



**Legal Services Regulatory Authority**

## **First Strategic Plan 2018-2020**

**Independence**

**Innovation**

**Consumer Protection**

**Accountability and Transparency**

**April 2018**

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## **Foreword by the Chairperson**

I am pleased to introduce the first strategic plan of the new Legal Services Regulatory Authority (LSRA). The Authority was established on 1 October 2016. Following the completion of the statutory nomination process, entailing the approval of the membership of the Authority by the Dáil and Seanad on the nomination of the Minister for Justice and Equality, the eleven Authority members met for the first time on 26 October 2016. The Authority commenced its work without staff or adequate premises. Nonetheless, we have met on nine further occasions, issued five statutory reports, introduced appropriate governance structures, moved into temporary accommodation and begun the process of recruiting key staff and building the capacity of the Authority.

Renee Dempsey joined the Authority on 1 January 2017 as interim Chief Executive Officer supported by a small Executive team. The Authority members and I owe Renee a huge debt of gratitude for her work in the early days of the Authority. I am also very grateful to my colleagues on the Authority for their hard work and enthusiastic engagement in meeting the statutory requirements to carry out consultative exercises and complete the reports on the Legal Partnerships, Multi-Disciplinary Practices and certain matters relating to barristers.

In September 2017, Brian Doherty joined us as the new CEO of the Authority and, amongst other responsibilities, commenced work on developing our first strategic plan, which sets out the key priorities of the LSRA as it develops the capacity to undertake the wide-ranging functions under the Act.

The first strategic priority under the plan is, therefore, to build the LSRA into the independent, effective regulatory authority envisaged in the legislation. It is not in the public interest, or in keeping with the objectives of the Legal Services Regulation Act, 2015, that the LSRA be set up in a rushed or haphazard fashion and without the necessary protections in place for the public. The Authority is very conscious that the mandate of the LSRA has significant implications for the provision of legal services and the administration of justice, for the public and for legal practitioners. It is the intention of the Authority that the commencement of the operations of the LSRA should be done in a measured and controlled way as set out in this three-year plan.

There will, of course, be challenges in meeting the indicative timescales set out in the plan and a considerable task lies ahead. However, I believe the strategic plan sets out an achievable and sustainable timetable for the delivery of the objectives of the 2015 Act and I commend it to you.

**Dr. Don Thornhill**  
**Chairperson**



### **Foreword by the Chief Executive**

As Chief Executive Officer of the Legal Services Regulatory Authority (LSRA), I am pleased to present, as required under section 20 of the Legal Services Regulation Act 2015, our three-year strategic plan covering the period 2018-2020.

The Legal Services Regulation Act was enacted by the Oireachtas on 30 December 2015. However, it was not until 1 October 2016 that the Authority was established by the Minister for Justice and Equality by virtue of S.I. 507 of 2016 in accordance with section 7 of the Legal Services Regulation Act 2015 and not until later that same month that the Authority itself was properly constituted and met for the first time. Since that time, a huge amount has been achieved but, of course, a lot remains to be done.

I was delighted to take up my post as Chief Executive Officer in September 2017 and I was immediately struck by how much had been achieved in the short time since the Authority had convened their first meeting. The Executive function in the early months was provided by Renee Dempsey as interim chief executive officer and I am extremely grateful for her work and perseverance in stewarding the organisation in the early days. Comprehensive and considered reports on legal partnerships, multi-disciplinary practices and matters relating to the barrister's profession were all delivered on or before their statutory deadline, accommodation was sourced, governance procedures were put in place and a small team of staff was formed under Renee's expert leadership.

Key working relationships had also been established with primary stakeholders including the Honorable Society of the King's Inns, the Bar of Ireland, the Dublin Solicitors Bar Association, the Law Society and the Competition and Consumer Protection Commission. I have found their support and knowledge to be invaluable and whilst respecting the independence of the LSRA they have all been welcoming and supportive of our work.

As Chief Executive Officer, I appreciate that much of the external focus on the LSRA has been in relation to the commencement of part 6 of the 2015 Act, which relates to Complaints and Disciplinary Hearings in Respect of Legal Practitioners. The commencement of part 6 can only be properly and carefully managed once the resources and infrastructure are in place. It should be noted that the organisation is still in the fledgling stages; permanent accommodation needs to be sourced, IT and

other infrastructure needs to be developed. Most importantly, we need to recruit and form the team of staff who will assist in developing the LSRA into an independent, effective and fully operational regulatory authority. The need to grow the organisation, and the associated goals and challenges have been reflected in the statement of strategy as our first strategic aim.

