

Kevin Lang moves up to interim Chief Executive at the Law Society

Kevin Lang is to become interim chief executive at The Law Society of Scotland at the end of this month.

The Law Society is the professional body and also the regulator of the membership body of around 13,000 solicitors in Scotland, housed in Atria One on Morrison Street since 2015 after many decades in a Georgian building in Drumsheugh Gardens which the Society then sold.

Currently Executive Director of External Relations at the Law Society, he will take up the interim post when Diane McGiffen steps down as planned from Monday 28 April. A process to recruit the next permanent chief executive is underway.

It is not yet known whether Mr Lang will apply for the permanent role, but he is also a Liberal Democrat councillor in Edinburgh. He has announced that he will step back temporarily from the position of group leader and [Cllr Ed Thornley](#) will take over those duties for now.

Christine Jardine, Liberal Democrat MP for Edinburgh West, said: "Kevin has been an energetic and dedicated group leader and I thank him for all his hard work. I'm certain he will carry on being a determined champion for the people of Almond and I look forward to continuing to work with him to make sure the issues local people care about get the attention they deserve.

“I would also like to welcome Ed Thornley to the role of group leader. I have worked closely with him for many years and I know he will do a great job for the people of Edinburgh.”

In the year to March 2024, Cllr Lang, as group leader, received a salary of £37,691.04 and claimed only £195 for conference expenses during the financial year. He is one of four councillors who represent Almond Ward in the west of the city, and one of three Liberal Democrats in the area. He has declared on the councillors' register of interests his position at the Law Society and also that he owns a property in Edinburgh. Mr Lang's wife is a member of the Board of North Edinburgh Arts and vice-chair of Career Ready Edinburgh & Lothian.

The 46-year-old is a former pupil at the Royal High School in Edinburgh.

Mr Lang was appointed to The Law Society of Scotland Services Limited on 17 March 2025 and this entity reported an operating loss for the year to October 2023 of £7,190 and an overall net loss of £8,743 which is down from the previous year when a loss of £13,675 was reported. The company is a separate organisation from the Society and its purpose is said to be “to undertake certain commercial opportunities on behalf of The Law Society of Scotland”.



Cllrs Kevin Lang and Louise Young with candidate Christine Jardine and Scottish Liberal Democrat leader Alex Cole-Hamilton



Cllr Kevin Lang Almond Ward in May 2022 at the City Chambers

ahead of supporting the minority Labour group into power

Diane McGiffen

Outgoing CEO of The Law Society of Scotland, Diane McGiffen, said on announcing her resignation after 18 months in the job: "The Law Society of Scotland is committed to upholding the rule of law, promoting access to justice, and acting for solicitors and the public. It has been an enormous privilege and a real pleasure to work alongside my colleagues to support Scotland's solicitor profession to thrive and uphold those timeless values

"I have been very proud to spend time with our many members across Scotland, to work with our committed Council members, and to see first-hand the care, consideration and expertise with which the Society's many volunteers comment and advise on legislation and areas of legal practice.

"There are many exciting opportunities ahead for the Society and it is the right time for me to pass the baton to a successor next year."

Susan Murray, President of the Law Society of Scotland, said today: "Since joining the Law Society in 2022, Diane has spearheaded the Society's strategic development, and we now look to meet future challenges and seek out further opportunities for Scotland's solicitor profession and the wider legal sector. In her time with us, Diane has championed the legal profession in Scotland, and I thank her for all of the support she has provided to members, as well as her work in leading the staff team at the Society. I wish her a successful future.

"I'm very pleased that Kevin Lang will be our interim chief executive until the Society makes a permanent chief executive appointment.

“Kevin is highly experienced, having held senior positions at the Law Society for 14 years and led on many high profile and complex areas of work including legal aid, policy and the current Regulation of Legal Services (Scotland) Bill. His interim appointment will ensure stability and continuity until a new chief executive is in post.”

Mr Lang said: “Diane has been a huge asset to the Law Society during her time as chief executive and I wish her the very best for the future.

“It’s a huge honour to be asked to be interim chief executive of the Law Society. My focus is to ensure the organisation continues to deliver for our members and for the public as we transition towards a new permanent chief executive being in place.

“This is a critical period for us at the Society, particularly with the final stages of the Regulation of Legal Services Bill expected soon. The Bill is the fruition of almost a decade of campaigning by the Society and, as we approach Stage 3, it’s vital that we ensure it brings greater protections for legal services consumers as well as much needed modernisation to the current regulatory structure, benefitting both solicitors and clients alike.

“Separate from the Bill, I plan to drive forward the strategic goals set by our Council and will look forward to delivering a smooth handover to our new permanent chief executive once appointed.”

Regulation of Legal Services (Scotland) Bill)

The Regulation of Legal Services (Scotland) Bill is at Stage 3 in The Scottish Parliament, although a date for the committee meeting is yet to be fixed. The bill was first introduced in

April 2023 and is now at the stage of final amendments before it can be passed into law. It is aimed at regulating legal services and providing a modern regulatory framework. The Law Society of Scotland was critical of the bill which it said risked undermining the rule of law.

The Law Society pointed out last year that the Bill as currently drafted gave Scottish Ministers sweeping new powers to intervene in the way lawyers work, including approving rules on law firms and even regulating lawyers directly. In its report, the cross-party committee said it shared these concerns and said “there is no place for Ministerial powers in the Bill and these should be removed”.

In February 2024 Sheila Webster, then President of the Law Society of Scotland, said: “This major cross-party report from MSPs shows how wrong the Scottish Government was to try and control the way the legal sector is regulated, a position not seen in any other western democracy.

“It is so often lawyers who are responsible for challenging the government on behalf of their clients and protecting citizens from the excessive use of power by the state. The current Bill risked fatally undermining the independence of the legal sector and the rule of law. It’s why you saw such widespread concern, from Scotland’s most senior judges through to the International Bar Association.

“The Government’s recent promises to significantly amend the Bill and scale back these new political powers are welcome. However, we still need to see the specific amendments before we can be certain they address the wave of criticism and concern expressed over the last year.”

By February this year the Law Society acknowledged that “considerable improvements” had been made to the bill.

David Gordon the Non-Solicitor Convener of the Regulatory Committee at the Law Society sent a lengthy letter to Siobhan

Brown MSP the Minister for Victims and Community Safety
setting out their residual concerns.



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