



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF CILEx REGULATION LIMITED (CRL)  
HELD ON 9 JULY 2024**

**Present:**

Jonathan Rees (Chair), Helen Astle, Alice Belcher, Douglas Blackstock and Patricia White

**In attendance (CILEx Regulation):**

John Barwick, Chief Executive Officer  
Simon Blandy, Director of Regulation  
Richard Hood, Interim Director of Governance, Policy and Legal  
Gerrard McCarthy, Finance Manager (item 14 -16 – Financial Update)  
Michael Stacey, Solicitor with Russell Cooke (item 17)

Note: the formal meeting had been preceded by a private Board discussion.

**1 Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

**2 Declarations of Interests**

None.

**3 Minutes of previous meetings and action log**

The Board received and **APPROVED** as a correct record the minutes of the meetings:

- Minutes 16/05/24
- Minutes 17/05/24

The Board noted the action log and **AGREED** to remove the action relating to an external review of governance, given the Board's own review in May was considered sufficient at this time.

The Annual Accounts would be signed by the Chair at the staff event on Thursday 11 July 2024.

**NOTED** that a webinar: **Artificial Intelligence - Risks and Opportunities for the Legal Sector** had been arranged for Monday 15 July 2024.

**4 Chair's update**

The Chair reflected on recent developments and action that was being taken with CRL on various initiatives. Despite external threats and challenges, CRL remained focused

on getting on with the important task of providing effective regulation over the CILEX community.

## **5 Chief Executive's Report**

The Board considered the CEO's report, which had been circulated within the Board pack and was **NOTED**.

This report updated the Board on key activities across the organisation over the last few months.

The Board reviewed the information on the key strategic and performance activities, which had been circulated within the Board pack, and this was **NOTED**. This covered the review of the Strategic Implementation plan, BAU plan, Strategic Risk Register and RPA Action Plan 2023. Regarding the Risk Register, the risks had been updated following the May discussion with SR3 reducing and reference to a 'minimal' risk appetite for financial control now being included.

The CEO reflected on the two recent webinars held as part of the new Strategy consultation, which had been well attended and provided a good level of engagement. The second webinar had been recorded and would be published alongside answers to the questions raised. The formal consultation on the new Strategy would commence shortly, with a survey being issued to capture individuals' comments.

CRL was holding an all-day staff event on 11 July 2024 bringing everyone together for training, development and team building. During this, the findings of the recent staff survey would be considered, and this provided a useful insight into the health of the organisation. The findings were generally pleasing and positive, particularly given the external challenges faced by CRL, and an action plan would be agreed for any areas where further progress was identified as being needed. This action plan would be reported to the Board in September.

A CRL staff team had participated in the London Legal Walk in June, raising money for charity and helping to raise CRL's public profile.

Finally, the CEO updated the Board on continuing discussion with CILEX regarding Reserves currently held by CILEX, which should have been transferred over to CRL in March 2024.

## **6. Annual Reports and Committees**

The Board received and considered annual reports that had been submitted to the Board:

06.00 CRL Annual Report and reports of Committees July 2023

- 06.01 CILEx Regulation Annual Report 2023
- 06.02 Admissions and Licensing Committee Annual Report 2023
- 06.03 Enforcement Annual Report 2023 DRAFT
- 06.04 Strategic Risk Committee Report 2023 DRAFT
- 06.05 Compensation Arrangements Report 2023
- 06.06 CRL EQA Report 2023

and **APPROVED** CRL's own Annual Report (06.01) for publication, agreeing to make small textual amendments to the other documents received.

Arising from this, the Board reiterated the need to consider and review the role of the Strategic Risk Committee (SRC) and for generally seeking better engagement between the Board and the various committees. To promote this, meetings would now be set up between the Board Chair and the Chairs of the Committees in accordance with the Board's previous decision in May to do so.

## **7. Director of Regulation Report**

The Director of Regulation provided an update on the work of his Directorate undertaken since the last meeting. This was contained within a comprehensive report circulated within the agenda papers.