Whilst we grow and develop the organisation, statutory obligations will still require to be met. The introduction of legal partnerships as a properly regulated new business model for legal services is to be achieved in the first year of this strategic plan. Significant research projects into the education of and admissions to the legal profession will also require resources and significant effort to achieve. The LSRA will also seek to learn from its experiences to date and conduct a review of the governing legislation. With this in mind, innovation in the provision of legal services and other areas is the second strategic aim of the LSRA.

It could be considered premature to set the values of an organisation that is in the earliest stages of forming, however, it is important to define the principles that will guide the formation and establishment of the LSRA. We have committed therefore to developing an organisational culture built on the values of independence, transparency and accountability, innovation and consumer protection.

In keeping with the values of transparency and accountability, the LSRA has identified communication and engagement as the third strategic aim of this three year plan. Whilst we have received comprehensive and informed submissions from the legal professional bodies, public consultations carried out to date have resulted in what could be considered a low level of response in terms of engagement from the public. We have also had a limited range of responses from consumer groups and the legal profession. We are in the process, therefore, of developing a communications strategy to both increase awareness of the work of the LSRA, and to encourage greater engagement and contribution from the public and the professions to inform the important work that is yet to be done.

The LSRA has a challenging workload ahead of it to become fully established as an operational regulatory body. This strategic plan will see the LSRA grow in terms of its capacity as an organisation, its profile amongst the public and the legal professions and in terms of its impact on delivery of legal services in the state.

I commend it to you,

**Brian Doherty**  
**Chief Executive Officer**

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## **PART 1: Introduction**

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**1.0** This strategic plan outlines the strategic direction of the Legal Services Regulatory Authority for the period 2018-2020. It identifies the Authority’s vision and mission for the future and sets out the key strategic objectives it will deliver and the functions it will perform in the coming years. The statement outlines the resources required to deliver on the statutory and strategic objectives of the LSRA and describes the key values that will inform the culture of the LSRA as it grows as an organisation and develops its capacity to regulate the legal profession.

### **1.1 About the LSRA**

**1.2** The Legal Services Regulatory Authority (the Authority) was established by the Minister for Justice and Equality on 1 October 2016 by virtue of S.I. 507 of 2016 in accordance with section 7 of the Legal Services Regulation Act, 2015 ( the 2015 Act). The Authority is a body corporate with perpetual succession and a seal. The executive function is provided by a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the secretary to the Authority.

**1.3** The Authority is comprised of 11 Members nominated in accordance with section 9 of the 2015 Act. The Authority has a lay majority and chair. Authority members are appointed by the Government following nomination by 10 organisations. This nomination process was designed to ensure the independence of the Authority while also achieving a balance of interests between legal practitioners and those consumers who avail of their services. The nominating organisations are as follows:

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>No. of Nominations</b>
The Citizens Information Board	1
Higher Education Authority (An tÚdarás um Ard-Oideachas)	1
The Competition and Consumer Protection Commission	1
The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission	1
The Institute of Legal Costs Accountants	1
Consumers’ Association of Ireland	1
Bar Council (Bar of Ireland)	1
Legal Aid Board	1
Honorable Society of the King’s Inns	1
Law Society	2

**1.4** The Members of the Authority appointed by the Government must have knowledge and expertise in relation to at least one of the following: the provision of legal services, legal education and legal training, competition law and policy, the maintenance of standards in professions regulated by a statutory body, business and commercial matters and the needs of consumers of legal services.

**1.5** The Authority met for the first time on 26 October 2016 following the completion of the nomination process for membership.

The initial membership of the Authority on 26 October 2016 was as follows:

Authority Member	Organisation	Term <sup>1</sup> of Appointment
Angela Black	The Citizens Information Board	4 Years
Don Thornhill (Chair)	Higher Education Authority	4 Years
Deirdre McHugh	The Competition and Consumer Protection Commission	3 Years
Gerry Whyte	The Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission	4 Years
Stephen Fitzpatrick	The Institute of Legal Costs Accountants	3 Years
Dermott Jewell	Consumers' Association of Ireland	3 Years
David Barniville <sup>2</sup>	Bar Council (Bar of Ireland)	3 Years
Joan Crawford	Legal Aid Board	4 Years
Eileen Barrington	Honorable Society of the King's Inns	4 Years
James MacGuill	Law Society	4 years
Geraldine Clarke	Law Society	3 Years

The Authority met on ten occasions from 26 October 2016 to 15 February 2018.

