

Laurence Harrison

Solicitor

208149

[Agreement Date: 9 July 2022](#)

Decision - Agreement

Outcome: Regulatory settlement agreement

Outcome date: 9 July 2022

Published date: 21 July 2022

Firm details

Firm or organisation at time of matters giving rise to outcome

Name: D&N Solicitors

Address(es): 15 King Street WOLVERHAMPTON WV1 1ST

Firm ID: 561749

Outcome details

This outcome was reached by agreement.

Decision details

1. Agreed outcome

1.1 Mr Laurence Harrison, a solicitor, agrees to the following outcome to the investigation of his conduct by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA):

- a. he is fined £1800
- 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 6 September 2021, while driving on a public road, Mr Harrison lost control of his car and collided with another car. The collision caused damage to both cars.

2.2 A witness to the accident called the police, who attended the scene. Mr Harrison was arrested and charged with driving a motor vehicle after



consuming excess alcohol contrary to Section 5(1)(a) of the Road Traffic Act 1998 and Schedule 2 of the Road Traffic Offenders Act 1988.

2.3 On 19 September 2021, Mr Harrison notified the SRA that he had been charged and that he intended to plead guilty.

2.4 On 24 September 2021, at Barnstaple Magistrates' Court, Mr Harrison pleaded guilty.

2.5 The sentence was:

- a. disqualified from holding or obtaining a driving licence for 24 months, to be reduced by 24 weeks upon completing a course approved by the Secretary of State
- b. community order to undergo treatment for alcohol dependency
- c. fine of £120.

2.6 Mr Harrison was also ordered to pay:

- a. victim surcharge of £95
- b. costs of £50.

Admissions

2.7 Mr Harrison admits, and the SRA accepts, that by virtue of his conduct and conviction 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 Standards and Regulations.

3. Why a fine is an appropriate outcome

3.1 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.

3.2 When considering the appropriate sanctions and controls in this matter, the SRA has taken into account the admissions made by Mr Harrison and the following mitigation which he has put forward:

- a. he has shown remorse for his actions
- b. this was an isolated incident
- c. personal issues were causing him stress at the time of the offence
- d. promptly reported the offence to the SRA
- e. he has co-operated fully with the SRA investigation.

3.3 A fine is appropriate to uphold public confidence in the solicitors' profession and in legal services provided by authorised persons because any lesser sanction would not sufficiently address the conduct and provide a credible deterrent to Mr Harrison or others. A financial penalty



therefore meets the requirements of rule 4.1 of the Regulatory and Disciplinary Procedure Rules.

4. Amount of the fine

4.1 The amount of the fine has been calculated in line with the SRA's published guidance on its approach to setting an appropriate financial penalty (the Guidance).

4.2 Having regard to the Guidance, the SRA and Mr Harrison agree that the nature of the misconduct was low because the conduct did not form part of a pattern of misconduct, and he has cooperated with the investigation. The Guidance gives this type of misconduct a score of one.

4.3 The SRA considers that the impact of the misconduct was medium because there was moderate impact and damage to property. The Guidance gives this level of impact a score of four.

4.4 The nature and impact scores add up to five. The Guidance indicates a broad penalty bracket of £1,001 to £5,000 is appropriate.

4.5 In deciding the level of fine within this bracket, the SRA has considered the mitigation at paragraph 4.2 from Mr Harrison.

4.6 Considering the factors set out in the Enforcement Strategy including the impact of the conduct, it is agreed that a fine at the lower end of the bracket is appropriate. The SRA therefore considers a basic penalty of £2000 to be suitable.

4.7 The SRA considers that the basic penalty should be reduced to £1800. This reduction reflects the mitigation put forward by Mr Harrison at paragraph 4.2 above.

4.8 Mr Harrison has made no financial gain or received any other benefit as a result of his conduct. Therefore, no adjustment is necessary and the amount of the fine is £1800.

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 Harrison agrees to the publication of this agreement.

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

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

6.2 If Mr Harrison 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 Mr Harrison 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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