Meeting:	Legal Services Board
Date:	24 November 2026[1]
Item:	Paper (26) 28
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 22 October.

Recommendation

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

Public Bodies Review

3. We published our response to the Public Bodies Review on 5 November. The response was pro-actively shared with regulators, representative bodies, the Legal Ombudsman, the Legal Services Consumer Panel, the Ministry of Justice and the Justice Select Committee.

4. The response accepts the recommendations directed to the LSB and sets out the changes we will make to strengthen our effectiveness, with a clear focus on outcomes for consumers, small businesses and the wider public. These include strengthening our regulatory oversight, improving our use of data and intelligence, and strengthening collaboration among regulators to identify risks to consumers. We also supported the ambition of the recommendations directed to the Ministry of Justice.

5. Our draft strategy for 2027–30 and accompanying business plan will provide more detail on how we will translate our PBR commitments into priorities and delivery plans. The forthcoming consultation will provide an opportunity to discuss our approach with stakeholders, including where closer collaboration can support implementation.

[1] Content correct as of 17 November date of circulation to the Board.

6. Delivery of the PBR recommendations will be supported by an internally facing organisational transformation programme. Progress updates will be provided at each Board meeting from January 2027.

Appointment matters

LSB Board

7. Interviews for the three lay positions and one non-lay position were held in the week of 10 November. The Assessment panel was led by the Hon. Mr Justice Eyre alongside Monisha Shah (LSB Chair), Abigal Plenty (Ministry of Justice Deputy Director), and Graeme Spencer (Independent Panel Member). Subject to the conclusion of this process, we expect inductions for new Board members to commence from January 2027 onwards.

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

8. The LSB Chair has informed the Lord Chancellor of the recent appointment of a new non-lay board member who is expected to join the OLC Board shortly.

9. Business cases for the reappointment of OLC Board lay member Rachel Cerfontyne and LSCP member Liz Coll have been approved by LSB's Remuneration and Nomination Committee for recommendation for approval by the Board.

Colleague and organisational matters

10. On 3 November, we announced the appointment of three new senior colleagues. Shona Barton joins as Director, Regulatory Oversight, leading our regulatory oversight work. Sam Wood will join as Head of Performance & Oversight, leading scrutiny of regulators' performance, and Atika Thomson will join as Head of Policy Development & Delivery, helping is to deliver our draft strategy.

11. We have successfully recruited an interim General Counsel on a three-month placement. They will be starting with us shortly.

12. We have recruited a temporary Corporate Governance Manager who will start 1 December and will be with us until 31 May 2027.

13. We are launching our biennial Diversity survey in December. The last survey was in 2024 and we ask all LSB colleagues, Board members and members of the LSCP to complete it.

Governance

Office for Legal Complaints (OLC)

14. The OLC / LeO budget and business plan, proposed changes to LeO's scheme rules and proposals for scheme transformation are the subject of a dedicated agenda item with associated papers.

Legal

Post Office & Legal Professional Privilege

15. We continue to monitor the status of the SRA and BSB's investigations and the publication of Volumes 2-6 of the final Post Office Horizon IT Inquiry report.

16. We met with the SRA and BSB earlier this month on the implications of the High Court's decision in *Carter-Ruck & Amersi v SRA,* including on their Post Office cases.

17. The SRA is seeking permission to appeal the judgment directly to the Supreme Court. As the Board is aware, the High Court in *Amersi* ruled that the SRA cannot compel the production of privileged documents unless the client gives a waiver. We are continuing dialogue with stakeholders on the impact of the judgment, as well as undertaking further work on the extent to which other regulators may be impacted.

Regulatory Updates

Statutory Decisions

18. Since the last update we have approved two applications. The first is an application from the CLC to increase contributions to its compensation fund by 6%. The second is an application from the ICAEW in relation to continuing professional development. We have also approved two practising fee applications; one from CLC for a 4% increase to practice fees and an increase in admin charges and the second from IPReg for an increase in practice fees of 2.97%; and, issued an exemption direction to the SRA in relation to fining powers for economic crime.

19. We are currently considering three applications. The first is from the BSB seeking approval for alterations to modernise the delivery of the BSB's enforcement function following significant redesign of its enforcement process and the regulations that underpin it as well as to implement recommendations arising from the independent review of the BSB's enforcement function. The other two applications are from CLSB for changes to its Disciplinary Rules and Procedure and to its Practising fee rules.

20. We are also considering a practising fee application from CILEX and CRL proposing increases to practising fees of 7.2% for CILEX Fellows, 7.4% for Associate Prosecutors, and 12.5% for firms and for Practise Rights Certificates. We are also considering two requests for exemption directions – one from the BSB relating to Authorised Education and Training Organisations and one from the SRA in relation to its Publishing Regulatory and Disciplinary Decisions guidance.

Regulatory Reviews

21. On 27 October, we wrote to inform the approved regulators and regulatory bodies that we are commencing the review of guidance to the profession on the reserved legal activities (excluding the conduct of litigation which has been completed). We shared the scope of the review, which has now been published.