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## PART 2: Background and Methodology

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- 2.0 This strategic plan is prepared in accordance with section 20 of the Legal Services Regulation Act 2015 which requires that the Authority shall prepare and submit to the Minister for Justice and Equality a strategic plan for the ensuing 3 year period as soon as practicable after the establishment day of the Authority.
- 2.1 A permanent CEO was appointed to the LSRA in September 2017 and was tasked by the Authority at the Authority meeting of 16 November 2017 to commence preparation of a Strategic Plan in compliance with section 20 of the 2015 Act.
- 2.2 It should be noted that section 20 also requires that the Authority prepare and submit a three year strategic plan within 6 months before each third year anniversary of the establishment day. This means that the LSRA is required to submit its next three year Strategic Plan within the six months prior to October 2019.
- 2.3 Within that context, this strategic plan will set out the strategic objectives of the LSRA for 2018-2020 but it is the intention of the LSRA to revisit the strategic planning process prior to October

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<sup>1</sup> Under section 10 of the 2015 Act 5 of the Authority members, selected by the drawing of lots, shall hold office for a period of 3 years with the remaining members, including the Chair holding office for a period of 4 years.

<sup>2</sup> Following the appointment of David Barniville as a High Court judge in November 2017 the nomination of the Bar Council to the LSRA remains unfilled.

2019. At that time, it will prepare and submit a new three year plan for 2019-21. From October 2019, the LSRA will then engage in a three year strategic planning cycle.

#### 2.4 **Methodology**

2.5 The LSRA Executive has conducted an analysis of the Statutory and Governance requirements of the LSRA in relation to strategic planning. The results of this analysis were submitted to the Authority for their review in November 2017.

2.6 It was noted that the first strategic planning period would in essence cover the start-up phase of the LSRA and would end in October 2019 when a second three-year plan would be required.

2.7 The analysis concluded that engaging in a protracted and costly strategic planning process would not be the best use of LSRA resources at this time, and that a leaner approach to strategic planning would meet both the statutory and governance requirements whilst also producing a strategic plan which could be used as the basis for the start-up phase of the LSRA.

2.8 It was proposed and agreed by the Authority that the LSRA Executive be tasked to produce a strategic plan, based primarily on the framework outlined in the 2015 Act, for the approval of the Authority at the first Authority meeting of 2018.

2.9 In preparation of the strategic plan, the LSRA Executive has engaged with other regulatory bodies and comparator agencies. A review of strategic plans from a large number of bodies has also been carried out. The staff of the LSRA were also consulted and given an opportunity to contribute to the strategic planning of the organisation.

2.10 The strategic plan was considered and approved by the Authority members at the February authority meeting.

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## **PART 3: Vision, Mission, Objectives, Functions and Values**

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### **Strategic Vision for 2018-2020**

*“To develop the LSRA into an efficient, effective and accountable regulatory body with the capacity to protect and promote the public interest and the interests of consumers of legal services whilst encouraging an independent, strong, competitive legal profession with high standards of professionalism and integrity.”*

### **Mission:**

*“The Legal Services Regulatory Authority will regulate the provision of legal services by legal practitioners and will ensure the maintenance and improvement of standards in the provision of legal services in the State.”*

### **Six Statutory Objectives**

The Legal Services Regulatory Authority will<sup>3</sup>

- (1) Protect and promote the public interest.
- (2) Support the proper and effective administration of justice.
- (3) Protect and promote the interests of consumers relating to the provision of legal services.
- (4) Promote competition in the provision of legal services in the State.
- (5) Encourage an independent, strong and effective legal profession.
- (6) Promote and maintain adherence to the professional principles of legal practitioners specified in the 2015 Act.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> As per section 13(4) of the 2015 Act

<sup>4</sup> Section 13(5) of the 2015 Act outlines the professional principles of legal practitioners as follows:

- (a) That legal practitioners shall
  - (i) act with independence and integrity,
  - (ii) act in the best interests of their clients,
  - (iii) maintain proper standards of work,
- (b) that legal practitioners who exercise before any court a right of audience, or conduct litigation in relation to proceedings in any court by virtue of being legal practitioners, shall comply with such duties as are rightfully owed to the court, and
- (c) that, subject to any professional obligation of a legal practitioner, including any obligation as an officer of the court, the affairs of clients shall be kept confidential.

