Scheme of Delegation
& authority table
# The General Council of the Bar

July 2026
Head of Strategy, Planning and Governance

Scheme of delegation for the General Council of the Bar

1. Context

1.1 The General Council of the Bar is an unincorporated Association established by Constitution. The Constitution is the overarching governing document. The Council is the governing body of the association.

1.2 The General Council of the Bar is the approved regulator for barristers under the Legal Services Act 2007, but has delegated the discharge of its regulatory functions to the operationally independent Bar Standards Board in alignment with the LSB's Internal Governance Rules (IGRs) 2019.

1.3 This scheme governs the exercise of the Association's representative (non-regulatory) functions. Individual Shared Services Agreements are in place to manage the delegation of shared functions between the Bar Council and the Bar Standards Board.

1.4 This scheme covers the delegations of authority from Council, and the role of the CEO and Senior Management Team and core Committees.

1.5 This scheme summarises the responsibilities and accountabilities set out in various extant documents (*but does not replace those documents*), including:

- Constitution of the General Council of the Bar
- Standing Orders for Committees of the Bar Council (including ToR)
- Standing Orders for Joint Committees of the Bar Council and BSB (including ToR)

1.6 Delegation establishes the authority to carry out a task, to take a business decision or to implement appropriate policy and procedure. As in all organisations, in practice, those with delegated authority often run teams who operationalise work related to the delegated matter.

1.7 This scheme is intended as a guide to delegated authority at the General Council of the Bar in line with governance good practice. It may be edited, revised, expanded etc. as seen fit and is intended to cover key business-critical authorities. It is not intended to encompass all tasks performed by all roles in the organisation.

2. Review of this scheme

2.1 This scheme shall be reviewed *every third year* by Council, under care of the Head of Strategy, Planning and Governance.

3. Separation in line with the Internal Governance Rules

3.1 Nothing in this scheme permits the Association, Council, Officers or Executive to exercise reserved regulatory functions; to interfere in regulatory decision making, or act in a way which compromises regulatory independence.

3.2 The Council *will not* direct regulatory decisions; review disciplinary cases or intervene in regulatory investigations.

4 Matters reserved to Council

4.1 The Association is ultimately governed by the Council, under direction of the Chair of the Bar, elected annually. The following matters are reserved to the Council:

- Amendment of the Constitution of the General Council of the Bar
- Approval of the Standing Orders for Committees of the General Council of the Bar, including the establishment or dissolution of Committees
- Oversight and approval of delegation arrangements with the regulatory body
- Approval of any changes to the governance framework with the regulatory body (ie Internal Governance Rules)
- Approval of the (notionally 5-year) Strategic/Corporate plan which sets out the key strategic aims and objectives for the Association over a defined period
- With guidance from the General Management Committee, approval of overarching representative priorities and major policy positions affecting the Bar
- Ultimate approval of the annual report and annual financial statements (at the Annual General Meeting)
- To select a nominee in the name of the Association for the purposes of investments or property (delegated to Joint Finance Committee)
- To borrow and secure any monies borrowed (delegated to Joint Finance Committee)
- To act as guarantor for any subsidiary company (requiring prior approval of the General Management Committee)
- Appointment and removal of a Chief Executive or other principal administrative officer and decisions relating to the remuneration thereof (in

practice, delegated to a subgroup of the General Management Committee with appropriate HR and consultative input)

4.2 The Council may delegate any of its functions and powers to any committee, Officer or employee of the Bar Council and at any time revoke any such delegation.

5. Chair of the Bar

5.1 The annually elected Chair is responsible for the strategic leadership of the Council and the discharge of its representative functions:

- To appoint the Chairs of the Council's representative Committees
- To appoint (jointly with the Chair of the Bar Standards Board) the Chairs of the Joint Committees
- To preside at, and determine the agenda for (with support from the Governance Office) all meetings of the Council and the General Management Committee
- To be the ex-officio Chair of the General Management Committee
- To act as primary link between the Council and the Chief Executive
- To evaluate and report on the performance of the Chief Executive or other principal administrative officer
- To act as spokesperson for the Bar on policy positions and undertake representative activities on behalf of the Association
- Jointly with the Chief Executive and Chair of the Ethics Committee, to decide on the suspension or removal of a member of the Bar Council
- Jointly with the CEO, to enter into contracts on behalf of the Association between £0.5m and £1million

