

Meeting: Legal Services Board

Date: 9 June¹

Item: Paper (26) 04

Title: CEO's Progress Report

Author: Richard Orpin CEO

Status: Official

Introduction: Purpose of the paper

1. This paper updates Board Members on key developments across the organisation since the Board's last meeting on 28 April 2026.

Recommendation

2. The Board is invited to **note** this report.

Appointment matters

LSB Board

3. The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) are finalising plans to launch the recruitment campaign for four new board members over the coming year – three lay and one non-lay. The executive are engaging with Dynamic Boards to promote the appointments to a wide ranging and diverse audience.

Office for Legal Complaints (OLC) and Legal Services Consumer Panel (LSCP)

4. The recruitment campaign for a non-lay vacancy for the OLC Board will be launched soon. Christine Nwaokolo, LSB Board Member, will lead the recruitment panel, with support from the Chair of OLC and an independent panel member.

Colleague and organisational matters

5. On 15 May, the MoJ formally delegated authority to us to commit resources and incur expenditure in 2026-27 in line with the budget on which we are seeking

Content correct as of 2 June 2026, date of circulation to the Board.

approval. There is one further step to navigate in the budget approval process, which is to seek Ministerial approval to raise the budget sought via the levy. This process remains ongoing. We have sought approval to advertise for a Director of Regulatory Oversight, who will lead our new oversight function. MoJ are considering this as part of the budget approval process, which means we are not yet in a position to advertise for this role.

Public Bodies Review

6. The second Challenge Panel meeting for the Public Bodies Review (PBR) of the LSB took place on 2 June. We expect the PBR to conclude before summer recess.
7. We continue to engage with the Lead Reviewer, Richard Lloyd, and the MoJ review team to support the PBR.

Governance

Office for Legal Complaints (OLC)

8. The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) has yet to approve the LeO's proposed budget for 2026/27. This includes both the operational budget, as well as the dedicated funding LeO had sought to procure external consultants to support a transformation of their operating model.
9. LSB colleagues are working closely with MoJ and LeO to ensure adequate budget is approved and to understand the risks the delay poses to operational performance and consumers.

Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal

10. The SDT recently published its 2025 KPM report which shows that its performance remains positive overall, reflecting its focus on measures to reduce lost court sitting days and costs per court and adjustments to obtaining participant feedback amongst different demographics, including before a hearing. The SDT is also focused on other measures to improve efficiency such as through new clerk shadow arrangements and workflow management, and the introduction of a case assurance committee to provide peer level scrutiny of judgments focussing on consistency, clarity and timeliness.
11. As Board members are aware, following the High Court's decision to overturn the SDT's decision in the Hurst v SRA case, we asked the SDT to conduct a formal lessons learned exercise and provide a report sharing its findings, outcomes and any recommended actions by the end of April 2026. The report has been provided to us and we are currently in the process of analysing it.

Legal

Post Office

12. We continue to monitor progress and hold the both the SRA and BSB to account through our regular meetings concerning their disciplinary and enforcement work

arising from the Horizon IT scandal. Our most recent meetings with the BSB and the SRA were held on 5 May 2026 and 17 April respectively. The next meeting with the BSB is on 7 July 2026 and with the SRA it is also anticipated to take place in the summer months.

13. The BSB published an update on [27 April 2026](#). As previously reported, it has 10 open investigations, all of which it expects to progress to the Independent Decision-Making Body this year. The BSB is also finalising its consideration of the 111 criminal conviction cases that were overturned by the Court of Appeal.

Regulatory developments

Review of Oversight

14. Implementation of our new approach to regulatory oversight is a top priority for us. This will enable us to deliver on our ambition, as agreed by the Board, to adopt a more targeted, proportionate, risk-based and intelligence. In June, ELT met to take resourcing decisions to operationalise our new approach. The first CEO Forum is expected to take place in June, and will provide an opportunity to discuss this new approach at a senior level with regulators. This will be supported by further engagement between the respective teams.

Regulatory Performance Update

15. The Board received an update at its last meeting on progressing in monitoring the BSB's progress against the Voluntary Undertakings. The next progress meeting will take place on 8 June. We can provide the Board with an oral update at the Board meeting.
16. The SRA has submitted its Q4 progress report on its implementation plan to demonstrate compliance with the Directions. We will meet the SRA on 8 June to discuss the report. At the end of June the SRA will submit an independent evaluation report on the effectiveness of the actions from the implementation plan in meeting the outcomes set in the Directions. A separate Board paper provides further information.