## Eleven Key Functions

The Authority will undertake the following specific functions as part of its role:

- (1) Keep under review and make recommendations to the Minister in respect of:
  - a. admission requirements of the Law Society, Bar Council, and Honorable Society of King's Inns;
  - b. availability and quality of education and training including ongoing training for the solicitors' and barristers' professions;
  - c. policies in relation to admission and, or, entitlement to practise of the Law Society, Bar Council and the Honorable Society of the King's Inns;
  - d. professional codes;
  - e. the organisation of the provision of legal services in the State.
- (2) Disseminate information in respect of the education and accreditation requirements and any other matters referred to above as the LSRA thinks fit.
- (3) Specify the nature and minimum levels of professional indemnity insurance required.
- (4) Establish and administer a system of inspection of legal practitioners for the purposes of the Act.
- (5) Receive and investigate complaints.
- (6) Maintain the roll of practising barristers.
- (7) Promote public awareness and disseminate information to the public in respect of legal services, including the cost of such services.
- (8) Keep the Minister for Justice & Equality informed of developments in respect of the provision of legal services including their cost.
- (9) Keep the Minister informed of developments in respect of the provision of legal services and make recommendations to assist the Minister in coordinating and developing policy.
- (10) Undertake, commission or assist in research projects and other activities in respect of the provision of legal services, which may increase public awareness and promote an improvement in standards for their provision, and make recommendations to the Minister for Justice & Equality.
- (11) Perform any other functions conferred by the Act or by regulations made under it.

## Four Core Values:

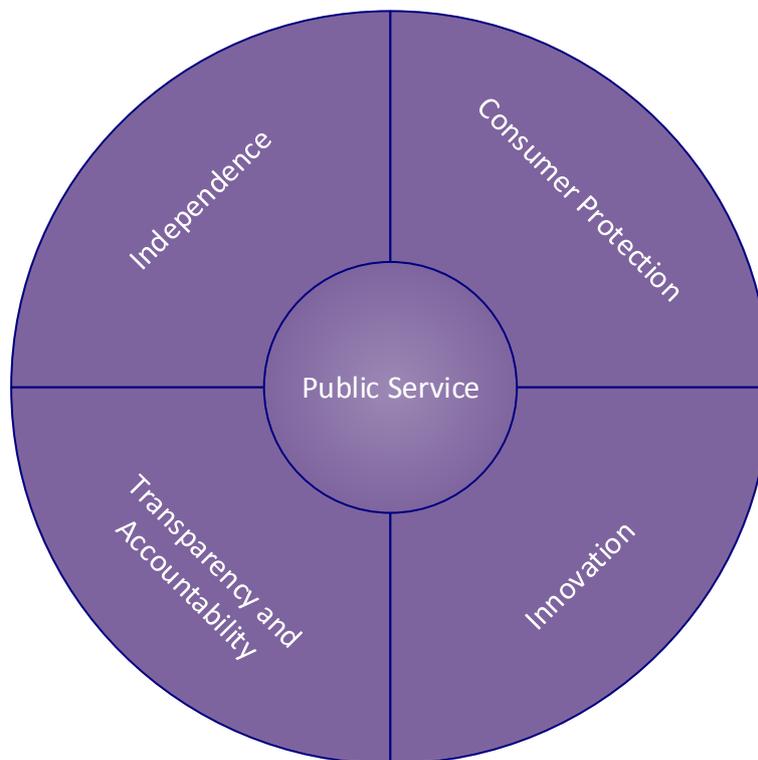
The work of the LSRA as a public service body will be guided by our four core values:

**Independence**

**Consumer Protection**

**Innovation**

**Transparency and Accountability**



### **First Core Value : Independence**

- 3.1 The LSRA's governing legislation states that the Authority shall be independent<sup>5</sup> in the performance of its functions.
- 3.2 This means that the Authority will be independent in its gathering and consideration of evidence, independent in its decision-making and independent in its reporting. The Authority will adhere to the core principle of independence in drafting regulations, conducting, commissioning or assisting in research, receiving and investigating complaints and reporting the outcome and findings of all our endeavours.
- 3.3 The independence of the LSRA is the cornerstone on which the trust of the public and the legal professions will be built.

### **Second Core Value: Consumer Protection**

- 3.4 Consumer protection and the rights of the consumer will be at the heart of all that we do.
- 3.5 The LSRA will strive to ensure that consumers have access to strong, independent and properly regulated legal services working to the highest professional standards in a competitive market.
- 3.6 The LSRA will ensure that consumers are properly and adequately informed of all matters relevant to the provision of legal services including the cost of such services.
- 3.7 We shall ensure that the consumer has recourse to an independent, efficient and open complaints process when things go wrong.

### **Third Core Value: Innovation**

- 3.8 The LSRA will conduct evidenced based research, consult with key stakeholders and will encourage and introduce innovation and advancement in education and training, admission to the legal profession, legal practice business models, access to justice by the consumer and other areas of legal services, where it considers that these are in the public interest and support the proper and effective administration of justice.
- 3.9 The LSRA will also reflect, review and improve on the performance of the LSRA and the operation of the 2015 Act.

