

Date	25 September 2024
Item	7
Title	Director of Governance Report
Author	Richard Hood, Interim Director of Governance, Policy and Legal
Purpose	This paper provides an update on the work undertaken in the governance, policy and legal team since the last Board meeting.
Recommendation	To NOTE the update and actions identified
Timing	N/A
Impact assessment	While there are no decisions requiring an assessment, work being undertaken demonstrates that CRL is well-led, consumer-focused and uses learning to improve performance.
Impact on Regulatory Objectives	The assurance provided by this report has a positive impact on the following regulatory objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public interest - Consumer interest - Independent, strong, diverse profession
Implications for resources	No additional resource implications.
Impact on consumer empowerment	The consumer facing projects carried out and supported by CRL reported in this paper.
Impact on ongoing competence	The Head of Education oversees and manages all matters relating to on-going professional competence.
Publication status	For Publication
Appendices	None

(A) EDUCATION

Apprenticeships/ New Education Standards

1. Amendments to new Education Standards Pathways have now been completed and will be submitted to LSB under Exemption Direction 181 as corrections to a minor drafting error by end September 2024 along with corrections to Immigration Practice Rights.
2. A rewriting of the 9 pathway handbooks is nearing completion with both CILEX Apprenticeship Assessors and CRL Work Based Learning Assessors now agreeing with proposed changes to assessment criteria/evidence requirements.

3. Revised handbooks to be published and promoted on CRL website at start of Q4 2024.

Higher Rights of Audience

4. Now in final stages of contract negotiations with ULaw and on track to launch the training offer on schedule later this month.

Rights of Audience Advocacy Scheme

5. A full review of the Rights of Audience Advocacy Scheme will be undertaken in Q4 2024. The scheme has not been reviewed since its implementation was approved by the LSB in 2014.
6. At the time of approval by the LSB, the rights of audience qualification requirements for Solicitors and Barristers was at a much higher level of complexity than it is currently and the opportunity should be taken to review onerous and lengthy entry and assessment requirements to bring us in line with other regulators.
7. In addition, CILEX/CILEX Law School have now declared an interest in seeking CRL authorisation as an Approved Training Provider to delivery Advocacy Training and Assessment Qualifications.

(B) POLICY

Equality Diversity and Inclusion

8. In June CRL again met with the Bridge Group to discuss possible work related to progression and agreed to commission them to take work forwards. At the beginning of August, we held an inaugural meeting with them to commence the work and subsequently supplied information and data to enable the work to proceed.
9. CRL ran our annual leavers survey between the middle of June to end of July 2024. We contacted CILEX members whose record indicates that they have either resigned or lapsed from CILEX membership in the year leading up to the survey. An update report can be provided for Board Members.
10. CRL participated in the Legal Regulators EDI Forum July meeting. Researchers from Neurodiversity joined the meeting to talk about their recent report on neurodiversity and inclusion in the legal profession. Discussions focused on the findings and a range of issues which might arise in relation to the legal workplace for professionals, firms and clients. The SRA provided highlights

from its research on differential outcomes in professional assessments which highlighted impacts on Black, Asian and minority ethnic students even before they enter the profession.

11. John Barwick had an article on EDI published in the Solicitors Journal in August.

Consumer

12. The application to amend the Transparency Rules and Regulations was formally approved by the LSB on 13 September 2024. It was pleasing to read in the covering letter that they *welcomed “CRL’s efforts to extend their transparency requirements to cover all areas of law, and to align more closely with the LSB Statement of policy on empowering consumers. These steps will support consumers to have the knowledge and capability to recognise their legal problems, engage with the legal services market, and access useful information”*.
13. Field work on the collaborative digital exclusion research with the research company, M.E.L. has commenced. Adjustments to the script have been necessary to improve participation rates and sufficient interview responses rates are anticipated.
14. At the beginning of August we met with a researcher from Pyetait, instructed by the LSB to carry out the 2024 Prices Survey, to discuss the requirements from CRL firms if requested to participate in the research.
15. CRL met with the Legal Ombudsman at the end of August. Discussions focused on CRL’s request that LeO supply additional information and data to CRL to support and augment the work of the enforcement and entity teams; and in relation CRL’s work on first and second tier complaints.
16. On 4 September CRL joined the Legal Choices quarterly Steering group meeting attended by legal regulators and the LSCP. Discussions took place about progress of the current delivery plan, budget, and website traffic. The proposed delivery plan for 2024/2025 was also considered. This incorporates the RIS project and the design phase commenced in August 2024. This includes a tested user interface design, a solution design and a fully functioning proof of concept.

(C) Communications Report – 20 June 2024 – 20 August 2024

(Previous reporting period – 20 April 2024 to 20 June 2024)

1. Since 20 June 2024, CRL has run the following communications campaigns and provided support as follows:

Campaigns

- Transparency Rule Changes consultation comms campaign including video promotion and Legal Futures coverage - Firms face new rule to publish price information for all services - Legal Futures.
- Webinar coordination for the CRL new 3 year strategy (2nd and 8th July) 68 and 71 attendees respectively. Associated Q&A follow-up responses and session recordings published.
- **CPD 2024 communications** (deadline 30 September 2024) - new video published (plus shortened version), new website content, email to membership and social media. Including promotion of new CILEX CPD training packages.
- Admin and coordination of the CRL / LexisNexis AI webinar which took place on 15 July 2024 (391 attendees). Including liaison with the LexisNexis team and creation and publication of video from the webinar.

