

Stefanie Anne O'Bryen

Solicitor

121114

[Prosecution Date: 20 February 2024](#)

Decision - Prosecution

Outcome: Referral to Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal

Outcome date: 20 February 2024

Published date: 12 June 2024

Firm details

Firm or organisation at time of matters giving rise to outcome

Name: Stefanie O'Bryen (trading as Watlingtons),

Address(es): 20 Shirburn Street, Watlington, Oxfordshire OX49 5BT

Firm ID: 405842

Firm or organisation at date of publication

Name: Nuzhat Dunn Solicitors

Address(es): 20 Shirburn Street, Watlington, Oxfordshire OX49 5BT

Firm ID: 8004037

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by SRA decision.

Reasons/basis

This notification relates to a Decision to prosecute before the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal. This is an independent Tribunal which will reach its own decision after considering all the evidence, including any evidence put forward by the Solicitor. The Tribunal has certified that there is a case to answer in respect of allegations which are or include that Miss O'Bryen :-

1. Between around 26 January 2020 and 27 July 2022, failed to keep and maintain accurate accounting records for the Firm.

2. From around January 2020 to 25 July 2022, caused or allowed a client account shortage on the Firm's client account.

3. From 26 June 2017 to around 10 October 2022, failed to have in place:

3.1 A Firm Wide Risk Assessment ('FWRA') as required by Regulation 18 of the Money Laundering, Terrorist Financing and Transfer of Funds (Information on the Payer) Regulations 2017 ('MLRs 2017');

3.2 Anti-money Laundering Policies, Controls and Procedures ('AML Policies') as required by Regulation 19 of the MLRs 2017.

4. On or around 12 December 2019, made a declaration to the SRA which was false and misleading in that it confirmed that the Firm had in place a fully compliant FWRA as required by regulation 18 of the MLRs 2017 when, in fact, there was no such FWRA in place.

5. Between 1 January 2022 and 31 March 2022, and in relation to the purchase of a property by Client A, caused or allowed the Firm to fail to comply with the MLRs 2017 in that the Firm:

5.1. Failed to conduct adequate client due diligence ('CDD') measures as required by Regulation 28 of the MLRs 2017;

5.2. Failed to apply enhanced due diligence ('EDD') as required by Regulation 33 of the MLRs 2017;

The allegations are subject to a Hearing before the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal and are as yet unproven.

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