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<sup>5</sup> Section 13(3) of the LSRA 2015 states that subject to the Act, the Authority shall be independent in the performance of its functions.

**Fourth Core Value: Accountability and Transparency**

- 3.10 The LSRA is committed to openness and transparency in decision-making and activity. The LSRA will communicate with our stakeholders and the public in relation to our activity and ensure that we make information available about how we operate, the services that we provide and the impact of our work on the public and the legal sector.
- 3.11 We will be accountable for our actions and will continually seek ways to improve, learn and grow as an organisation.

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## **PART 4: Statement of Strategy**

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4.1 For the period 2018-2020 the LSRA will have three key strategic priorities:

<p><b>Strategic Priority One:</b> <b>To build an independent, effective regulatory authority.</b></p>
<p><b>Strategic Priority Two:</b> <b>Innovation in the introduction of new models of legal service delivery and research into legal education, access to justice and other areas.</b></p>
<p><b>Strategic Priority Three:</b> <b>Increasing Awareness through Communication and Engagement</b></p>

**Strategic Priority One- To build an independent, effective regulatory authority**

4.2 We will build the organisation to become a fully resourced and operational independent and effective regulatory authority.

	<b>Goals</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Key Indicators and Outputs</b>	<b>Indicative Timeline</b>
1.1	To build the staffing resources of the	Define staffing structure and workforce plan.	An LSRA resourced to defined staffing limits.	Quarter 1 2019

	Authority to sufficient levels to deliver statutory objectives.	Commence recruitment campaign.  To effect the transfer of staff from professional bodies as appropriate.	Commencement of all parts of the 2015 Act as they apply to the LSRA.  Delivery of customer service targets.	
1.2	To build the necessary infrastructure required by the LSRA.	Identify and secure appropriate premises. Develop appropriate IT system capable of delivering business needs and statutory reporting obligations.  Develop HR and Finance Functions.  Develop necessary internal procedures and policies.  Develop necessary governance structures and functions.	LSRA premises with suitable access and capacity.  LSRA IT system capable of delivering statutory and strategic objectives.  Operational HR functionality for all business needs.  Internal audit of policies and procedures.  C & AG review of governance procedures.	Quarter 1 2019
1.3	Establish the Roll of Practising Barristers.	Engage with all barristers who may be eligible and/or required to be included on the roll of practising barristers.  Develop clear guidance on the roll of practising barristers including who is required to be on the roll and what information is to be provided to	Commence roll of practising barristers.  Complete roll of practising barristers to be held in hard copy and/or published on LSRA website within six months of the commencement date.	Quarter 2 2018  Quarter 4 2018

		the LSRA by practising barristers.		
1.4	Introduce the levy to be paid by Law Society, Bar of Ireland and barristers who are not members of the Law Library.	<p>Engage with the Law Society, Bar of Ireland and barristers who are not members of the Law Library as to mechanisms for calculating and issuing levy notices.</p> <p>Issue regulations relating to the levy.</p> <p>Calculate levy accurately and in accordance with the legislation.</p> <p>Issue accurate levy notices to all relevant parties.</p> <p>Collect levy payable and where appropriate issue enforcement proceedings.</p> <p>Report on operation of levy as part of annual reporting obligations.</p>	<p>The operation of the levy as funding for the LSRA.</p> <p>Financial end of year reports reflecting the operation of the levy.</p> <p>Regulations on the levy in place.</p> <p>Annual report on operation of levy.</p>	Quarter 2 2019
1.5	Commence Part 6 of the 2015 Act relating to the receipt and investigation of complaints.	<p>Engage with the Law Society and Bar of Ireland on transfer of staff.</p> <p>Introduction of regulations regarding complaints.</p> <p>Introduction of guidelines for resolution of complaints by</p>	<p>A fully functioning complaints system.</p> <p>Publication of six-monthly reports under section 73 in relation to the performance of the complaints function.</p>	Quarter 2 2019

		<p>mediation or informal means.</p> <p>Information campaign to inform public and professions of new complaints regime.</p> <p>Establishment of review committees.</p> <p>Establishment of Complaints Committee.</p> <p>Establishment of Legal Services Disciplinary Tribunal.</p>		
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**Strategic Priority Two- Innovation in the introduction of new models of legal service delivery and research into legal education, access to justice and other areas.**

4.3 The LSRA will research and where appropriate work to introduce innovations in legal service business models, legal education, access to justice and other areas.