Regulatory oversight

22. The outcomes of our regulatory oversight risk assessments are the subject of a dedicated agenda item with associated papers.

23. We are continuing informal engagement with the SRA on proposals for draft performance targets and expect to provide advice to Board by correspondence by the end of November. This advice will include feedback from the oversight challenge panel.

24. We are in dialogue with the BSB regarding its plans to bring a proposal to vary the Voluntary Undertakings. This will be discussed further at a 4-way meeting taking place immediately after the Board meeting.

Strategy, Business Plan & Budget

25. The draft three-year strategy and 2027/28 business plan are the subject of a dedicated agenda item with associated papers.

26. Subject to the Board's agreement, we are aiming to launch our consultation on both the draft strategy and business plan in early December, with plans for targeted engagement with stakeholders throughout the consultation period.

27. ARAC considered the proposed budget for 2027/28 at its meeting on 17 November, which is also the subject of a dedicated agenda item.

Consumer Protection Policy

28. We sought feedback from the LSCP on our proposed next steps following the publication of the consumers and AI research earlier in the year which include; monitoring emerging risks more effectively; developing the evidence base on consumer harms; and, convening stakeholders to consider the regulatory levers required to better safeguard consumers.

29. We continue to engage with the SRA as it reviews responses to its consultation on third party litigation funding.

Technology and Innovation Policy

30. The AI Growth Lab continues to progress, with the initial application and assessment phase now complete. Following review, a final cohort has been selected and is undergoing due diligence checks ahead of formal confirmation and programme launch. We will be presenting on the AI Growth Lab at the Institute of Regulation's Policy special interest group on 19 November.

31. The Civil Justice Council (CJC) issued its Final Report on the Use of AI for Preparing Court Documents on 29 October 2026, setting out 15

recommendations for the safe and responsible use of artificial intelligence (AI) in civil court proceedings. The first recommendation calls for legal services regulators, including the LSB, to work together collaboratively to ensure guidance for the legal profession on the appropriate use of AI in the preparation of court documents is consistent. This is already within the planned scope of the Technology and Innovation Project.

32. The CEO will attend The Global Business and Law Summit on 1 December which brings together senior leaders from government, business and the legal sector to discuss the role of English law in driving investment, enabling innovation and supporting economic growth.

Research

33. Fieldwork with legal services providers is circa 50% complete for our Use of Technology and Innovation Survey which will conclude by December. We anticipate publishing the results of the survey in Spring 2027.

34. We have published our Small Business Legal Needs Survey report and are engaging stakeholders regarding the insights (see below).

Communications & Engagement

35. We published the fifth wave of our Small Business Legal Needs Survey on 9 November. The findings will inform our strategy and risk-based oversight, and help regulators and the wider sector identify unmet needs and barriers to legal support. Addressing these barriers supports the growth agenda by helping small businesses resolve problems that can hold back investment, innovation and expansion.

36. To reach beyond the legal sector, we collaborated with the Small Business Commissioner, Federation of Small Businesses and British Chambers of Commerce in the launch. All three promoted the report through their channels, alongside coverage in legal and business trade publications, extending its reach among organisations representing and advising small businesses. This provides a basis for further engagement on how the sector can respond to the findings and improve outcomes for small business consumers.

37. The CEO will be speaking on a panel at the Institute of Business Ethics Leaders Autumn Seminar on the 18 November. DSPEC will join Richard Moorhead, Steve Kerry (BT) and James Ferris (FRC). The panel will be discussing "Emerging regulatory perspectives of ethics and AI".

<u>Meeting Schedule</u>

The following senior-level meetings took place between 9 October and 13 Nov 2026

Date	**Meeting**	**LSB**
12 Oct	LSB/SRA	CEO
12 Oct	LSB/BSB	CEO
13 Oct	MoJ Executive Committee	CEO

13 Oct	LSB/MoJ Officials	CEO
13 Oct	Chancellor of the High Court	Chair
14 Oct	LSB/Faculty Office CEO mtg	CEO
14 Oct	Law Society President's inauguration	CEO
15 Oct	Enforcement Challenge Panel	Chair, CEO
15 Oct	LSB/SRA	CEO
21 Oct	Legal Services Consumer Panel Board meeting	CEO
26 Oct	LSB/TLS CEO mtg	CEO
29 Oct	LSB/OLC Chair mtg	Chair
2 Nov	Sir Stephen Hillier	Chair
3 Nov	LSB/SRA	CEO
5 Nov	LSB/MoJ Chief Operating Officer	CEO
9 Nov	LSB/SRA/BSB	CEO
10 Nov	LSB/LeO	CEO
12 Nov	LSB/SRA	CEO
13 Nov	LSB/LeO	CEO
9-12 Nov	LSB Board interviews	Chair

Annex A: November Regulatory Dashboard
Annex B: Voluntary Assurance Letter - October 2026

Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoI)		
Para ref	**FoI exemption and summary**	**Expires**
Annex A: November Regulatory Dashboard	s36(2) – free and frank discussion	n/a