



## MINUTES FINAL

### 44<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Legal Services Regulatory Authority – Minutes (FINAL)

**Date:** 6 February 2025  
**Time:** 16:30 to 18:30  
**Location:** Ormond Meeting Rooms

#### Attendees:

Authority Members	Executive & Secretariat	Others
Tom Boland (Chair)	Brian Doherty (CEO)	
Shane Galligan	Ultan Ryan (Secretary)	
Paul McGarry SC		
Sara Moorhead SC		
Simon Murphy		
Michele O'Boyle SC		
Bríd O'Donovan		
Paul O'Donovan		
Síona Ryan		
Emily Sherlock		

Apologies: Éilis Barry

## Section 1 – Administration

### 1.0 General

- 1.1 Agenda adopted.
- 1.2 Declaration of Interests on agenda items. None raised.
- 1.3 Minutes of Authority meeting of 12 September 2024 approved.

Matters arising in Minutes dealt with in the CEO Report.

- 1.4 Schedule of Meetings for 2025 approved subject to agreement of alternative date for March 2025 Meeting.

## Section 2 – Governance

### 2.0 CEO Report (including update on Risk Register)

The CEO report was taken as read with the following items addressed by the CEO at the meeting:

#### 2.1.1 CEO Report (including update on Risk Register)

2.1.1 CEO Report provided updates on matters arising from Minutes of 12 September 2024 and highlighted activity and the Risk Register dashboard since the last Authority meeting. The following aspects of the report were discussed at the meeting:

#### 2.1.2 Recruitment and Staffing:

The CEO provided a summary of staff changes since the last meeting and forthcoming changes. The CEO also flagged to the Authority that a submission on the review of the LSRA workforce would be issued to the Department of Justice and DPENDR once the Levy process was advanced and bulk Levy payments received. The CEO informed the Authority that the LSRA has budgeted for additional staff to come on stream from Q2 2025, subject to sanction.

#### 2.1.3 Section 6 Report on Review of the Operation of the 2015 Act:

The CEO provided the Authority with an update on this matter. The Draft Section 6 Report will be presented to the Authority for consideration at the March meeting. Once approved, the report will be submitted to the Minister for Justice.

#### 2.1.4 Risk Management:

The Risk Register Dashboard was noted by the Authority.

2.1.5 Other matters were dealt with under separate agenda items.

### 3.0 Duly Authorised Register.

The Authority approved the revised staff listing on the Duly Authorised Register since previous meeting.

### 4.0 Update on FAR Committee.

The Authority noted that the LSRA's Finance, Audit and Risk Committee (FARC) completed its full term on 12 July 2024. The Chairperson asked that any Authority Members who wished to come forward as members of the

FARC should contact the Secretary to the Authority directly. A minimum of 2 Authority Members are required to be members of the FARC, one of whom should be a lay member.

#### **5.0 External Assessment of the Authority's Governance Performance.**

The Authority completed an assessment of its Governance Performance through an external consultant between end 2023 and 2024. The Assessment Report and the Implementation Plan in respect of recommendations arising were noted by the Authority. Some adjustments to language which had been agreed by the Authority at its September meeting will be applied to the Final Assessment Report. The CEO explained that the main focus of the recommendations related to keeping the Authority updated on governance matters and the LSRA Executive will provide updates and associated documents to the Authority over the course of the scheduled meetings for 2025. An Authority self-assessment will be scheduled in Q4 2025 once the new membership has been in place for a sufficient period of time.

## **Section 3 – Finance**

#### **6.0 Financial Reports:**

##### **6.1 Management Accounts for period ended 31 December 2024**

The Authority noted the LSRA Management Accounts and associated variance reports at end December 2024.

##### **6.2 Budget 2025**

The Authority noted the LSRA/LPDT Budget for 2025 which was approved by the Authority at its meeting of 12 September 2024. One query was raised at the meeting in relation to the development of a Case Management System (CMS) for the LSRA/LPDT. The CEO provided a summary on the status of the project proposal in respect of which the LSRA Executive is engaging with the Department of Justice including in relation to projected cost.

##### **6.3 Update on levy**

The Authority noted the update report on the status of the Levy for the 2023 Financial Year and the plan in respect of the Levy for the 2024 Financial Year (the Levy in 2025). The Authority discussed the Levy model, including in respect of the surplus/deficit. The Authority considered the variability in the Levy amount set over the past three years and the necessity to get to a stable Levy amount to ensure certainty for those who contribute to the Levy. The CEO informed the Authority that once the Levy process for 2025 has been finalised, the LSRA Executive will engage with the Representative Bodies to work on a five-year plan for LSRA Budgets and Levy.

The Authority queried the position in respect of Section 32 funding advances from the Minister for Justice. The CEO explained that the LSRA currently has an amount owed to the Department of Justice of €2.7m and that the treatment of this is the subject of regular engagement by the LSRA with the Department and the Representative Bodies.

The CEO explained that the LSRA must keep expenditure closely mapped to budget which is in turn mapped to the Levy calculation. In this regard, any extra necessary unbudgeted activity in the year would have to come from existing budget lines. The Business Plan for 2025 and the Strategic Plan 2022-2025 (and 2025-2028) were identified as key roadmaps for the LSRA.

## Section 4 – LSRA Policy and Implementation

### **7.0 Updates on the Performance of the Complaints & Resolutions Department of the LSRA and on the Operation of the LPDT**

The CEO presented update reports, including statistical reports to the Authority in respect of the Complaints & Resolutions Department of the LSRA and on the operation of the LPDT.

### **7.1 Update on the Performance of the Complaints & Resolutions Department**

The Authority noted the summary report and statistics in relation to complaints.

The CEO provided some overview on the reports including reference to the LSRA anticipating making up to 30 applications to the Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal before the end of Q1 2025 and the establishment of a new Division of the LSRA Complaints Committee.

