

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF  
THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF CILEx REGULATION LIMITED (CRL)  
HELD ON 10 FEBRUARY 2026**

**Present:**

Jonathan Rees (Chair), Helen Astle, Douglas Blackstock and Aaron Porter

**In attendance (CILEx Regulation):**

John Barwick, Chief Executive Officer  
Simon Blandy, Director of Regulation  
Jonathan Levack, Director of Policy & Governance

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

**Note of the private discussion (not for publication)**

**Mazur and CILEX Update**

The Chief Executive updated the Board on the implications of the Mazur judgment on Chartered Legal Executives and CRL. The Chief Executive gave the Board an overview of the number of portfolio applications being processed by CRL, noting that the numbers of applications approved on a weekly basis now exceeds the number received. There has been a noticeable improvement in the quality of applications, with 3 in 4 passing pre-screening and 4 in 5 being approved by an external assessor first time. At the current run rate, CRL can expect to have approved approximately 750 CLE litigators by the next Board meeting. The Board did note that some applications continue to be delayed and considered the potential reasons for that as well as possible mitigations. The Board also noted recent stakeholder engagement related to Mazur, noting the LSB's praise for CRL's progress since the judgment but also noting CILEX's concerns about customer service. The Board **ASKED** the Executive to pass on their thanks to the team for all their hard work in recent weeks.

The Chief Executive then updated the Board on recent engagement with CILEX. CILEX continue to express concern that CRL's customer service does not meet their members' expectations. The Board acknowledged that customer service could have been better but we have chosen to prioritise processing practice right portfolio applications. The Board **RECOMMENDED** that this issue be put on the agenda at the next CRL/CILEX meeting and that a 'lessons learned' exercise be conducted in the Spring once we have processed the bulk of applications..

The Chief Executive also discussed CILEX's current financial position and the risks this posed to CRL. CRL will continue to pursue the outstanding reserves but should be cognisant of the risks this may pose to CILEX. The Board **ASKED** the Executive to begin contingency planning for CILEX entering financial difficulty. Such planning should consider outstanding reserves and the options to secure a different ownership structure.

## 1 Welcome and Apologies

Apologies were received from Patricia White.

## 2 Declarations of Interests

There were no new declarations of interest.

## 3 Minutes of previous meetings

The Board received and **APPROVED** as a correct record the minutes of the Board meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2025.

## 4. Chair's update

The Chair updated the Board on recent meetings with the LSB.

## 5. Chief Executive's Report

The Chief Executive introduced his report, highlighting recent updates including:

- A recent meeting with the Legal Services Consumer Panel, which focused on Mazur, related consumer detriment (or lack of), RIS and their compensation fund research.
- Changes to the Strategic Risk Register, which has been updated to reflect financial challenges. The Board were asked to note that there are now more risks registering as amber on the balanced scorecard. The Board asked the Executive to reconsider strategic risk 1, which may be too low in the current risk environment.
- The 2025 Regulatory Performance Assessment action plan, which is now complete. The date of the 2026 Regulatory Performance Assessment is expected in Spring at the earliest.
- The risk appetite statement. The Chief Executive noted that the Strategic Risk Committee had recently reviewed the risk appetite statement. As a result, it was recommended that the statement be amended to:
  - Measured in the financial risk area, recognising recent developments
  - Seeks and measured in the communications and profile risk area recognising communication challenges related to Mazur
- The requirement for legal advice in relation to contingency planning and reflecting the points raised by the LSB in their PCF decision notice.

The Board **NOTED** the report and **AGREED**:

- that the 2025 regulatory performance assessment action plan be considered closed
- changes to the risk appetite statement
- to update strategic risk 1 on the risk register

## 6. Director of Regulation's Report

The Director of Regulation introduced his report, updating the Board on:

- The work of the PAS team. The Board thanked the team for their hard work and commitment to a 'lessons learned' exercise in due course, noting the need for a degree of independence.
- Entity and supervision team activity. The Director of Regulation confirmed that the current Entity and Supervision Officer was leaving but a replacement was being recruited. Since the last Board meeting, two in person entity inspections had been conducted. The team continue to work with OPBAS in AML supervision, subject to and until the transfer of regulation to the FCA.
- The work of the enforcement team, noting the number of ongoing misconduct cases.

