



Solicitors
Regulation
Authority

From the Chief Executive

Mr Paul Rogerson
The Law Society Gazette
113 Chancery Lane
London, WC2A 1PL

Sent by email only to: Paul.Rogerson@lawsociety.org.uk

Mr Neil Rose
Legal Futures Publishing Limited
Kinetic Business Centre
Theobald Street
Borehamwood
Herts, WD6 4PJ

Sent by email only to: Neil.rose@legalfutures.co.uk

The Cube
199 Wharfside Street
Birmingham B1 1RN

DX: 720293 BIRMINGHAM 47
UK 0370 606 2555
Int + 44 (0)121 329 6800
F + 44 (0)121 616 1999
sra.org.uk

15 September 2022

Dear Paul and Neil

Re: SRA Board meetings

Thank you for your email of 5 September about our Board meetings.

We moved away from public Board meetings some time ago because we, like many organisations, were not finding that the public attended. We fully recognised the difficulties people experience in accessing such meetings, whether face to face or virtually, and the limited value it may offer them. It was also clear to us that other significant organisations in the legal sector, and more widely, had decided that holding meetings in public was not a helpful approach.

As part of our commitment to genuine and meaningful openness, we looked at what better ways we could find to make our decision making more transparent for the public and, indeed, the profession. We increased openness by publishing [much more information](#) about how our Board works and in respect of each meeting. This includes, for example, a detailed accountability statement, Board responsibilities, a transparency statement, decision making and delegation frameworks.

We also started producing a Chair's blog after our Board meetings to give a timely read out of what was covered, and we publish the overwhelming majority of our Board papers, including much fuller minutes setting out how and why decisions have been made.

These are complemented by publishing feedback we receive to our consultations, as well as our response to that feedback, so everyone can understand what our thought processes were and be confident that we have listened very carefully to everything we have heard, in line with the LSB performance assessment comment that you cite.

We are the regulator of solicitors and law firms in England and Wales.

Solicitors Regulation Authority Limited is a company limited by guarantee.
Our registered offices are: The Cube, 199 Wharfside Street, Birmingham, B1 1RN.
Our company registration number is: 12608059.

You mention several key areas of our work, all of which have been subject to extensive outreach, engagement, and consultation – both formal and informal – with the public and the profession. On the Solicitors Indemnity Fund, for example, there have been several layers of consultation and a discussion paper over the summer. The work has been supported throughout by a reference group which comprises key voices from across the profession, as well as surveys, events, research, expert input, and social media activity, raising awareness and seeking views, along with extensive published technical supporting material.

Our Board papers do not go out in advance because the Board is the right place to agree whether any papers, or parts of papers, are not suitable for publication, in line with [our transparency statement](#). The Covid-19 pandemic and its longer term legacy of fewer face to face meetings has prevented us from holding post Board meeting briefing sessions as we had hoped.

The press does, of course, have ready access to us and our work and we are always open to requests from the media for comment or discussion on any particular areas. As you know, we respond promptly to such requests.

We are always interested in improving how we work, and we are happy to invite the press to discuss the next Board meeting after it has been held, or in any other suggestions you may have for increasing transparency.

However, we are confident that our current approach is the right one for providing the public with ready access to useful and clear information about the work of our Board, so we do not anticipate reverting to the public Board meetings that so clearly proved to be an ineffective way of providing that information and insight.

Thank you for your interest in our work.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Philip', written in a cursive style.

Paul Philip
Chief Executive
Solicitors Regulation Authority