Progress was being made in developing the staffing and Panel capacity and reviewing the enforcement processes to provide better and more timely determination of cases. Focus was being given to cases indicated 'on hold', consideration given to closing cases where appropriate and frequent case reviews undertaken and monitoring to expedite workflow. Further details of the review of enforcement were provided in the separate paper on the agenda (see item 10 below)

The Board **NOTED** the report and **ENDORSED** the action being taken.

The Board further **NOTED** the action being taken to address the training needs for Advocacy with the CEO having requested a meeting with the relevant course provider to resolve outstanding issues. CRL and CILEX might consider offering bursaries, if necessary, to bolster and support course numbers if this was found necessary.

## **8. Director of Governance Report**

The interim Director of Governance, Policy and Legal provided an update on the work undertaken in his Directorate since the last Board meeting, referring to the paper that had been circulated with the agenda papers.

By way of updates:

- work would be shortly completed on the literature review on issues relating to the unreserved and unregulated legal market, this helping to inform the roundtable event that CRL was planning to host in the Autumn.
- a webinar on *AI and Risks and Opportunities for the Legal Sector* had been organised for Monday 15 July 2024.

## The Board **NOTED** the report

### 9. Comms engagement strategic review

The Board received this paper reviewing current activity and presenting a continuing communications plan.

The Board reflected on the three key public messages, that:

- CRL was strong and stable and it was business as usual, and continuing to plan for the next 3 years with its new, updated Strategy;
- CRL continued to oppose CILEX's proposal to redelegate its regulatory arrangements, on the basis that it was not in the public interest, it was not supported by the majority of the CILEX community, and it was potentially unlawful; and
- CRL was a modern, responsive and innovative regulator providing effective oversight over the CILEX community.

The Board asked that the key messages be included within the Communications Plan and for work to be undertaken to promote these.

It was reassuring that there now appeared to be a heightened awareness of the existence of CRL and that satisfaction with CRL remained high, with the regulated community seemingly valuing our organisation highly.

Going forward, it was felt that more use could be made of publicising case studies and feedback provided from the regulated community. A need to engage specifically with CRL entity owners was identified and this might best be achieved through a meeting or webinar type event.

The Board **AGREED** to endorse the paper and the approach being taken.

### 10. Review of Enforcement

The Director of Regulation provided a detailed update on progress with the review that was being undertaken to improve further the efficacy of enforcement practices and processes within CRL. There had already been some discussion earlier in the meeting in receiving the Director's report.

Activity focused on:

- reviewing outstanding cases
- setting targets and monitoring
- improved data management
- improved procedures
- expediting the time taken to determine cases.

In addition, Board Members stressed the need for information to be provided on the outcomes of cases determined, publicising this widely and using this information as thematic analysis to help others learn from cases.

The Board was encouraged by the progress being made and improvements already being achieved. The Board **Noted** the report and agreed that regular progress reports would be provided as part of the Director of Regulation's regular Board report.

#### **11. Transparency Consultation**

The Board considered the outcome of the consultation on proposed changes to extend CRL's transparency requirements. The responses received were supportive and included a detailed and helpful response from the LSCP, who had identified further work areas where arrangements could be developed further in the future.

Also, positive media coverage had been given in Legal Futures to CRL's plans being identified as being ahead of other regulators in implementing the requirements of the LSB's statement of policy.

Based on the consultation findings, the Board reiterated its support for submitting an application to the LSB to effect the proposed changes and **APPROVED** this in principle, subject to Board Members having the opportunity to comment on the actual application before being submitted.

#### **12. Annual Cycle of Business**

The Board **NOTED** the annual cycle of business without comment.

Draft 2025 dates were circulated for feedback before finalising the formal Calendar.

The next Board meeting would be held on 25 September 2024.

#### **13. Any Other Business**

None

#### **14. 2025 Budget and PCF Consultation**

**This minute is not for publication on the basis it relates to emerging strategy or policy.**

**15. 2023 Costs transparency statement**

**This minute is not for publication on the basis it relates to emerging strategy or policy.**

**16. Financial Update**

**This minute is not for publication on the basis it contains commercially sensitive information.**

**17. Future Regulatory Arrangements**

**This minute is not for publication on the basis it includes legal or other professional advice on sensitive or confidential matters.**

**DRAFT**