In relation to the Inspections Function, the Authority was informed that the first inspection was undertaken in December 2024.

### **7.2 Update on the Operation of the LPDT:**

The Authority noted the update on the operation of the Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Tribunal.

### **8.0 Update on Legal Partnership Regulations and Associated Framework**

The CEO briefed the Authority on progress since the introduction of the framework for Legal Partnerships in October 2024.

### **9.0 Update on the Barriers Report and the Section 16 Education and Training Committee:**

### **Section 16 Education and Training Committee:**

- 9.1 The CEO provided the Authority with a background summary on the Barriers report and the activities which resulted in the establishment of the Education and Training Committee by the Authority (under section 16 of the 2015 Act) and the recommendation for the setting of a competency framework on legal education. The CEO informed the Authority that recruitment for the Committee was ongoing but that some members are already in place. The CEO further informed the Authority that some initial research work has been completed in the form of a review of existing competency frameworks. The Authority was informed that a review of resource and funding needs for the anticipated statutory Legal Practitioners Education and Training (LPET) Committee will also be undertaken.
- 9.2 The CEO informed the Authority that the Section 16 Education and Training Committee was established by the Authority and is subject to oversight by the Authority and the Terms of Reference of the Committee will be circulated to the Authority

### **10.0 Annual Business Plan 2025**

The CEO presented the LSRA Business Plan for 2025. At the Authority's request, a dashboard on progress to targets, including linking to KPIs and targets on the LSRA Strategic Plan 2022-2025 will be developed by the LSRA Executive for inclusion with progress updates to the Authority.

The Authority discussed elements of the Business Plan, including in respect of the conveyancing report and transparency on legal costs (including section 150 notices).

### **11.0 Strategic Plan 2025-2028**

The CEO informed the Authority that the next Strategic Plan for the LSRA is due to be submitted to the Minister at end Q3 2025. The Authority noted the Methodology and Programme of activities set out for the Strategic Plan process. The CEO was requested to organise an externally facilitated group session for the Authority on the Strategic Plan as part of the Programme. This should include any available stakeholder input for consideration by the Authority in its discussions.

### **12.0 Closed Session**

The Secretary left the meeting for the closed session of the Authority.

### **13.0 AOB**

No matters arising.

<b>Action Points – Meeting of 6 February 2025</b>	
<b>Agenda Item</b>	<b>Action</b>
1.3	<p><u>Minutes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minutes of 12 September 2024 approved.</li> <li>• Secretary to arrange signature by Chairperson and upload to LSRA website.</li> </ul>
2.1	<p><u>CEO Report:</u></p> <p><u>Standing Updates for next meeting on:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2.1.3 Section 6 Report – Review of the Operation of the 2015 Act</li> <li>• 2.1.4 Update on Risk Register</li> </ul>
3.0	<p><u>Duly Authorised Register:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated Duly Authorised Register will be circulated prior to next Authority Meeting to reflect staff changes.</li> </ul>
4.0	<p><u>FAR Committee:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on establishment of FAR Committee.</li> </ul>
5.0	<p><u>External Assessment of the Authority’s Governance Performance:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive to provide the Authority with reviewed and updated Governance reports and documentation over the course of 2025.</li> <li>• Wording of External Assessment to be revised as approved by Authority at its meeting of 12 September 2024.</li> <li>• LSRA Executive to arrange a self-assessment for the Authority in Q4 2025.</li> </ul>
6.0	<p><u>Financial Reports:</u></p> <p>Up to date Financial Reports to be provided for next Authority meeting. This to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Latest available Management Accounts</li> <li>• Update on Levy</li> </ul>
6.1	<p><u>Management Accounts:</u></p> <p>Up to date Management Accounts with variance analyses to be presented to the Authority at its next meeting.</p>
6.2	<p><u>Update on Levy Financial Position:</u></p> <p>For inclusion as separate item or in CEO Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on Levy process in 2025 (in respect of the 2024 Financial Year)</li> <li>• Update on Financial Position in 2025</li> </ul>
7.1	<p><u>Update on performance of Complaints and Resolutions Department:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update Authority on Complaints statistics and processing;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on performance activities for Complaints Department;</li> <li>• Update Authority on Advertising Regulation activities.</li> </ul>
7.2	<u>Update on the Performance of the LPDT</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on operation of the LPDT including Inquiries.</li> </ul>
8.0	<u>Legal Partnership Regulations and Codes:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on Legal Partnerships. Can be included in CEO Report.</li> </ul>
9.0	<u>Update on Barriers Report and the Section 16 Education and Training Committee:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on implementation plan for Barriers Report;</li> <li>• Update on establishment of Section 16 Education and Training Committee and LPET Committee.</li> <li>• Terms of Reference for the Education and Training Committee to be circulated to Authority Members.</li> </ul>
10.0	<u>Annual Business Plan 2025:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Update on development of a dashboard on progress to targets, including linking to KPIs and targets on the LSRA Strategic Plan 2022-2025.</li> </ul>
11.0	<u>Update on Strategic Plan 2025-2028:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To include update on programme of activities;</li> <li>• Update on scheduling of externally facilitated group session for the Authority.</li> </ul>

**FINAL Minutes Signed**



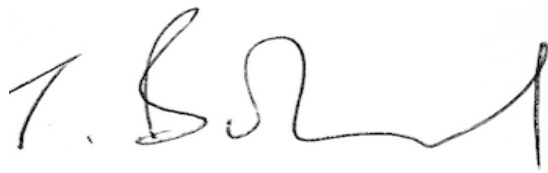
**6 February 2025**

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Ultan Ryan, Secretary

Date



**6 February 2025**

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Tom Boland, Chairperson

Date