

Solicitor fined for executry delays

A Musselburgh solicitor has been fined £5,000 for delays in dealing with an executry case.

Gary Robertson Pirrie (50) a partner in the firm of Alex Mitchell & Sons in Musselburgh delayed in making payment of a bequest in terms of a will for over six years according to the findings of the Scottish Solicitors' Discipline Tribunal (SSDT).

Payments of other legacies were dealt with first and the solicitor had difficulties in contacting the beneficiary, meaning that it took years for him to contact the rightful person. The Tribunal found that he failed to make proper attempts to find the beneficiary of a legacy of £5,000 from a relatively small estate. Even when the beneficiary was traced Mr Pirrie only made partial payment and it took a further two years for the balance to be settled.

There were other delays in correspondence with another legal firm engaged by the beneficiary, leading the SSDT to determine a ruling of professional misconduct.

Mr Pirrie had previously been found guilty of professional misconduct and he pleaded guilty to this charge.

The tribunal found that Mr Pirrie has since taken steps to set up a 'better support network', although there is a service complaint being considered by the Scottish Legal Complaints Commission.