6. Chief Executive Officer

6.1 The Chief Executive is responsible for leading the organisation and shall discharge all duties as the Council shall assign to them:

- To develop and implement the Bar Council's Strategy and business plans
- To oversee processes for budgeting, reporting to Finance Committee, and ensure financial sustainability of the Association
- To manage the staff, including the appointment and dismissal of all staff at Level 2 or below on the payscale, and staff salaries (with the exception of staff at the Bar Standards Board which are appointed in line with the Bar Council and BSB's Shared Services Agreements)
- To ensure the organisation has policies and procedures in place for Human Resources, compliance with GDPR, business continuity etc.
- To decide on the management of complaints against the Association's staff

- To deliver member services
- To authorise expenditure within the approved budget
- To enter into contracts on behalf of the Association up to £0.5m
- To authorise any bank account of the Bar Council to be overdrawn up to a limit fixed by the Finance Committee
- To approve donations by the Association to charities or other entities
- To be the Returning Officer for the Bar Council's Officer and Subscriber Elections (supported by the Governance Office)
- To ensure BRF payment collection and accurate record-keeping
- To ensure practising certificate fees are issued on payment of the PCF
- To make decisions on how legal claims against or initiated by the Association are handled
- Jointly with the appropriate panel as defined in the Provisions for the removal of a Chair, Vice-Chair or Treasurer of the Bar Council from Office, to decide on the suspension or removal of the Chair of the Bar
- Jointly with the Chair of the Bar and Chair of the Ethics Committee, to decide on the suspension or removal of a member of the Bar Council
- To report on Whistleblowing and Public Interest disclosures received to the Joint Audit Committee
- To report on Risk Management at the Bar Council
- As a Director of subsidiary Companies, joint authority for decisions relating to the incorporation or wind-up of a subsidiary

6.2 In practice, the CEO is supported by the Senior Management Team (who each have individual areas of responsibility) and the staff of the Bar Council.

6.3 The CEO may delegate any task or direction required by the Council to a deputy (notionally from within the Senior Management Team) with authorisation from the General Management Committee.

7. Senior Management Team

7.1 The Senior Management Team reports to and operates under delegated authority from the Chief Executive (and has no independent constitutional authority). Many of the duties delegated by the Association to the Chief Executive are supported directly by members of the Senior Management Team and their respective staff teams. In practice, SMT are responsible for:

- Supporting the development of Bar Council Strategy and review of performance against key indicators
- Developing and delivering annual business plans to operationalise strategic aims

- Management of staff and allocation of work
- Management of strategic and tactical risks in areas of responsibility and reporting of risk management strategies through regular review
- Drafting of relevant policies, procedures and organisational safeguards
- Individual requisitions within approved budget (and departmental budgeting)
- Approval of business cases for new or substantive projects with cost implication
- Member engagement and commercial activities
- Acting as deputy for the Chief Executive when unavailable for a substantial amount of time

8. Bar Council Properties

8.1 The Directors of Bar Council Properties Ltd. have authority to enter building leases. The Chief Executive of the Association is always a Director.

9. Committees

9.1 The Association's Committees operate under Terms of Reference which are defined in the Standing Orders.

9.2 *The Standing Orders for Committees of the General Council of the Bar* define the role and responsibilities of representative Committees, under which there are several Panels and Working Groups. Delegated authority granted to the General Management Committee is laid out in this scheme, but this scheme does not intend to outline all individual policy interest areas covered by the numerous committees reporting to it. Chairs of the representative committees have authority to decide on the appointment, reappointment and removal of Committee members.

9.3 *The Standing Orders for Joint Committees* are jointly approved by the Bar Council and the BSB Board and define the role and responsibilities of committees supporting the Association with finance, audit and shared functions.

10. General Management Committee

10.1 The GMC is the senior representative committee established by Council. It is established to formulate proposals for the Bar Council's strategy and priorities and to keep these under review. It has authority:

- To hold the Executive to account for the delivery of the Bar Council's strategy and priorities and for the effective overall management of the Association's affairs

- To hold the Chief Executive and Chair of the Bar to account for effective and efficient delivery of the Bar Council's objectives and priorities
- To keep under review and formulate proposals to Council for the amendment of Standing Orders and other procedural matters affecting the Bar Council's business
- To authorise the Association to enter into contracts exceeding £0.5m (decided jointly with the CEO).
- To resolve to revoke membership of the Bar Council because of non-attendance
- To approve the establishment of new representative Panels or Working Groups
- To authorise the delegation of a task or exercise of a function of the Chief Executive Officer to a deputy

10.2 The GMC receives assurances on behalf of the Council around budgetary requirements, priorities and performance and reviews and advises on the Strategic Risk Register.

