London WC1B 4AR**

Present: Enid Rowlands (Chair), Julia Black, Sharon Darcy, Jane Furniss, Geoff Nicholas, Paul Marsh, Barry Matthews, Dame Denise Platt, Chris Randall, Deep Sagar, Elaine Williams, Tony Williams, David Willis.

In attendance: Paul Philip, Richard Collins, Jane Malcolm, David Middleton, Juliet Oliver, Crispin Passmore

1 Apologies

Apologies had been received from David Heath, Shamit Saggar and Robert Loughlin.

2 Minutes of the meeting held on 8 March 2017

The minutes of the meeting on 8 March 2017 were approved as a true and accurate record subject to some minor amendments suggested by Board members.

3 Matters arising and declarations of interest

The Board reviewed the action log and noted that all actions that were due had been completed including in relation to a new Corporate Strategy for 2017-2020 and in developing arrangements for focus groups to be held before the 13 September Board meeting in Manchester. There were no matters arising that were not covered on the agenda.

Interests were as previously declared and available to view on the SRA website. members would declare any particular interest in an individual item if necessary.

4 Chair's update

The Chair noted that she and colleagues had attended the quarterly meeting of the SRA and the City of London Law Society on 5 April 2017 which included discussion on the implications of Brexit.

The Chair and the President of the Law Society had joint chaired the meeting of the Business and Oversight Board on 6 April 2017 in advance of a new Chair being elected.

The next Board meeting on 31 May 2017 would start with a seminar discussion on consumer needs and concerns. Jane Martin, Chair of the Legal Services Consumer Panel and Chief Legal Ombudsman, Kathryn Stone would be joining the Board for the seminar.

5 Chief Executive's Report

The CEO presented his report to the Board. He drew attention to:

- work starting on preparing for the new General Data Protection Regulations which would introduce changes in how personal data was obtained and managed. This would require operational changes and we were gearing up for these.
- a letter of 20 March 2017 received from the Legal Services Board on its investigation into the governance arrangements in place between the SRA and the Law Society. The Board noted that no date had been set for the conclusion of the investigation.
- progress on the Modernising IT Programme which was going well with the focus on supplier procurement. The Finance and Audit Committee had considered progress at a meeting the previous day.
- ongoing work with other legal regulators and the Competition and Markets Authority about how to take forward the recommendation in the CMA's report into the legal services market. The first meeting of the Implementation Group had been held on 19 January 2017 and the next would be in May.

The Board discussed HM Treasury consultations on anti-money laundering (AML) regulations and emphasised the importance of robust and effective AML measures in the legal sector and our role in ensuring that these were in place.

The CEO report also covered progress against our published KPIs. The results for these for February were:

- 93% of conduct matters closed within 12 months of receipt - this was achieved in February at 93%.
- 90% of Compensation Fund claims closed within 12 months - this was achieved in February at 98%.
- 90% of medium / high risk applications closed within 3 months in Firm Based Authorisation - this was achieved in February at 96%. We achieved all of our KPIs in Authorisation in February.

6 Protocol for the appointment and reappointment of Board members of the Solicitors Regulation Authority

The Chair, David Willis and Elaine Williams declared interests in this item as they were eligible for reappointment at the end of 2017. Dame Denise Platt chaired the discussion.

The Board agreed a new draft protocol for the appointment and reappointment of SRA Board members. This reflected the need to update processes and the establishment of our People Strategy Committee and clarified the roles of the bodies and individuals concerned. The draft protocol had been discussed with the Law Society and would be put to the Law Society Council for approval in May 2017.

7 Solicitors Qualifying Examination (SQE) - outcome of consultation and next steps

The Board had a detailed discussion on the responses to the second consultation on proposals to introduce a common assessment for anyone wishing to qualify as a solicitor (the SQE) and agreed next steps ahead of an announcement on 25 April 2017.

8 Review of meeting and any other business

There was no other business. The Chair noted that the next meeting would take place in London on 31 May 2017.

NEXT MEETING: WEDNESDAY 31 MAY 2017 AT THE GRANGE HOLBORN HOTEL, 50-60 SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, WC1B 4AR COMMENCING AT 10:00