



LETTER TO THE CHAIR OF THE LEGAL SERVICES BOARD

REFORMING THE BAR STANDARDS BOARD

I hope it is a good augury for your term of Chair and for our future relationship that I am writing to you formally for the first time to send you the Bar Standards Board's Business Plan 2023/24 and, drawn from it, an action plan of transformative reform of the BSB itself.

As you will know, I wrote to your predecessor on 31 January foreshadowing these reforms, but explaining that, in order to ensure effective delivery of what we promised, we needed to integrate reform into our overall business plan. That is what we have now done. The Business Plan and associated action plan have the full support of my Board and the BSB's Senior Management Team. They envisage a culture of continuous improvement applied specifically to our performance in delivering our regulatory functions, to our regulatory approach and to our culture and capability. We are very grateful for the helpful feedback provided by Matthew Hill and his colleagues in developing these plans. The plans also reflect consultation with the Legal Services Consumer Panel.

As we draw out in the foreword to the Business Plan, we are focused on delivery of the Regulatory Objectives and have a clear vision of how the Bar Standards Board must change to that end.

We want the Bar Standards Board to be operationally excellent in delivering its core functions. This means that we shall improve the timeliness of our enforcement and authorisations work, while maintaining the consistently high standards of decision-making and sustaining recent improvements in productivity.

We intend the Bar Standards Board to be proactive in its regulatory approach, drawing on improved intelligence and analysis, to anticipate risks to the public interest before they materialise. We shall also continue with our initiative to ensure that we can take greater assurance from the chambers' oversight of standards, equality and access at the Bar.

We want the Bar Standards Board to be a champion of the public interest as the Bar evolves to meet new challenges. So we shall be taking forward our strategic initiatives on standards, equality and access with programmes of work that will extend into the third year of our current strategy in 2024/25.



Perhaps, most important, our ambition is to see the Bar Standards Board itself increase in its self-confidence and credibility as a respected independent regulator. A culture of continuous improvement will be at the heart of this.

The action plan attached to this letter sets out the specific reforms which will deliver this vision. The plan spells out key milestones for the delivery of these initiatives which are, in turn, built into our business plan. The Board will be monitoring progress against these milestones at each of its future meetings and taking stock of our progress towards realisation of the vision I have outlined at our regular annual off-sites.

We look forward to working with you and other front-line regulators to ensure that our legal services generally, and the Bar in particular, serves the public interest.

Kathryn Stone
Chair