Statutory Decisions

17. Since the last update, we have issued one exemption direction to CLC related to a requirement for regulated firms to display its secure badge which helps consumers know that they are obtaining legal services from a regulated provider.
18. We are currently considering an application from the Faculty Office in relation to its Notaries Accounts Rules. The proposal seeks to merge three existing rules into a single set of rules and to update language and definitions.
19. We are considering one exemption direction from the BSB in relation to publications for its determination by consent procedure.

Mazur judgment

20. As planned, we met with all the approved regulators and regulatory bodies on 20 May 2026 to discuss the actions they have identified and taken so far in response to the Court of Appeal clarification.
21. During the meeting, we reiterated our expectations of them – set out in our letter of 1 April 2026 – in relation to pace and collaboration.
22. We expect to publish the final report for the conduct of litigation review by late June/early July. We are preparing to share the draft report with the relevant regulators for fact checking.

Consumer Protection

23. Our research examining the opportunities and risks consumers currently face when using Artificial Intelligence (AI) lawtech has been completed and the outcomes will shortly be published. Key findings include the need for a minimum guarantee of accuracy and some level of human oversight, as well as access to redress if things go wrong.
24. The landscape review of standards for Artificial Intelligence (AI) powered consumer-facing legal technology has concluded and is due to be published alongside the Consumer Protection research. Key findings include that standards are broad but shallow, and weakest in critical areas including vulnerability identification, referral protocols, and mechanisms for redress.
25. The findings from both pieces of research will inform the scope of our consumer protection work in particular on the best approaches to reduce harm and increase consumers' risk awareness when using unregulated services including the potential use of voluntary standards to increase quality and support growth.
26. We have completed a gap analysis of types of litigation funding and the risks posed to consumers and have worked closely with the SRA who are undertaking complimentary work on this topic. We are determining our next steps in the context of the evidence and wider government's plans to introduce proportionate regulation of litigation funding agreements.

Technology, Growth & AI

27. We will shortly be writing to the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT), the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), and the Department for Business and Trade (DBT) setting out our plans to enable AI driven innovation in the legal services sector. We will include an annex of case studies from the legal services regulators highlighting the work they are doing to support responsible innovation.
28. We anticipate launching procurement for an external research partner to run our Use of Technology and Innovation Survey by the end of May. The survey will generate evidence on the extent and nature of technology adoption in legal services, including emerging use of AI and provide a comparison with the data

collected during the last survey undertaken in 2022. The survey is intended to deliver evidence to inform actionable insights for LSB and across the sector.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

29. On 21 May, the LSB Chair joined the inaugural meeting of the newly established [Judicial and Legal Diversity Board](#), co-chaired by the Lord Chancellor and Lady Chief Justice. This board aims to bring increased focus to judicial diversity across the legal sector. It brings together organisations from across the sector. The board will meet twice annually and be supported by a bi-monthly senior officials steering group.

Economic Crime/AML Supervision

30. The LSB is due to meet the FCA to better understand plans for transitioning the AML supervisory regime. We will be seeking to understand timelines, scope and engagement with legal services providers to date. This meeting will help us provide support to front line regulators and inform our view of whether and how our guidance on the economic crime regulatory objective may need to be updated.

Three Year Strategy & horizon scanning

31. Both the approach to developing the 3 year strategy and an update on horizon scanning intelligence gathering are included in the substantive agenda.

Professional Ethics and Rule of Law

32. Following publication of the statement of policy in late March, we have held bilateral meetings with the regulators to answer questions and provide support on implementation planning ahead of the commencement of the front line regulators implementation phases on 30 September.
33. As part of a continued collaborative approach to implementation, planning is underway for a Professional Ethics Network event on 1 July, to convene thought leadership on ethics in the legal sector and provide support to front line regulators. See 'communications and engagement' section for further information.

Communications and Engagement

Chair's engagement

34. Our new Chair is undertaking a programme of stakeholder engagement to learn more about the opportunities and challenges facing the legal services sector. This is also supporting our work on horizon scanning and the insights gathered will help inform the development of our three-year strategy.
35. [A list of the Chair's engagements](#) is being maintained online. We will continue to provide a list of meetings that have taken place between meetings in the CEO report.