The Board **NOTED** the report and reiterated their thanks to the entire CRL team for all their hard work in recent weeks.

The Director of Regulation introduced the Terms of Reference for a Review of the Compensation Fund arrangements. The review will be conducted by the Strategic Risk Committee. The Board **AGREED** the Terms of Reference, asked whether the Strategic Risk Committee was appropriately resourced to conduct the review and requested to be updated at the next Board meeting.

## 7. Director of Policy and Governance Report

The Director of Policy and Governance introduced his report, noting:

- That new first-tier complaint rules were now being implemented
- CRL's continued engagement with the Regulatory Information Service
- That stakeholder perceptions research has completed its primary research. Findings will be presented to the Board at the next meeting.

The Board **NOTED** the report.

## 8. Education Annual Report

The Head of Education presented his annual report to the Board. The report focused on the Government's changes to apprenticeships funding, that CRL has authorised more training providers to provide qualifications for CLEs and priorities for 2026.

The Board:

- Noted the changes in the market, including to Level 7 apprenticeship funding and the number of training providers operating
- Requested that the Board have appropriate oversight of the planned quality assurance strategy
- Noted the need to apply to the LSB to amend our legacy applicant handbooks
- Noted that the CPD sampling exercise will be in March
- Thanked the Head of Education for his work on litigation practice rights.

## 9. Enforcement Review – project scope

The Director of Regulation presented the draft scope for the review of CRL's enforcement function. The Enforcement Review is intended to enhance the effectiveness of the CRL Enforcement function so resources can be concentrated on timely and proportionate resolution of misconduct complaints and prior conduct declarations. The Board:

- Noted the scope of the review was sound and it will be conducted internally
- Asked whether there was opportunity to adopt a more Executive-led decision making model and whether other regulators' enforcement models should be considered.
- Asked that the issue of enforcing against non-authorized CILEX members be a key consideration.

The Board **APPROVED** the project scope and **ASKED** for a project update at the next Board meeting.

## 10. Pay Review

The Chief Executive introduced his paper asking the Board to consider a review of the CRL Pay Bands and any associated pay adjustments, and approve the annual pay award for 2026 to be applied from 1 April 2026.

The Board **AGREED** to:

- A 3.5% pay increase for all eligible employees
- Adjustments to identified posts
- Increases to the pay bands to reflect inflation
- Undertaking an external benchmarking exercise to inform the 2027 pay review.

## 11. Consultations Update

The Director of Policy and Governance introduced four consultation responses for the Board's consideration. These were:

1. A response to the House of Lords Industry and Regulators Committee Inquiry into the relationship between regulators and economic growth. This was submitted in December, with the input of the Chairman. The Board **NOTED** the response.
2. A draft response to the Ministry of Justice's consultation on Interest on Lawyers' Client Accounts scheme. The Board **APPROVED** CRL's draft response.
3. A draft response to the LSB's 2026/27 Business Plan and Budget consultation. The Board **APPROVED** the response subject to amendments suggested via email.
4. An outline response to the LSB's consultation on a draft Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement of Policy. The Board noted that the LSB's objectives were closely aligned with CRL's EDI Strategy but suggested that the response could be firmer in its reservations and that regulators should be given the

scope to focus on issues pertinent to their profession. Noting the deadline for responding, the Board **AGREED** to delegate approval to the Chair.

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

The Board **NOTED** the Annual Cycle of Business.

## **13. AOB**

Helen Astle **THANKED** the executive team for their continued performance and the quality of the Board papers.

**The following minutes are not for publication.**

## **14. Finance update**

The Chief Executive presented a finance update to the Board, noting the overspend in 2025. The causes of the overspend are costs related to the Part 8 claim, recruitment, associated with both permanent and temporary staff, and the operational response to Mazur. The operational deficit is expected to be £30k less following PCF end of year reconciliation.

The Board **NOTED** the finance update and the intention to develop a three-year financial forecast. In response to the update, the Board:

- Asked whether any further Part 8 costs were expected
- Asked for the Executive to detail how much has been spent by CRL on the Part 8 claim over the last three years
- Consider how the 2025 financial performance is communicated in the annual accounts, noting that there has been significant unbudgeted expenditure.