

STRATEGY
STATEMENT
2019-2023



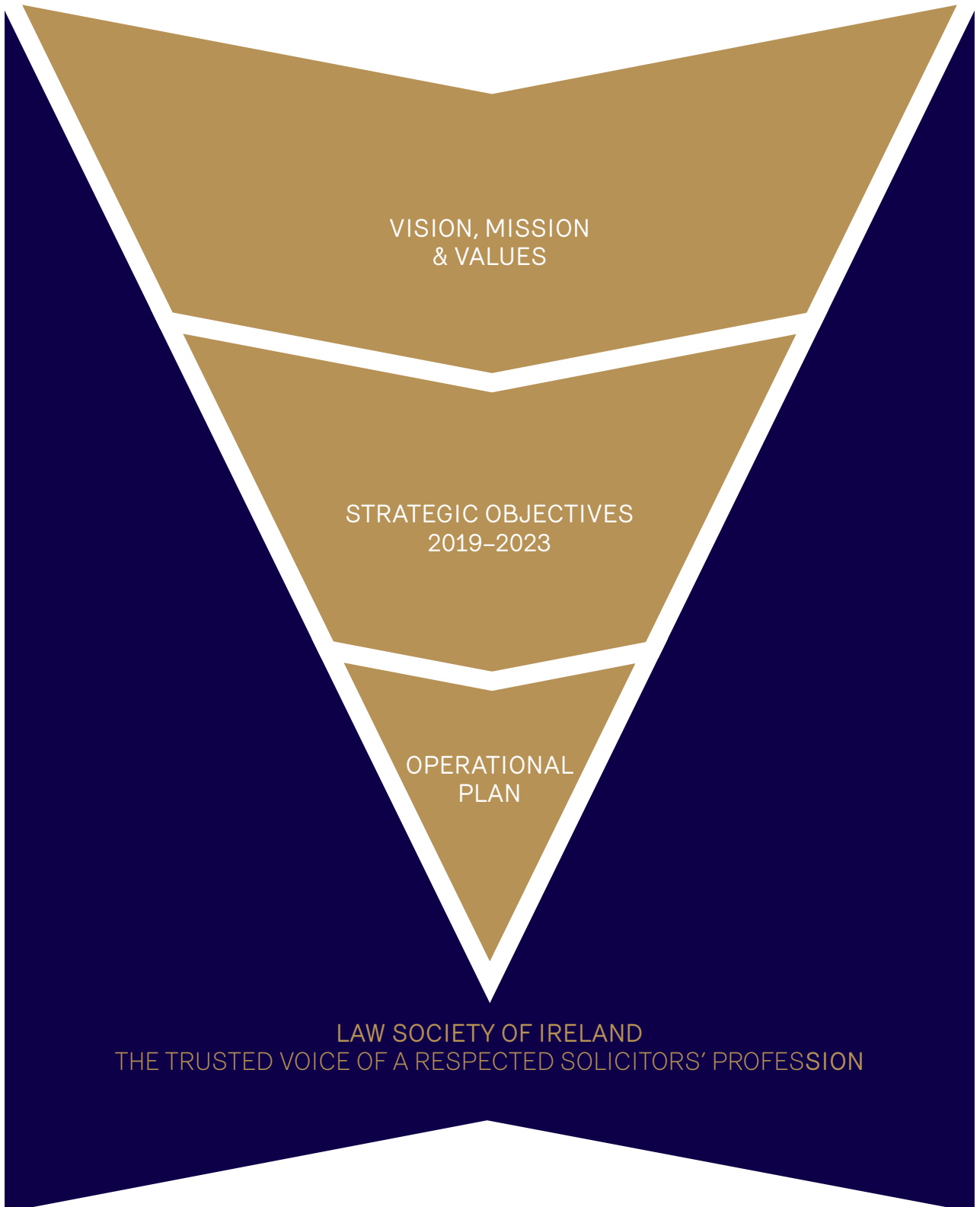
PROUD OF
TRADITION –
PREPARED FOR
THE FUTURE



The Law Society of Ireland Strategy Statement 2019–2023 sets out the strategic objectives which the Society will follow for the next five years.

These will help to shape the Society's future, enabling it to fulfil its Vision to be "the trusted voice of a respected solicitors' profession".

Seven broad objectives have been set for the period 2019–2023. Each year, the Society will develop an Annual Operational Plan. This sets out the key activities the Society will pursue in any one year in order to further its strategic objectives.

