

**BOARD REPORT**

**AGENDA ITEM: 11
REPORT NUMBER: SLAB/2023/37**

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| **Report to:** | The Board |
| **Meeting date:** | 18th September 2023 |
| **Report title** | Revised Risk Management Framework |
| **Report category** | For Decision |
| **Issue status:** | Business as usual |

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| **Written by:** | Andrew McIntosh – Corporate Support Manager |
| **Director responsible:** | Colin Lancaster |
| **Presented by:** | Andrew McIntosh – Corporate Support Manager |
| **Contact details:** | CEO@slab.org.uk |

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| **Delivery of Strategic Objectives** |
| Select the Strategic Objective(s) relevant to the issues  | 1. Our timely, clear and consistent decisions on legal aid applications and accounts deliver a positive customer experience
2. Our client legal services and targeted funding deliver high quality and accessible information, advice and representation
3. We support our people to develop the skills and ways of working needed to deliver our mission, both now and in the future
4. Our advice to Ministers supports their decision making on the future of legal aid and SLAB
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| **Link to Board or Committee remit** |
| The Board sets the organisation’s approach to risk, including its risk appetite. It has reserved authority for approving the Risk Management Framework and has a key role in considering the risk environment and overseeing the Executive’s work on risk. |

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| **Publication of the paper** |
| This paper is suitable for publication as it concerns our policy on risk. |

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| **Executive summary** |
| A review of the Risk Management Framework has been carried out. This was initially presented to the Audit Committee on 28 August. The Committee provided feedback, which has informed a further revision. The final version is presented here for Board approval.  |

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| **Previous consideration** |
| **Meeting** | **Detail** |
| N/A | N/A |

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| **Report** |
| The purpose of the Framework is to set out the risk management arrangements in SLAB. This ensures risk management is effectively considered and managed throughout the organisation, which in turn reduces the risk to the delivery of our corporate plan. In October 2022, Internal Audit undertook a consultancy review of risk management. The consultancy made several recommendations. Although already planned, a review of the Risk Management Framework was one of these. The review was carried out and the revised framework presented to the Audit Committee on 28th August 2023. The main change to the document is the ‘process’ of risk management has been removed from the document. It was considered that the current document fell into two parts; the framework itself (in effect, the policy) and a guide to managing risk. It was considered more appropriate that the latter be split into a separate guidance document, and this will be finalised and published shortly in consultation with our internal Corporate Governance and Risk Group. The language in the revised Framework has also been more closely tied with the language used in the recent manager training, delivered in January this year, to ensure consistency and relevance of the training.Although the Internal Audit consultation report recommended the inclusion of a ‘Risk Director’ we have not considered this to be necessary due to the specific roles we have of Risk Coordinator, Director membership of the Corporate Governance and Risk Group and the role of the Executive Team in ownership of individual corporate risks and collective oversight of the Framework. We have also clarified the policy around risk reporting and the escalation of risks between the functional and corporate register.The Audit Committee was pleased to see that the focus of the Framework was that the key message of risk was everyone’s responsibility. However, the Committee also noted that the framework required more mention of risk appetite and how the organisation will embed the risk management. Based on that feedback, further revisions have been made to the Framework, which is presented here for your consideration and approval.  |

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|  | **Governance links**  |
| 1. Finance and resources | Finance and resources are taken into consideration when assessing the impact of risks that have been identified. Conversely, finance and resources can be the primary cause of risks. |
| 2. Risk | The overall management of risk within SLAB is given detailed scrutiny at the Audit Committee – a report is then made to the Board following that meeting and assurance given as appropriate.  |
| 3. Legal and compliance | N/A |
| 4. Performance | Our performance is taken into consideration when assessing the impact of risks that have been identified. |
| 5. Equalities impact | There is no equalities impact assessment required directly with our risk assessment work, but we will consider any impact on our equalities duty when assessing the impact of risks. |
| 6. Privacy impact and data protection | N/A |
| 7. Communications and engagement | N/A |

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| **Conclusion and next steps** |
| The Board is asked to consider and approve the revised Risk Management Framework.  |

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| **Appendix/further reading** |
| Risk Management Framework |