

SOLICITORS DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNAL

IN THE MATTER OF THE SOLICITORS ACT 1974

Case No. 12938-2026

BETWEEN:

SOLICITORS REGULATION AUTHORITY LTD

Applicant

and

FIONA HUNTER BLAIR PARSONS

Respondent

Before:

Mrs L Boyce (in the chair)
Mrs L Nabou
Dr A Richards

Date of Hearing: 16 September 2026

Appearances

There were no appearances as the matter was dealt with on the papers.

JUDGMENT ON AN AGREED OUTCOME

Allegations

1. The Respondent was alleged to have abused her position as a solicitor between 8 June 2016 and 23 February 2023 and acted dishonestly by misappropriating client money, causing her employer, Lambe Corner LLP (the Firm) a net loss of approximately £161,215. She was convicted under Section 4 Fraud Act 2006. Her conduct was alleged to breach Principle 6 of the SRA Principles 2011 for the period before 25 November 2019 and Principles 2 and/or 4 of the SRA Principles 2019 thereafter.

Documents

2. The Tribunal had before it the following documents: -
 - Rule 12 Statement and Exhibit SN1 dated 11 May 2026.
 - Applicant's Statement of Costs dated 11 May 2026.
 - Statement of Agreed Facts and Proposed Outcome signed by the parties dated 13th September 2026.

Background

3. The Respondent was a conveyancing solicitor. Her misconduct came to light in February 2023 when Client A disclosed that a £400 payment had been made directly to the Respondent's personal account, at her direction, rather than to the Firm. The Firm suspended and subsequently dismissed her for gross misconduct, reported the matter to the police, and she was arrested for fraud in March 2023.
4. The investigation established that, between 2016 and 2022, the Respondent had directed clients to pay money into her personal account. Approximately £249,459 was misappropriated, with around £88,244 repaid, leaving a net loss to the Firm of approximately £161,215. The Respondent had also taken unconfirmed amounts in cash payments from clients. The Respondent had got into financial difficulties and in 2016 began to provide her personal bank details to clients rather than the Firm's.
5. The Respondent pleaded guilty to fraud by abuse of position on 12 March 2025 and was sentenced to 30 months' imprisonment on 24 April 2025. The Applicant relied on the conviction, the underlying findings of fact and the police evidence as proof of the allegation. At the time of the hearing the Respondent had recently been released from prison, on licence into the community.

Application for the matter to be resolved by way of Agreed Outcome

6. The parties invited the Tribunal to deal with the Allegations against the Respondent in accordance with the Statement of Agreed Facts and Outcome annexed to this Judgment. The parties submitted that the outcome proposed was consistent with the Tribunal's Guidance Note on Sanctions.

Findings of Fact and Law

7. The Applicant was required to prove the allegations on the balance of probabilities. The Tribunal had due regard to its statutory duty, under section 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998, to act in a manner which was compatible with the Respondent's rights to a fair trial and to respect for their private and family life under Articles 6 and 8 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

Seriousness

8. In approaching each of the allegations, the Tribunal had regard to Dentons UK and Middle East LLP v SRA [2026] EWCA Civ 508, in which the Court of Appeal held that there was an inherent requirement of seriousness in determining whether a solicitor's conduct amounted to breaches of the SRA Principles or the mandatory provisions of the SRA Code. The question for the Tribunal was whether the conduct would be regarded by competent and reputable solicitors as sufficiently serious to be categorised as professional misconduct.
9. The Tribunal was satisfied that the seriousness threshold was clearly met because the Respondent had acted dishonestly and significant harm had resulted from her actions. The Respondent took payment for work which she did not undertake. She was convicted for fraud at the Worcester Crown Court.
10. The Tribunal reviewed all the material before it and was satisfied on the balance of probabilities that the Respondent's admissions were properly made.

Sanction

11. The Tribunal considered the Guidance Note on Sanction (11th Edition, February 2025). In doing so the Tribunal assessed the culpability and harm identified together with the aggravating and mitigating factors that existed.
12. The Tribunal assessed the seriousness of the Respondent's conduct as extremely high.
13. The Respondent's conduct was dishonest and fraudulent, and it occurred repeatedly over an extended period of approximately six years. She bore sole responsibility for her actions. She failed to protect client interests and client money, abused her position of trust, and harm resulted. She obtained a personal advantage from her actions. She knew or ought reasonably to have known that her conduct was in material breach of professional obligations to protect the public and the reputation of the legal profession.
14. The Tribunal noted that the Respondent had pleaded guilty to the criminal charges she faced and expressed regret for her actions. She had no previous disciplinary findings against her.
15. As the Respondent's conduct was dishonest and untrustworthy, the Tribunal observed that a finding of dishonesty would, absent exceptional circumstances, require an order striking the solicitor from the roll. The Respondent did not contend that there were any such exceptional circumstances.

