

<b>Meeting</b>	OLC Board Meeting	<b>Agenda Item No. Paper No.</b>	12 126.7
<b>Date of meeting</b>	26 April 2023	<b>Time required</b>	10 minutes

<b>Title of paper</b>	<b>Update on Scheme Rules Changes</b>
<b>Presented by</b>	Steve Pearson

<b>Executive summary</b>
<p>The attached paper provides Board with confirmation that the changes to the Scheme Rules went live on 1 April as planned and provides confirmation that we have not experienced any major issues and failures following the changes that have been introduced.</p> <p>The paper provides an overview of the work that has been undertaken since the last update to Board across all the key areas of the business to ensure that we were in a position to go live as planned. It also outlines the work that is still ongoing to monitor the impacts of the changes and to ensure that there are no unforeseen impacts or effects.</p> <p>We are mindful that some work still needs to be undertaken such as the finalisation of the training of operational staff on all aspects of the new Rules but this remaining work is only required in areas where we have yet to see the practical application of the changes (such as SR 5.19 / 5.20 which relates to ombudsman final decisions) As Board are aware, we are also working to finalise our suite of reporting in time for the end of Q1 as planned.</p> <p>Although we are monitoring the immediate impacts of the Scheme Rules, given the short amount of time that the Rules have been live the data set is too small to draw any immediate or definitive conclusions. However, the data we have seen does not suggest that there are any unforeseen impacts of the changes.</p>
<b>Recommendation/action required</b>
Board is asked to <b>note</b> the paper

# Scheme Rules Update - April 2023

## Background

The Scheme Rules changes went live as planned on 1 April without any significant issues.

Significant thanks must be given to all involved in the delivery of the project for getting us to a point that we were able to go live as planned. Further thanks must be given to those members of the project team who were available over the weekend of 1 April to ensure that the go live went ahead without any issues.

We are now in a position that existing investigation WIP and cases that were in the Pre-Assessment Pool as at midnight on 31 March will continue to be handled under the old Scheme Rules (and can be identified on our case management system as such). All new cases received after that date are now being handled under the new Scheme Rules and, again, can be identified as such on our case management system.

We now continue to monitor for any unforeseen glitches in our systems or unintended consequences of the changes and we will continue to make iterative changes to our processes, documents and guidance as and when required to ensure that the adoption of the new Scheme Rules is successful.

We continue to hold post launch project meetings to ensure that the adoption of the new Rules is going well and that we are in a position to deal with any unforeseen issues or obstacles.

## Case Management System

As noted above, after extensive development and testing work, the changes to the case management have been introduced without any major issues.

We are now able to run cases under the old and new Scheme Rules and to differentiate between those sets of cases for reporting purposes. It is clear from the case management system which set of rules a case is being run under which will help us ensure that the right set of rules are applied to each case, as the new Rules will not be applied retrospectively.

RPA is operating as intended to separate out cases that are Out of Time under the new Rules so that we can ensure that Ombudsman discretion to extend time limits is applied consistently and fairly and that access to justice is not adversely impacted in the transitional period.

## Website

As previously advised, the Eligibility Checker has been updated to reflect the changes to the Scheme Rules and also to enable us to capture EDI data that we did not capture before. This all continues to work as expected.

The website itself has been updated to reflect the changes to our Scheme Rules and where guidance on the website refers to aspects of our service / process that have been impacted by the Rules changes, it has been updated to reflect the new Rules.

We are working with our external provider to upload case studies on to the website to provide real life examples of the application of the new Rules.

## Operations

We have a dedicated team of staff in place dealing with the application of discretion to cases that, on the face of it, are out of time under the new time limits.

As previously explained, given the size of the exercise we took the decision to deliver the training around our new Rules on a phased basis. This approach enabled us to minimise the disruption to operational staff but also to ensure that the staff who needed to know about the changes as of 1 April were trained first.

All operational staff (and others in key areas like service complaints and quality) have now been trained on the application of the new time limits. We are now mid-way through training staff on the application of SR 5.19 and 5.20 around the access to an ombudsman's final decision.

All the relevant internal guidance and letters have been updated to reflect the changes to the Scheme Rules. However, all templates and guidance will continue to be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that, once they are in use, they are fit for purpose and address the practical application of the Rules.

## Quality

Systems and processes have been developed to enable us to provide assurance around the quality of the application of the new Scheme Rules.

A sign off process has been put in place to ensure that operational staff are fully trained and can successfully apply the new Rules. We will use the new quality assurance checks to ensure that standards are maintained once staff have been signed off on the application of the new Rules.

## Reporting

Work is progressing as planned in the BI team to ensure that we are in a position to provide a full suite of reporting on the impacts of the new Scheme Rules from the end of Q1 as planned.

## Communication

We continue to communicate the changes to our Scheme Rules through social media and will also be tracking what the profession, the public and our stakeholders are saying about the changes on social media to identify any issues or interventions that are required.

We are looking at the websites of the law firms with particularly high usage of our service to ensure that their information around the new Rules is up to date and will reflect on how to engage with any whose information does not adequately reflect the changes.

Internally our Scheme Rules Champions continue to support colleagues around the application of the new Rules and we are constantly looking at the information on our intranet to ensure that it addresses any concerns, questions or suggestions that our staff might be raising.

Externally we continue to engage with stakeholders and the profession generally to keep them updated on the changes to the Rules and to remind them of the anticipated benefits to operational performance and efficiency that they will deliver.