	Goals	Actions	Key Indicators and Outputs	Indicative Timeline
2.1	To introduce the enabling framework for Legal Partnerships as a business model for the delivery of legal services in the State.	<p>Develop regulations in relation to the operation and management of legal partnerships.</p> <p>Develop regulations in relation to professional indemnity insurance for legal partnerships.</p> <p>Engage and inform the public and legal professions about the introduction of legal partnerships and the</p>	<p>Regulations relating to Legal Partnerships.</p> <p>Regulations relating to professional indemnity insurance.</p> <p>Number of Legal Partnerships registered within lifetime of strategic plan.</p>	Quarter 3 2018

		related regulatory framework.  Create form and fee for registering a legal partnership.  Create register of legal partnerships.		
2.2	To introduce the enabling framework for Limited Liability Partnerships as a business model for the delivery of legal services in the state.	Develop regulations in relation to professional indemnity insurance for limited liability partnerships.  Develop regulations in relation to the operation and management of limited liability partnerships.  Create register of limited liability partnerships.	Register of Limited Liability Partnerships.  Regulations relating to Limited Liability Partnerships.  Number of Limited Liability Partnerships registered within lifetime of strategic plan.	Quarter 4 2018
2.3	To research and review the education and training of legal practitioners and to make such recommendations as necessary.	Review of existing arrangements relating to the education and training of legal practitioners.  Focused consultation exercise with key stakeholders in legal education and professions.	Report and recommendations on the education and training of legal practitioners.  Monitoring the impact and implementation of recommendations.	Quarter 3 2018 <sup>6</sup>
2.4	To research and report on the admission of persons to the legal professions and whether this is consistent with the public interest in ensuring the availability of such services at a reasonable cost.	Research on admission of solicitors and barristers to the professions.  Focused consultation with key stakeholders including the Law	Report and recommendations on whether levels of admission to the professions is consistent with ensuring availability	Quarter 2 2019 <sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Under section 34 of the 2015 Act, the statutory deadline for the report on the education and training arrangements in the State is 30 September 2018.

<sup>7</sup> Under section 33 of the 2015 Act, a report on the admissions of persons to the legal professions should be submitted to the Minister by 30 April every year.

		Society, Bar of Ireland and Kings Inns.	of services at a reasonable cost.	
2.5	To review the operation of the Legal Services Regulation Act 2015 and to report on our findings.	<p>Review of operation of the 2015 Act.</p> <p>Analysis and recommendations on amendments to the 2015 Act, Solicitors Acts 1954-2015.</p> <p>Consultation with Competition and Consumer Protection Commission, professional bodies and other stakeholders.</p>	<p>Report on operation of the 2015 Act.</p> <p>Recommendations for amendments to 2015 Act and other instruments as appropriate.</p>	Quarter 3 2018 <sup>8</sup>

### Strategic Priority Three: Increasing Awareness through Communication and Engagement

4.4 The LSRA will ensure a high level of awareness of its activity and of emerging issues relevant to the legal services sector with the public, legal practitioners and other stakeholders.

	Goals	Actions	Key Indicators and Outputs	Indicative Timeline
3.1	The LSRA will communicate with the public and the legal professions in relation to the introduction of legal partnerships.	<p>Develop a communications strategy to inform the public and the legal professions in relation to the introduction of legal partnerships.</p> <p>Ensure that sufficient information is available in an accessible format for both the public and the legal professions.</p>	<p>Feedback from stakeholders on information provided.</p> <p>Uptake of legal partnerships as a new model for delivery of legal services.</p>	Quarter 2 2018

<sup>8</sup> Under section 6 of the 2015 Act, the LSRA is required to commence the review no later 1 April 2018 and to report to each house of the Oireachtas within 12 months of commencing the review.

3.2	The LSRA will communicate with the public and the legal professions in relation to the introduction of limited liability partnerships.	<p>Develop a communications strategy to inform the public and the legal professions in relation to the introduction of limited liability partnerships.</p> <p>Ensure that sufficient information is available in an accessible format for both the public and the legal professions.</p>	<p>Feedback from stakeholders on information provided.</p> <p>Uptake of limited liability partnerships as a model for delivery of legal services.</p>	Quarter 3 2018
3.3	The LSRA will develop a communications strategy to ensure that all “practising barristers” are aware of their obligations to apply to have their name on the roll of practising barristers.	<p>To develop a strategy to communicate key messages in relation to the roll of practising barristers.</p> <p>Communicate and engage with all barristers who should apply to have their name on the roll.</p> <p>Develop a communication strategy in relation to section 212 of the Act, which permits barristers entered on the roll to take up paid employment and appear in a court, tribunal or arbitration forum on behalf of their employer.</p>	<p>Roll of practising barristers is accurate and complete.</p> <p>High awareness in profession as to existence and importance of the roll.</p> <p>Roll is made available in appropriate formats as per the 2015 Act.</p>	Quarter 4 2018
3.4	The LSRA will raise awareness of its role and provide regular	The LSRA will undertake a campaign of key engagements with	Survey of public awareness of LSRA.	Ongoing