16. Having considered the authorities, in particular SRA v Sharma [2010] EWHC 2022 (Admin) and SRA v James [2018] EWHC 2058 (Admin), the Tribunal confirmed that there were not any exceptional circumstances justifying any lesser sanction than striking off, which was an appropriate and proportionate sanction which sought to maintain the reputation of the solicitors' profession (Bolton v The Law Society [1994] 1 WLR 512).

Costs

17. The parties agreed that there should be no order as to costs because of the Respondent's financial circumstances. The Tribunal determined this approach was reasonable and proportionate. Accordingly, the Tribunal ordered that there be no order as to costs.

Statement of Full Order

18. The Tribunal ordered that the Respondent, FIONA HUNTER BLAIR PARSONS, Solicitor, SRA ID number 168792, be struck off the Roll of Solicitors and it further ordered that there be no order as to the costs of and incidental to this application.

Dated this 21st day of September 2026
On behalf of the Tribunal

L Boyce

L Boyce
Chair

BEFORE THE SOLICITORS DISCIPLINARY TRIBUNAL

Case No: 2938-2026

IN THE MATTER OF THE SOLICITORS ACT 1974 (as amended)

AND IN THE MATTER OF:

SOLICITORS REGULATION AUTHORITY LIMITED

Applicant

and

FIONA HUNTER BLAIR PARSONS

Respondent

STATEMENT OF AGREED FACTS AND PROPOSED OUTCOME

1. By its application dated 11 May 2026, and the statement made pursuant to Rule 12 (2) of the Solicitors (Disciplinary Proceedings) Rules 2019 which accompanied that application, the Solicitors Regulation Authority Ltd ("the SRA") brought proceedings before the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal making one allegation of misconduct against Fiona Hunter Blair Parsons ("the Respondent").

The allegations

2. The allegation against the Respondent made by the SRA within that statement was that while in practice as a Solicitor at Lambe Corner LLP ("the Firm"):
 - 2.1 Between 8 June 2016 and 23 February 2023, abused her position as an employee of the Firm by misappropriating money from clients, causing a net loss to the Firm totalling approximately £161,215.00, contrary to Section 4 of the Fraud Act 2006 and in doing so
 - 2.1.1 insofar as such conduct took place on or after 6 October 2011 but before 25 November 2019, acted in breach of Principle 6 of the SRA Principles 2011.
 - 2.1.2 Insofar as such conduct took place on or after 25 November 2019, acted in breach of the Principle 2 and/or Principle 4 of the SRA Principles 2019.

3. In addition, dishonesty was alleged as an aggravating factor with respect to this allegation.

Admissions

4. The Respondent admits all of the allegations and breaches that are applicable to each outlined in paragraphs 2 and 3 above.
5. The Applicant has considered the admissions being made and whether these admissions and the outcome proposed in this document, meet the public interest having regard to the gravity of the matters alleged. For the reasons explained in more detail below, and subject to the Tribunal's approval, the Applicant is satisfied that the admissions and outcome do satisfy the public interest.
6. The Applicant and the Respondent invite the Tribunal to approve this Agreed Outcome on this basis. The Parties consider in all the circumstances that the proposed Agreed Outcome represents a proportionate outcome to the proceedings which is in the public interest.

Agreed Facts

7. The following facts and matters, which are relied upon by the SRA in support of the allegation set out within paragraphs 2 of this statement, are agreed between the SRA and the Respondent.
8. The Respondent was admitted as a solicitor on 1 September 1998 and remains on the Roll of Solicitors. At all material times, the Respondent was employed as a conveyancing solicitor at Lambe Corner LLP ("the Firm"). She does not hold a current Practising Certificate.
9. The Respondent completed her training contract at the Firm and was a partner between 2002 and 2012 before stepping down and continuing her employment as a conveyancing solicitor within the Firm.
10. In January 2023, the Firm contacted a client concerning an outstanding balance on a conveyancing matter. The client informed the Firm that £400 had previously been paid directly to the Respondent. The Firm established that the payment had not been received into its account and that it had been paid into the Respondent's personal bank accounts. The Firm commenced an investigation and identified a number of client matters on which payments had been made directly to the Respondent.
11. On or around 23 February 2023, the Respondent was suspended from the Firm and prevented from accessing its computer systems. On 24 February 2023, the Respondent was dismissed by the Firm for gross misconduct.
12. The conduct was reported to the police by the Firm. On 12 March 2025, the Respondent pleaded guilty to one count of fraud by abuse of position contrary to

section 4 of the Fraud Act 2006. On 24 April 2025, the Respondent was sentenced to 30 months' imprisonment at Worcester Crown Court.