10.3 The GMC gives direction to the representative committees and their executives on activities in fulfilment of the Bar Council's objectives and priorities. The following representative committees report to the GMC:

a. Legal Services Committee;
b. Education and Training Committee
c. Ethics Committee;
d. International Committee;
e. Employed Barristers' Committee;
f. Remuneration Committee;
g. Equality, Diversity and Social Mobility Committee;
h. Law Reform Committee;
i. Young Barristers' Committee;
j. European Committee;
k. Bar Representation Committee;
l. Pro Bono and Social Responsibility Committee.

11 Joint Finance Committee

11.1 Established to keep under review the GCB's procedures for preparing the annual budget, levels and procedures for the authorisation of expenditure, procurement policy and other financial control.

- To review and finalise annual revenue and capital expenditure budgets (in consultation with the BSB and GMC as appropriate) for presentation to the Council
- As a function of the approved regulator, to approve proposals for the annual practising certificate fee (to the Council)
- To determine persons responsible for drawing up bank accounts for the Association and to determine and keep under review the Association's banking arrangements and policy
- To seek assurances on the management accounts prior to consideration by the Joint Audit Committee
- To enter financial arrangements on behalf of the GCB including investments and loans and to act as guarantor for any subsidiary company (CEO delegated authority up to £0.5m)
- To decide the remuneration and expenses for the Chair of the Bar and Vice Chair of the Bar appointments (sub-group)
- To decide the remuneration of Lay Members of the Joint Committees (sub-group)
- To approve the annual increase in staff pay as recommended by the Executive (usually presented within the budget)

12 Joint Audit Committee

12.1 Established to advise on corporate governance matters and the effectiveness of all internal controls, including financial management and internal business processes.

- To appoint or remove the external auditors and ensure a re-tender at least every five years
- To scrutinise and approve the annual financial statements for presentation to Council
- To recommend signing of the auditor's letter of representation and going concern annually
- To review and seek assurances on risk management arrangements
- To approve Whistleblowing and Public Interest Disclosure policy and procedures and arrangements for investigating fraud, corruption and error
- To review the level and nature of GCB's insurance cover
- To be assured of processes in place to ensure statutory compliance

13 Information Management Programme Board (IMBP)

13.1 Established as a standing committee of the executive bringing together representatives from Bar Council, BSB and shared services functions. IMPB exists to oversee and govern investment in the information assets and technology at the GCB. It determines the common technology strategy for the organisation necessary to deliver security and economy of scale.

13.2 The IM Programme Board is authorised to decide upon, direct and review any part of the IM Programme portfolio and on all projects that fall within the scope of the board's remit. The Board is authorised to receive post project reviews, to be assured that benefits realisation activity is undertaken, and approved business cases are realised. To include:

- Projects and initiatives that cut across the organisation and require joint oversight
- Projects and investments that impact, change, alter or amend the information asset of the organisation and its underlying technology.
- Projects requiring use of shared resources, particularly those of the IS and PMO teams
- Projects drawing on the technology capital and revenue budget of the organisation
- Projects that require the input of technology suppliers to the organisation

14 Accountability framework

> The Senior Management Team is accountable to the Chief Executive (note: Shared Services Directors are also accountable to the Director General of the BSB and report to the Chief Executive as senior managers of the GCB umbrella).

> The Chief Executive is accountable to the Chair of the Bar and to the Council (via GMC)