Consultations

- CRL new three-year strategy consultation launched 22 July, all associated communications.
- PCF Consultation launched 12 August, member communications and social media
- Transparency Rule change consultation end phase.

The Policy and Stakeholder Engagement Team also provided support to the Executive Team and wider team for:

- AML review of related communication activities in relation to sanctions for the HM Treasury report.
- CILEX Journal – content coordination and submission for 25 July publication. Including Richard's AI article, CPD article with latest guidance and feature covering the London Legal walk article.
- Practice Rights webinar x 2 took place in July in conjunction with CILEX and CRL PAS team. Assisted with creation of webinar slides and publication of webinar recordings onto the CRL YouTube channel.

- Consumers – approach made to Citizens Advice help desk to request inclusion of a link to CRL on their main website (as they have an SRA link).
- Creation of Welsh Landing page and liaison with Spindogs to create new link for this on the CRL homepage (13 June 2024)
- London Legal Walk – 18 June 2024 coordination of our participation including liaison with the organisers (London Legal Support Trust), team coordination, external liaison with Allen Lane Recruitment participants and fundraising promotion.
- Formatting all CRL 2023 annual reports suite and uploading them to the website. Website and social media promotion.
- Publication of board papers for July 2024 session.
- Publication of the Chairs blog following the July 2024 board meeting.
- Resolution of the Regulation Matters domain ownership issue with Heart Internet. Site now registered in CRL's name and Spindogs can proceed with necessary updates.
- Creation of the 2024 Comms Strategy paper and Comms plan (based on the CRL2024 Corporate Plan).
- Newsletters for June and July with average open rates of 35%.

Press coverage for SRA decision announcement

[Society attacks SRAs CILEX takeover as decision day looms](#) – June 2024

[SRA Board to decide the future regulation of CILEX members](#) – June 2024

[Firms face new rule to publish price information for all services](#) (CRL focus) – Transparency consultation June 2024

Work has also continued on ongoing projects including:

- Website monitoring and SEO updates** – ongoing
- Google Analytics** – Reporting on engagement stats for CRL website and Regulation Matters.
- Review of the Regulation Matters website** –

Currently cataloguing all content to identify what will be moved to the main CRL website.

(Due to continued low engagement we are considering the possible decommissioning of the site. Options discussed with Spindogs include moving

content to the main CRL website or setting up a microsite. Currently reviewing feasibility, risk, costings etc with Spindogs).

- d) **Citizens Advice website** – Citizens Advice have responded to say they won't be including our links as they don't think it appropriate. RH to raise this with the LSB.
- e) **Accessibility** – messaging to increase awareness of our ReachDeck product including translation functionality.
- f) **LegalTech** – horizon scanning for innovation initiatives including lawtech or AI activity.
- g) **Brand awareness** – increase awareness and understanding of the CRL brand amongst legal services consumers and the role of CLE's

CRL's communication channels continue to show steady engagement across our main platforms, including the CRL website, social media and newsletters.

2. Website and Newsletter Engagement

CRL newsletter email open rates are as follows:

Edition	Open Rate
June 2024	35%
July 2024	34%
August 2024	TBC
Industry Standard	15-35%

3. CRL Press Releases

Date	Press release
N/a	None issued for reporting period

4. Engagement and Reach

The following is a summary of CRL's communications engagement* and reach for the reporting period:

Channel	20 Jan 24 – 20 April 24	20 April 24 – 20 June 24	20 June 24 – 20 August 24	Highest engagement (for reporting period)

CRL Website	Total users: 18,057 Engaged sessions: 46,464	Total users: 11,877 Engaged sessions: 28,309	Total users: 11,942 Engaged sessions: 32,218	Top 5 pages views: 1. Practitioners Directory – 4,626 users (11,932 views) 2. Schedules – 879 users (6,431 views) 3. Home page – 1,597 users (3,916 views) 4. Resource library – 606 users (2,950 views) 5. Chartered legal executives – 1,733 users (1,969 views)
LinkedIn followers	4822	4853	4887	LinkedIn posts with the highest engagement (top 3): 1. London Legal Walk – 9.63% 2. AI webinar – 8.46% 3. July Board update – 6.71%
LI average post engagment rate*	5.58%	4.1%	5.26%	
Twitter followers	1626	1624	Currently unable to access 'X' analytics	Twitter posts with highest the engagement: (top 3) (Currently unable to access Twitter 'X' analytics)
Twitter average post engagment rate**	2.8%	2.0%	Approx 2.5%	
Regulation Matters website	Total users: 1,118 Engaged sessions: 640	Total users: 400 Engaged sessions: 355	Total users: 327 Engaged sessions: 143	Top 5 page views: 1. Home page – 143 (119 users) 2. Features home page – 97 (16 users) 3. Independent prac rights – 29 (24 users) 4. Money matters feature - 22 (18 users) 5. Case studies – 21 (15)

*Industry standards: 2% and above is considered good engagement

**0.33 to 1% is considered very high

Recommendation

The Board is asked to **NOTE** the update and any actions identified.

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