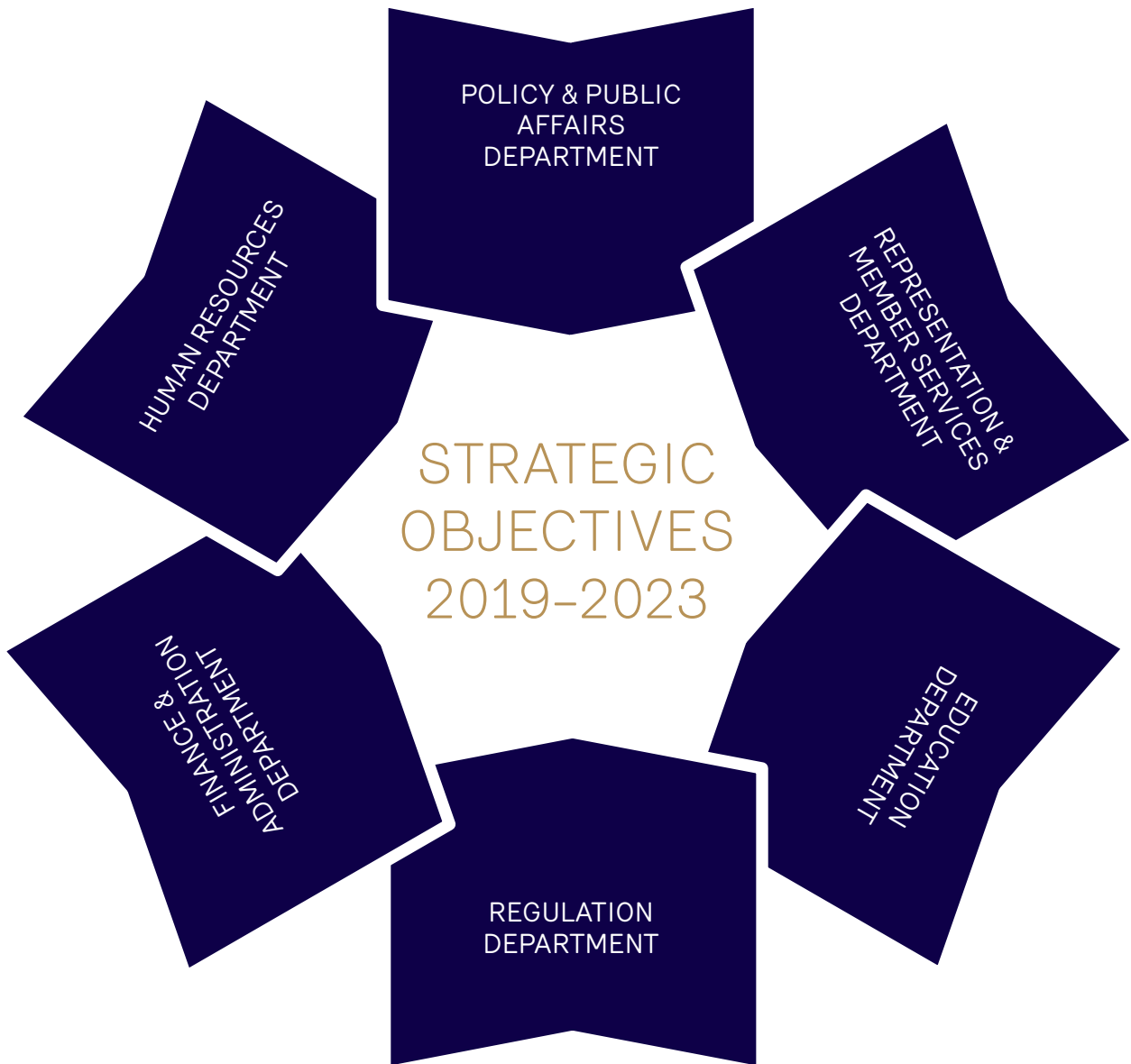


STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2019-2023

1. We will use our voice, our experience and our relationships to represent the solicitors' profession and to champion their contribution to the Irish economy, the vindication of citizens' rights and the rule of law.
2. We will provide a strong voice in policy debate in order to inform decision-making on matters pertaining to the justice system and law reform.
3. We will enable our members to achieve their potential as respected and trusted advisors and successful businesses.
4. We will fulfil our statutory regulation functions to ensure fair and effective regulation of solicitors in the interests of the profession and the public.
5. We will fulfil our statutory education functions in delivering a premier qualification and high-quality ongoing education and training.
6. We will be a valued resource for our members as a high-performance professional body.
7. We will continue our tradition of engaged citizenship and civic responsibility by promoting legal awareness, encouraging social diversity within the profession, supporting local community initiatives and providing accessibility to our resources at Blackhall Place, in line with our Corporate Social Responsibility Statement.

ANNUAL
OPERATIONAL
PLAN
2019-2023

REPRESENT
CHAMPION
INFORM
ENABLE
EFFECTIVE
FAIR
STRONG VOICE
VALUED RESOURCE



ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLAN 2019

POLICY & PUBLIC AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

We will engage in all relevant consultation processes with Government, State agencies and other policy-makers.