> The Council is collectively accountable to the Membership

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Authority table
Governance

Function	Function Assigned to	Function Delegated To	Evidence of Authority
To appoint a CEO: (i) and direct/delegate functions to them; and (ii) to act as a Returning Officer for Officer and Subscriber Elections	Bar Council	Chief Executive (any functions delegated to the Chief Executive may be done or exercised by, or given to, any deputy for the Chief Executive authorised by the GMC to act in place of the Chief Executive.) For the purposes of this schedule 'deputy' shall mean any member of SMT. The nature of the delegation will depend on the function.	Constitution, Part II, Paragraph 19 (a)-(b) Constitution, Part II, Paragraph 19 (a)-(b) Constitution, Part II, Paragraph 12(b)
To decide on the appointment, suspension and dismissal of the Chief Executive	Bar Council	GMC *In practice a subgroup of the GMC shall be convened with appropriate HR input*	The appointment of the CEO is enshrined in the Constitution
To act as a deputy for the CEO when the CEO is unavailable for a long term period.	SMT	SMT. Responsible for own areas reporting directly to the Chair who would seek external advice if required. In event of absence of CEO Chair to seek advice from joint committees as required and Treasurer.	
To make the Constitution of the General Council of the Bar including the discharge of the functions of the Bar Council; the composition of its membership, the arrangements for officer and subscriber elections and the AGM arrangements.	Bar Council	In practice, Head of Strategy, Planning and Governance	Constitution, Part II, Paragraph 1
To make Standing Orders for the representative committees of the General Council of the Bar setting out the duties of the committees, the proceedings of the committees and the appointment and termination of committee memberships.	Bar Council	In practice, Head of Strategy, Planning and Governance	Constitution, Part II, Paragraph 15 Standing Orders for the Representative Committees of the General Council of the Bar

To make Standing Orders for the joint Audit and Finance Committees of the General Council of the Bar and BSB	Bar Council BSB Board	Shared Services Forum reviews first In practice, Head of Strategy, Planning and Governance (BC) and BSB Head of Governance	Constitution, Part II, Paragraph 15 Standing Orders for the Joint Committees of the General Council of the Bar and the BSB
To approve the Bar Council's five year Strategic Plan	Bar Council	N/A	Not explicitly stated in constitution but implied under Functions and Powers, Part II point 1.
To appoint annually, from among the Bar Council members: (i) a Chair of the Bar; (ii) a Vice Chair; and (iii) a Treasurer of the Bar.	Bar Council	N/A	Constitution, Part II, Paragraph 12 (a)-(e)
To authorise the Vice Chair to act for the Chair in any matter, including: (i) serving as Chair, where the Chair is absent from a Bar Council meeting; (ii) acting as Chair should the role become vacant; (iii) acting as Chair should the Chair be absent for a period of more than one month; (iv) deputising for the Chair in any meeting or conference that the Chair is unable to attend and for which the presence of the Chair is highly desirable.	Bar Council Chair of the Bar	For (i), if the Chair and Vice Chair are both absent, then the members present shall choose one of their number to be Chair of that meeting.	Constitution, Schedule II, Paragraph 6 (for (i) meetings)
To delegate to the senior representative committee - the General Management Committee: (i) the formulation of proposals for the organisational strategy and priorities of the GCB; (ii) the holding of the Executive to account for the effective delivery of these and for the overall management of the GCB; (iii) the directing of the representative committees	Bar Council	GMC	Part One, Standing Orders for Committees of the Bar Council

and their executives in fulfilment of GCB objectives and priorities.			
To decide on the appointment/reappointment, suspension and removal of the members of representative committees.	Chairs of the Representative Committees		Standing Order for Committees
To decide on the appointment/reappointment, terms of office, suspension and removal of members of the joint committees.	For members, the Chairs of those committees. For Chairs, the Chair of the Bar and Chair of the BSB		Standing Orders for Joint Committees
To decide on the suspension and removal of the Chair of the Bar	Bar Council **or** the Bar **or** the CEO and panel *as documented in provisions*		Provisions for the removal of a Chair, Vice Chair or Treasurer of the Bar Council from office
To decide on the suspension and removal of members of the Bar Council.	Chair of the Bar + Chair of the Ethics Committee + CEO acting by majority		Constitution, Part 1, Paragraph 6 Procedure for dealing with allegations of misconduct by members of the Bar Council
To select and approve nominations and appointments of barrister representatives to external organisations.	GMC		Nominations and Appointments Policy
To hold a yearly AGM at which the annual accounts and report are presented	Chief Executive	Head of Strategy, Planning and Governance	Constitution
To oversee the subscriber elections process	Chief Executive	Head of Strategy, Planning and Governance	Constitution
To present reports on any Whistleblowing disclosures received to the Joint Audit Committee	Chief Executive	Head of Strategy, Planning and Governance	Whistleblowing and public interest disclosure policy

To select and approve nominations and appointments of barrister representatives to external organisations.	GMC		Nominations and Appointments Policy