13. The criminal investigation and prosecution established that from June 2016 onwards, the Respondent provided clients with her personal bank account details rather than the Firm's bank account details. The Respondent requested and received payments from clients involved in conveyancing transactions into her personal bank accounts. The Respondent would provide her personal bank account details to clients on her business card.
14. The Respondent also received payments from clients which had been intended for conveyancing transactions conducted by the Firm and retained those monies for her own purposes. In some transactions, the Respondent requested monies from clients for property searches, which were not undertaken and retained those monies herself.
15. The Respondent used monies received from clients to meet personal financial commitments and repay personal debts.
16. The conduct occurred repeatedly over a period of approximately six years. During that period, the Respondent received approximately £249,459.03 from clients and repaid approximately £88,244.00 to the Firm. The Respondent's conduct was found to have caused a net loss to the Firm of approximately £161,215.00.
17. The Respondent also received cash payments from clients, although the total amount received in cash could not be determined by the SRA or the police in their investigation.

Non-Agreed Mitigation

18. The following mitigation, which is not agreed by the SRA, is put forward by the Respondent:
19. The Respondent draws the Tribunal's attention to her witness statement provided to the SRA (see pages B1-14 of the bundle). There has been a full acceptance of responsibility for her actions as well as a guilty plea to the criminal charges. With hindsight the Respondent is now of the view that her mental health was far more of an issue than she had appreciated at the time. It was likely to have played some part in her irrational and out of character decision making over the period of her misconduct. The Pre-Sentence Report prepared for sentencing in the criminal prosecution is also now exhibited for the benefit of the panel. Character references from the criminal case are also submitted to demonstrate the many good qualities the Respondent has.
20. The Respondent wishes to apologise to the panel, the Law Society and her many colleagues, and the clients effected by her actions. She recognises that her misconduct let her colleagues and her profession down. The Respondent accepts that her legal career is now at an end.

21. The Respondent received a prison sentence and has recently been released on licence into the community. She was a trusted prisoner, moved to open conditions where she worked in various roles supporting other prisoners. She is now working with the Probation Service towards her rehabilitation and completion of her sentence. The Respondent co-operated with the Police and CPS in resolution of confiscation proceedings. All of her remaining assets were surrendered and subject to a confiscation order under the Proceeds of Crime Act.

22. The Respondent does not contend that the mitigation set out above amounts to exceptional circumstances which would justify the Tribunal in making any order other than that she be struck off the Roll.

Penalty proposed

23. It is therefore proposed that the Respondent should be struck off the Roll of Solicitors.

24. With respect to costs, it is further agreed that there should be no order as to costs due to the Respondent's financial circumstances.

Explanation as to why such an order would be in accordance with the Tribunal's sanctions guidance

25. The Respondent has admitted dishonesty. The Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal's "Guidance Note on Sanction" (10th edition), at paragraph 47, states that: *"The most serious misconduct involves dishonesty, whether or not leading to criminal proceedings and criminal penalties. A finding that an allegation of dishonesty has been proved will almost invariably lead to striking off, save in exceptional circumstances (see **Solicitors Regulation Authority v Sharma [2010] EWHC 2022 (Admin)**)."*

26. In **Sharma [2010] EWHC 2022 (Admin)** at [13] Coulson J summarised the consequences of a finding of dishonesty by the Tribunal against a solicitor as follows:

"(a) Save in exceptional circumstances, a finding of dishonesty will lead to the solicitor being struck off the Roll ... That is the normal and necessary penalty in cases of dishonesty..."

(b) There will be a small residual category where striking off will be a disproportionate sentence in all the circumstances ...

(c) In deciding whether or not a particular case falls into that category, relevant factors will include the nature, scope and extent of the dishonesty itself, whether it was momentary ... or over a lengthy period of time ... whether it was a benefit to the solicitor ... and whether it had an adverse effect on others..."

27. The Respondent abused her position to undertake fraudulent activity and have clients pay monies into her bank account over a period of over 6 years. The Respondent held a position of trust and was expected to safeguard the interests of clients of the Firm

and the Firm. The Respondent was taking payments from clients for property searches that she was not conducting. Clients were paying monies into her personal bank account believing they were paying the Firm for services or disbursements as part of their conveyancing matters. The Respondent was using the money paid into her account to settle her debts and for her personal benefit. The Respondent did not have authority from the clients to use their payments for her own benefit or from the Firm to provide her personal bank account to clients in place of the Firm's bank account. The conduct resulted in a significant criminal conviction which attracted a custodial sentence.

28. These were serious acts of dishonesty committed over an extended period which benefitted the Respondent to the detriment of the Firm's clients, her colleagues and the profession and the case plainly does not fall within the small residual category where striking off would be a disproportionate sentence. Accordingly, the fair and proportionate penalty in this case is for the Respondent to be struck off the Roll of Solicitors.

Dated this th 3 day of September 2026

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14 Sept 2026

Head – Investigation, Enforcement and Litigation
On behalf of the SRA

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Fiona Blair Parsons
Respondent