Lester Aldridge Litigation Partner to Become District Judge

Michael Veal, Partner at Dorset's largest law firm, Lester Aldridge, is leaving after almost 22 years to become a full-time judge.

Michael started his career at LA in 2001 as a paralegal in the Residential Property team and later the same year started his training contract with the firm. He qualified into the litigation team in 2003 and has worked in this area of law since, with a particular focus on regulatory and health and safety cases.

In November 2007, Michael became a partner. During his career, he has worked on some great cases, including a series of criminal appeals which have developed the modern law of health and safety, and a human rights case for the UK's largest care provider at the time in the House of Lords.

In 2019, Michael was appointed to the part-time judicial post of Recorder, presiding over family cases (in addition to his practice).

"I have loved that every day has been different. Litigation has been about the people I've met and the skills I've developed as a result. From working with clients to opponents, barristers, experts, and victims – with every interaction, you develop new skills, from argument to negotiation, and learn something new about the world. No two days are the same," says Michael.

"Looking over my career at LA, I will miss the people the most. I am proud, too, to have worked for a firm where the management team are accepting of sound commercial ideas, allowing individuals to develop in a way which plays to their personal strengths and to the overall benefit of the firm."

Michael is leaving LA to become a full-time District Judge in Bournemouth, dealing with both civil and family cases.

Managing Partner Matthew Barrow says, "Michael has made a very significant contribution to Lester Aldridge over the past two decades. He has a wealth of experience in advising clients as well as representing them in court, including in some very high-profile or sensitive cases, and those which have shaped the law. He will be missed but we wish him all the best in his next venture."

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