	updates on the progress of implementing the 2015 Act.	<p>the public and the legal professions.</p> <p>The LSRA will provide regular updates on the progress of implementing the Act on the <a href="http://www.lsr.ie">www.lsr.ie</a> website.</p> <p>The LSRA will issue press releases as appropriate to highlight the work of the LSRA.</p>	<p>Survey of awareness of LSRA amongst legal professions.</p> <p>Increased submissions to public consultation exercise.</p>	
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- 4.5 Indicative Timelines have been included for each of the goals listed above. It is, of course, difficult to predict with certainty how long it will take to deliver the broad remit of the LSRA. In many cases, the achievement of these goals is dependent on external factors outside the control of the LSRA. Other factors such as resourcing and recruitment may also impact on delivery of the goals to the indicative timeline set. If necessary, the LSRA will revise the plan as greater clarity emerges as to whether the indicative timeline is achievable. Every effort will also be made to reduce the timelines where feasible.
- 4.6 Over the lifetime of this strategic plan the LSRA will lay the foundations necessary to undertake other areas of work required by the 2015 Act such as the development of regulations in relation to advertising of legal services, establishing an advisory committee on the grant of patents of precedence, research and reporting on the potential creation of a new profession of conveyancer and consideration of the unification of the solicitors’ profession and the barristers’ profession.

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## PART 5: Resources

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- 5.0 The LSRA will build its resourcing over the course of this strategic plan until it has sufficient capacity to undertake its broad remit under the 2015 Act. To that end, the LSRA has developed a staffing structure and has completed a workforce planning exercise that identifies the structure and resources required to deliver the objectives of the Act.
- 5.1 The staffing structure is attached to this strategic plan at appendix two. The LSRA intends to commence recruiting to key roles in the near future. The structure will also be used to develop a sustainable budget profile for the first five years of operation. That work is due to commence shortly.
- 5.2 Under section 26 of the 2015 Act, the LSRA may give appropriately qualified staff of the Law Society and the Bar of Ireland the option to transfer to the Authority. The LSRA has formally

commenced this process and is in the process of setting up a working group with the necessary parties.

- 5.3 The LSRA needs to develop the IT infrastructure to operate a modern and efficient complaints handling system with a focus on customer service. The LSRA will begin scoping the requirements of such a system in the near future.
- 5.4 Finally, the LSRA will need to secure permanent premises from which to operate. The LSRA has already engaged with the Office of Public Works and work has commenced on producing a detailed breakdown of the LSRA's needs.

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## PART 6: Appendices

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### Appendix One- Timeline of Key Events to Date

01 October 2016 – The LSRA was established by the Minister for Justice and Equality.

26 October 2016 – First meeting of the Authority.

01 January 2017- Appointment of Interim CEO.

31 March 2017- (Section 118) Public consultation and report to the Minister for Justice and Equality in relation to the regulation, monitoring and operation of legal partnerships.

31 March 2017- (Section 119) Researched report to the Minister for Justice and Equality on the establishment, regulation, monitoring, operation and impact of multi-disciplinary practices in the State.

30 April 2017 – (Section 21) First Annual Report of the LSRA for 2016.

31 July 2017- (Section 118) Submission of further interim report to the Minister for Justice and Equality in relation to legal partnerships.

29 August 2017-Joint workshop on Legal Partnerships and Limited Liability Partnerships.

13 September 2017- LSRA move into serviced office accommodation.

14 September 2017- Appointment of permanent CEO.

29 September 2017- (Section 119) Public consultation and report to the Minister for Justice and Equality on the establishment, regulation, monitoring, operation and impact of multidisciplinary practices in the state.

29 September 2017- (Section 120) Public consultation and report to the Minister for Justice and Equality on certain matters relating to barristers.

