

## News from the Board

### Reflections on our September Board meeting - Anna Bradley, SRA Chair

19 September 2025

Central to our Board discussion this month was how we as an organisation can make sure we are delivering the greatest impact in the public interest. In particular – with such rapid shifts in the legal market – it is essential we are fleet of foot and explore how we can do things differently to deliver most effectively.

#### High volume consumer claims

For instance, the risks and issues we are seeing in the high-volume consumer claims market are unprecedented. We are continuing our investigations into more than 70 firms, moving as quickly as possible so we can step in where needed. But the [significant issues highlighted in our thematic review](https://referral.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/high-volume-consumer-claims-thematic-review/1) [https://referral.sra.org.uk/sra/research-publications/high-volume-consumer-claims-thematic-review/1], which indicate that too many firms don't have their house in order, means we must do more.

We need to use all the levers available to us to drive improvements. We have put all firms working in this area on notice of our concerns, setting the requirement for a compliance declaration. This is a robust step to drive them to sort out any issues themselves. And if they don't, they can expect us to take further, stronger action.

We are also looking at whether there are wider changes that could improve the protections for consumers in this area, and we will publish a discussion paper on this shortly.

#### Risk and data

Responding quickly and effectively to changing risks in the legal sector is at the heart of our Risk and Data Programme, which I touched upon in my last blog.

The Board approved further changes to our approach to risk – ensuring that the Board has good visibility of the wider market issues that are emerging. While we have been focused on risk and data for some time, our work here is also a key element of how we are delivering against the LSB's Directions, following its review of our handling of the Axiom Ince case.

We have also learned lessons to improve how we identify risks as part of our own review of what we could have done better in the handling of the

SSB Law case. And while there is more to do, the Board recognised the significant improvements made over the past year.

## **Safeguarding client money**

Another key area of work is our Consumer Protection Review. Our consultation earlier this year considered steps we could take in the more immediate term to better protect client money. It also asked some big, fundamental questions about change over the longer term in two areas – the model of solicitors holding client money, and the model of funding the compensation fund.

We have heard a lot of views, with some appetite for change to address the root causes of risks to client money. However, we have always said these are complex issues, that cannot be solved with quick fixes.

We consider there is a strong case to properly explore the long-term transformation of the model of holding client money and how the compensation fund is funded.

However, our immediate focus is on making changes to better protect and safeguard client money under the current system. So we plan to consult later this year on these changes. This will include picking up actions set out in the LSB's Directions to us.

We then plan to return to those bigger, longer term questions after we have made changes to the current system when we can give them the robust consideration they need.

## **Working flexibly**

We reviewed our performance metrics for the period March to June this year. The organisation is having to operate flexibly to meet new challenges. We explored how we are dealing with the sustained and significant increase in reports of misconduct coming into us. And how we can continue to increase our proactive work in relation to the high volume claims market.

We will continue to look at how we do things differently in the future – both for efficiencies in the face of greater challenges, but also expanding the range of tools we routinely use could help us further improve our effectiveness.

## **Business plan**

Finally, all of this fed into our thinking about our business plan for 2025/26. We considered the feedback from our consultation over the summer, and the need to maintain the flexibility to reprioritise as necessary throughout the next year.

We will publish our final business plan and budget next month, and we will stay focused on our key strategic priorities. But we are clear that our ways of working and proactive, risk-based approach will need to evolve further still over the coming year.