Authority table
Remuneration and resourcing

Function	Function Assigned to	Function Delegated To	Evidence of Authority
To decide the remuneration and expenses for the CEO, Chair of the Bar and Vice Chair of the Bar appointments.	Finance Committee	Sub-set of the Finance Committee comprising the GCB and independent members	IGR governance documents
Appointment and dismissal of staff Level 2 and below *(except at the BSB, covered by Shared Services agreements)*	Chief Executive	SMT	
SMT expenses	Chief Executive		Expenses forms
Staff expenses	Finance Director	Finance Team	Expenses forms
Staff salaries	Chief Executive and in some cases, the Finance Committee	SMT (when appointing staff)	In the ToR for the Finance Committee to agree the yearly increase
Human Resources policies (grievance, redundancy etc.)	Chief Executive	Head of HR	
Decisions on management of complaints against the GCB and any of its staff and/or committee members in their capacity as GCB employees/representatives	Chief Executive	SMT	HR policies Committee complaints procedure

Authority table
Finance, Audit and Assets

Function	Function Assigned to	Function Delegated To	Evidence of Authority
To enter into financial arrangements on behalf of the GCB including investments and loans and to act as guarantor for any subsidiary company	Bar Council	Finance Committee who delegate to CEO up to £0.5M Directors and other staff may commit to expenditure of up to set amounts in the Procurement Policy	Constitution, Part II, Paragraphs 20-22 and Procurement Policy
To enter into contracts on behalf of the GCB	Chief Executive (up to £0.5M) then GMC/Chair and CEO in agreement (up to £1mil)	SMT	Constitution, Part II, Paragraph 19c Contracts above £250k are reported to the Joint Finance Committee
To keep and publish accounts which shall be duly audited and annually present such accounts to the Inns and Subscribers in the Annual General Meeting. **To ensure accounts are appropriately filed in line with statutory requirements**	Bar Council	Finance Committee, Director of Finance	Constitution, points 25 & 26
Appointment of the External Auditors	Joint Audit Committee		Standing Orders for Joint Committees
To sign the auditor's letter of representation and going concern annually	Bar Council (Chair)	Joint Audit Committee	
Risk management	Bar Council	GMC, Joint Audit Committee, SMT	Risk Register and Tactical Issues Log
Framework Agreements and Contracts	Chief Executive	Director with responsibility for that contract/agree, emt	Contracts Register

Decisions regarding disputes with suppliers on framework agreements or approved contracts	Chief Executive	Director with responsibility for that contract/agree, emt	Contracts Register
Building leases	Directors, Bar Council Properties Ltd	Head of Facilities and Property	Bar Council Properties Limited
Appointment of bankers/bank account set up	Finance Committee	Finance Director	Standing Orders for Joint Committees
Incorporation or winding up of a Subsidiary	Chief Executive and subsidiary Directors		The articles for each subsidiary
Donations: approved transactions	Chief Executive	Finance Team	Individual agreements
Individual requisitions within approved revenue budget	Finance Director	Budget owners	Budgeting/business planning process and Procurement Policy
Approval of business cases for new or substantive projects with cost implication (Bar Council)	Chief Executive	SMT	

Authority table
Representative and other functions

Function	Function Assigned to	Function Delegated To	Evidence of Authority
To publish/provide information to barristers and the public about the Bar Council and the exercise of its functions	Bar Council	Director of Communications	Constitution, Part II, Paragraph 19 (a)-(b) Constitution, Part II, Paragraph 19 (a)-(b) Constitution, Part II, Paragraph 12(b)
To respond to public consultations and issue guidance to the profession on behalf of the Bar Council	Bar Council	GMC	
To make decisions on handling media and other communications issues	Chief Executive	Director of Communications	
To maintain a database of barristers	Chief Executive	Records Team (note: this is a joint function with the BSB)	CRM
To keep and maintain a membership lists: **(i) members of the Bar Council** **(ii) members of all representative committees/panels and working groups** **(iii) members of the joint committee**	Head of Strategy, Planning and Governance	Governance team	
To collect BRF payment and maintain accurate records of those who have paid.	Chief Executive	Director of Services (note: this is a joint function with the BSB)	AtP process
To issue practising certificates upon payment of the PCF.	Chief Executive	Records Team (note: this is a joint function with the BSB)	AtP process
Decisions on how to handle legal claims against or initiated by the Bar Council or any of its subsidiaries	Chief Executive		
Adherence with GDPR	Chief Information Officer	Data Protection Officer	

End.