22 November 2017- Workshop with Law Society Regulation Department on Legal Partnerships.

30 January 2018- Workshop with Bar of Ireland on Legal Partnerships.

21 February 2018- Workshop with Honorable Society of King's Inns on Legal Partnerships.

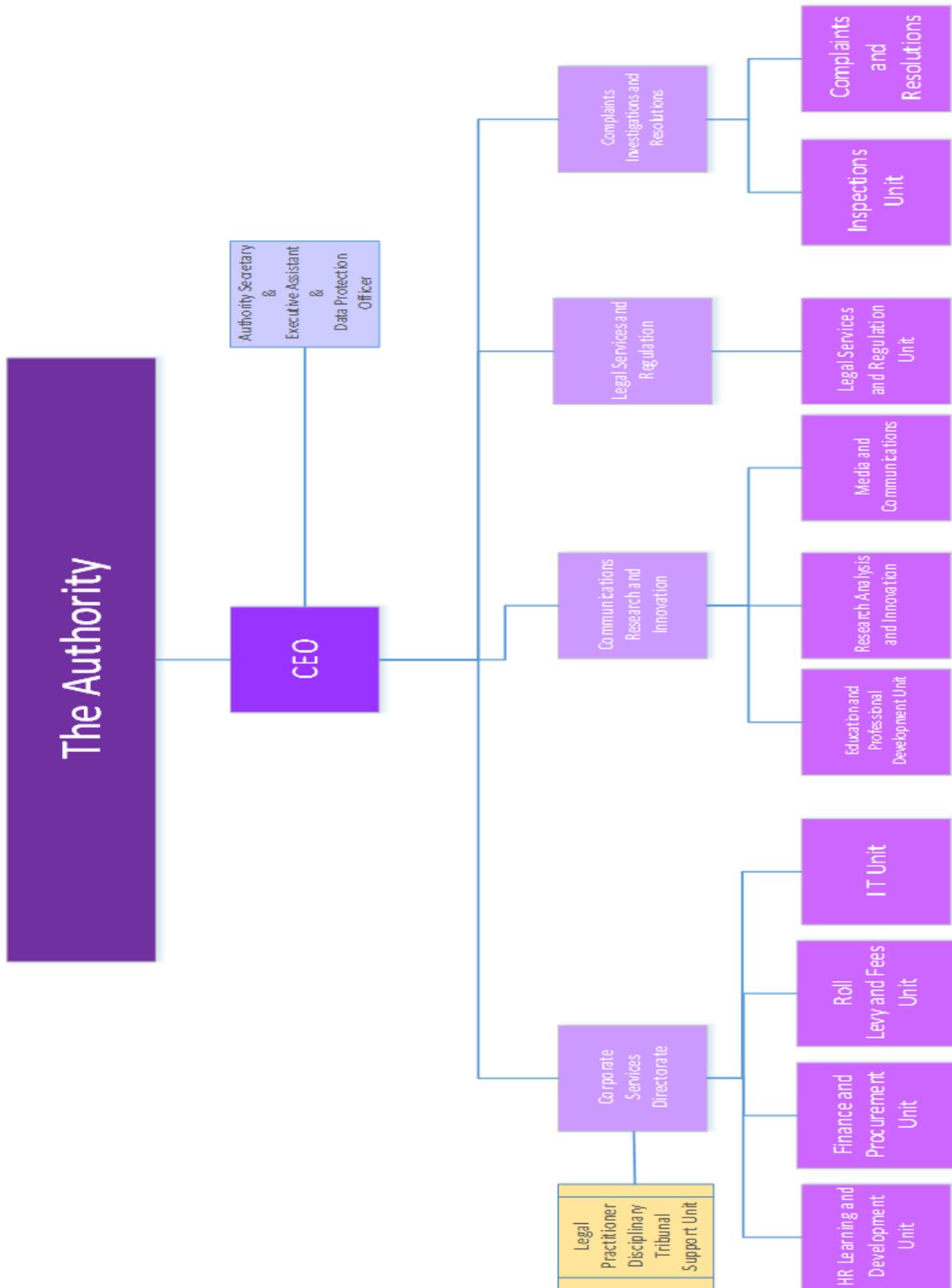
30 April 2018- (Section 21) Second Annual Report of the LSRA for 2016.

The LSRA has completed a substantial volume of work to date, and remains committed to meeting its statutory deadlines having regard to its functions and responsibilities set out in Section 13 of the Act. In particular, the Authority is committed to the principles set out in Section 13(4) of the Act, which states that:

*“The Authority shall, in performing its functions of the regulation of the provision of legal services under this Act, have regard to the objectives of –*

- a) protecting and promoting the public interest,*
- b) supporting the proper and effective administration of justice,*
- c) protecting and promoting the interests of consumers relating to the provision of legal services,*
- d) promoting competition in the provision of legal services in the State,-*
- e) encouraging an independent, strong and effective legal profession, and*
- f) promoting and maintaining adherence to the professional principles...”*

Appendix Two- Proposed Structure of the LSRA



# Legal Services Regulatory Authority



**Independence**

**Innovation**

**Consumer Protection**

**Accountability and Transparency**

**April 2018**