We will build our relationships with Government Departments, the Oireachtas and MEPs through briefings, our Policy and Law Reform Newsletter and participation in Oireachtas hearings.

We will monitor and co-ordinate the Law Society's response to Brexit-related issues.

We will enhance our support structures for the CCBE and participate in EU consultation and lobbying projects on justice and law reform issues.

We will support the Committee resource in providing timely and balanced contributions to policy and law reform debates.

We will continue to push for Government and other stakeholder support for the eConveyancing project.

We will manage the Law Society's engagement with the authorities on implementation of the 5th EU Anti-Money-Laundering Directive and other EU and FATF initiatives and we will issue guidance to the profession.

We will continue to support the President and the Council in delivering their representation, policy and public affairs agenda.

We will continue to build content on the Law Society's knowledge management system for Society submissions, legal advices, policy positions and research.

We will ensure compliance with the Law Society's obligations under the Lobbying Act.

We will conduct relevant surveys and consultation processes with the profession in support of key policy decisions and in order to inform the Law Society's thought-processes.

We will provide a research and policy development resource for the Co-ordination Committee and the Council.

We will continue to build alliances and relationships with professional bodies, civil society groups and public representatives to progress our law reform objectives.

ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLAN 2019

REPRESENTATION & MEMBER SERVICES DEPARTMENT

We will champion and defend the reputation of the solicitors' profession and the Law Society by proactively telling stories about the contributions the solicitors' profession and the Law Society make to Irish society in the media and through our marketing activities. We will make regular Public Interest Statements to the media in support of access to justice and the rule of law.

We will continue to build our relationship with the media and provide transparent, accurate and helpful information in response to their queries while respecting their deadlines.

We will provide regular, high quality communications to members so that they remain informed as practising solicitors and engaged as members of the Law Society.

We will provide valued member services to the profession and ensure members understand all of the good work the Law Society does for their own, their clients' and the public's benefit.

We will foster a culture of service within the Law Society as we promote adherence to the Enquiries Guide and Tone of Voice by staff as part of our member and public communications services.

We will implement the recommendations of the Market Study of Sole Practitioners and Smaller Practices in Ireland (the Crowe Report) to help our smaller firm members achieve more as businesses. At the conclusion of 2019 our small business owner members will know and understand precisely how they can achieve greater success.

We will actively support the Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (GEDI) goals of the Law Society by promoting GEDI principles and by providing assistance to the GEDI Task Force as it addresses its remit. This work includes delivery of the Law & Women Mentoring, Returners and Stay in Touch programmes to support women in the profession.

We will support the Law Society's activities to promote Mental Health and Wellbeing among the profession by introducing new member services and communications.

We will establish *Gazette.ie* as the source for quality, breaking legal news stories of interest to our members and the public. We will work to expand our readership as we build advertising and subscription revenue.

We will ensure the *Gazette* magazine features the most relevant and readable content that informs, inspires and entertains our members. We will work to grow advertising revenue.

We will continue to provide, develop and market our core library services for members and trainees. We will maintain services during construction affecting the library during 2019.

We will complete a full redesign and content review of *lawsociety.ie* to improve the user experience across all devices and launch a new integrated system for management of eNewsletters including subscription self-management. We will continue to grow our social media presence using visually rich content, including photos, video and live-coverage of events.

We will continue to build revenue from Legal Vacancies as we serve our members with this best in class job seeking website.

ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLAN 2019

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

We will provide premier professional training courses for all trainee solicitors.

We will continue to improve the premises and facilities used for our courses.

We will implement the proposals of the Peart Commission to streamline and modernise the process of qualification as a solicitor.

We will continually review and change our courses to ensure their relevance and application to practice.

We will oversee and monitor the “in-office” training of those seeking to qualify as solicitors.

We will support students through mentoring, counselling and learning supports.

We will promote diversity in entrants to the profession through our Access programme and the provision of different routes to qualification.

We will oversee the continuing professional development of the profession through monitoring of the CPD scheme rules.

We will provide a growing number of cutting edge diplomas and certificates in diverse areas of law and practice.

We will provide a wide range of relevant, practical and informative seminars for the profession throughout Ireland.

We will plan the provision of appropriate training arising from the Crowe Report and the Mental Health and Wellbeing Project.

We will provide legal education and information to all through initiatives such as the Street Law programme and an annual open online course.

We will examine and assess all those seeking to qualify as solicitors.

We will assist those who have met the education and regulatory requirements of the Society in qualifying as solicitors.

ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLAN 2019

REGULATION DEPARTMENT

We will, so far as possible based on available information, develop and implement plans to adapt to changes arising from the coming into force of the Legal Services Regulation Act 2015.