England and Wales stakeholder events

Swansea

36. On 23 April 2026, we visited Swansea as part of our ongoing programme of stakeholder engagement activities across England and Wales. This was the first engagement event for our recently appointed Chair. The session was an opportunity to hear from the sector about what's working, what isn't, and where regulation can do better. It also provided an opportunity to hear directly about the pressures faced by frontline providers, the barriers clients encounter, and the opportunities that regulators sometimes miss. The Chair's [opening remarks](#) are available on our website.
37. There were three stakeholder engagement meetings with Swansea Neath Port Talbot Citizens Advice, Swansea Law Clinic, and the Pro Bono Committee for Wales. These sessions were followed by an event with representatives from universities, law firms, advice agencies and regulators. The conversation explored a wide range of issues, from ethics and the regulatory burden to artificial intelligence, consumer understanding, qualification routes, legal technology costs, succession planning and access to justice. A strong theme throughout the session was the need for regulation to remain proportionate, practical and enabling - protecting consumers while also recognising the pressures faced by firms operating in increasingly complex markets.
38. We have published blogs covering the discussions and the actions we took away:
- [Swansea roundtable](#)
 - [Swansea Neath Port Talbot Citizens Advice meeting](#)
 - [Swansea Law Clinic](#)
 - Pro Bono Committee for Wales

The North East

39. Many small businesses struggle to identify and access the right legal support, often leading to problems escalating or going unresolved. Therefore, we are collaborating with the North-East Chamber of Commerce to produce events in Newcastle focused on the legal needs of small businesses. St James Place will be hosting the events.
40. There will be a small, curated roundtable event with local MPs, the Department of Business and Trade (DBT), and the MoJ invited to participate. We will also invite small business owners, legal advisors, and local support organisations. The second event will be a broader gathering of small businesses and the organisations that support them, with a practical focus on what help is available and what businesses say they need most. This will also be an opportunity to launch early findings from our Small Business Legal Needs Survey.

Professional Ethics Network

41. The Professional Ethics Network (PEN) is scheduled for 1 July at City St George's, University of London at Finsbury Square in London. Planning is underway and we are currently organising external speakers and the agenda.
42. The focus of the event will be on ethics education, training and ethical work culture. The event aims to broaden regulatory thinking on education, training and ethical workplace culture under the Statement of Policy, while contributing to the wider debate on ethics education prior to qualification. We will invite regulators, educators, legal professionals and members of the PERL Reference group to participate.

Media coverage and participation in external events

43. The CEO was interviewed in Legal Futures in May. The interview focused on our work to secure improvements in the SRA's regulatory approach so that it is better able to protect consumers, as well as the potential options in the Act to enable reform of the scope of regulation. The CEO was also interviewed for ITV News North and ITV News Wales during May regarding PM Law.
44. The Interim Director, Policy & Strategy spoke on ethics at a Westminster Legal Policy Forum event on 30 April, alongside TLS, SRA and BSB. This was an opportunity to galvanise stakeholders around our recently published statement on progressive ethics and the rule of law and outline our next steps.
45. The Interim Head, Policy & Delivery spoke to the Central Admissions Board on 13 May, focusing on ethics and education/training.

Meeting Schedule

The following senior-level meetings took place between 16 April and 28 May 2026.

Date	Meeting	LSB
16 April	LSB/SRA CEO meeting	CEO
20 April	LSB/CLSB CEO meeting	CEO
21 April	LSB/Faculty Office CEO meeting	CEO
29 April	LSB/IPReg CEO meeting	CEO
5 May	LSB/LeO CEO meeting	CEO
11 May	LSB/Professional Standards Authority CEO meeting	CEO
13 May	AI Growth Lab - Legal Services meeting	CEO
18 May	LSB/LSCP Chair/Chair meeting	Chair
18 May	LSB/The Law Society Chair/Chair intro meeting	Chair
18 May	LSB/CLC Chair/Chair intro meeting	Chair
19 May	MoJ Public Bodies Digital, Technology and AI Event	CEO
21 May	Judicial and Legal Diversity Board	Chair
28 May	LSB/SRA Board to Board meeting	Chair & CEO

Annex A: OLC Voluntary Assurance Letter

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (Fol)		
Para ref	Fol exemption and summary	Expires
N/A	N/A	N/A