We will support staff of the Regulation Department through changes arising from the coming into force of the Legal Services Regulation Act 2015.

We will monitor developments in relation to Brexit and respond in relation to regulatory issues arising.

We will warn about threats to the solicitors' profession, particularly cybercrime and other fraudulent activity.

We will develop measures to better protect clients' money and the Compensation Fund.

We will seek to apply generally accepted best practice in the implementation of anti-money laundering measures, including assisting in implementation of FATF actions for the Law Society.

We will enforce the Solicitors Advertising Regulations proactively, with special focus on claims-harvesting websites, including by court action when appropriate.

We will implement measures designed to maintain stability in the professional indemnity insurance market.

We will support the development of further improvements to the user-interface for practising certificate applications.

We will develop a proactive user-friendly regulatory service to support solicitors in addressing their regulatory obligations, including through contributing to CPD seminars nationwide.

We will develop improved efficiency in recovery, storage and distribution of client files in distressed practice closure situations.

We will pro-actively enforce legal costs orders - to reduce the financial burden on the vast majority of compliant solicitors.

We will support the development of improvements to the Law Society's database and our case management systems.

We will support data protection compliance by the Law Society.

ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLAN 2019

FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

We will continue to ensure that we secure value for money on both operational and capital expenditure through the implementation of a procurement policy.

We will ensure that there is an effective control and compliance environment to give members confidence in the financial management systems of the Law Society and apply best practice in relation to set up of a new internal audit function.

We will manage the Law Society's finances to smooth the impact of the advent of a Legal Services Regulatory Authority levy.

We will continue our roll-out of eCommerce within the finance function, including invoice scanning and electronic payroll projects, and ensure full integration with System 360.

We will manage the long term finances of the Law Society through a Five Year Plan process.

We will ensure that the Law Society is GDPR compliant in terms of processes and culture.

We will conduct risk management reviews as necessary, develop a Risk Policy, and review our Risk Register.

We will ensure that the Law Society's premises are maintained and operated efficiently and offer the best possible user experience.

We will continue our programme of investment in Blackhall Place to improve amenities for members and students, including works to the Library, Presidents' Hall, members' facilities and upgrades of the electricity and heating systems

We will continue to maintain and protect the integrity of the historic building at Blackhall Place through implementation of the Conservation Plan and the Master Plan.

We will review our eco-friendly policies and improve our carbon-footprint.

We will contribute to the Law Society's CSR programme through the Calcutta Run, Open House, Heritage Week, Culture Night etc. and encourage community use of the Law Society's facilities.

We will advance a potential development on the Benburb Street site.

We will continue to invest in IT to enable systems meet the needs of members and students in an efficient and user friendly manner so as to ensure effective delivery of services. This will primarily be delivered through System 360, with Phase 2 (Education) being completed in 2019.

We will install a new telephone system and ensure we capitalise on the data management system implemented in 2018.

We will continue our cyber security awareness programme with IT users and conduct an external review of our technical security systems.

We will continue our oversight of the run-down of the SMDF and cease member contributions to the SMDF Levy Fund in 2019.

ANNUAL OPERATIONAL PLAN 2019

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

We will develop and implement strategic approaches to human resources to enhance organisational effectiveness.

We will continue to ensure our workforce is informed, supported and engaged.

We will ensure that the Law Society continues to attract a qualified and diverse workforce to maintain delivery of a professional service to members.

We will provide a supportive working environment to foster and grow future leaders by developing their capabilities and competence.

We will promote a working environment with equal opportunity for our diverse workforce.

We will support individual and organisational effectiveness by offering an array of approved learning and development programmes, to support employee development, the achievement of the Law Society's strategic objectives and its future growth.

We will progress the delivery of a wellness programme for employees to attract and retain employees, optimise health and productivity and promote a healthy and supportive work environment.

We will continue to deliver human resources services and communications which are valued by our prospective employees, current employees and retirees.

We will explore the use of new technologies to provide an efficient, accurate and informative experience to the employees of the Law Society.

We will continue to build and support a positive, fair and open working environment.

We will progress the employee experience through progressive on-boarding strategies.

We will promote and support the culture through the Law Society's internal brand values, which continue to guide behaviour of the Law Society's employees in their dealings with all stakeholders.

We will support corporate social responsibility by building and strengthening community partnerships through our employees.

We will continue to stay informed and up to date on human resources issues and best practice strategies through the development of relationships with external partners, professional bodies and comparative organisations.

THE TRUSTED VOICE OF A RESPECTED SOLICITORS' PROFESSION

OPERATIONAL PLAN
2023

OPERATIONAL PLAN
2022

OPERATIONAL PLAN
2021

OPERATIONAL PLAN
2020

OPERATIONAL PLAN
2019

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES
2019-2023

VISION, MISSION & VALUES

