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Woodville Paid £37M To Director-Linked Firms Before Collapse

By **Robbie Kalus**

Law360, London (September 10, 2026, 12:37 PM BST) -- Motor finance litigation-funder Woodville paid upward of £37 million ($50 million) to companies connected to its directors before it collapsed into administration, according to a report by the administrators.

The payments were part of a series of transactions. They included loans and advances to entities associated with the company's directors, managers and related businesses, in which the "purpose, commercial rationale and recoverability remains under review" the report from joint administrators at Kroll Advisory said.

Woodville Consultants, which was based in Wales, entered into administration in July, the month in which the Financial Conduct Authority announced a partial suspension of its motor finance compensation program. Woodville, which had been backing the motor finance complaints, owed £298 million to unsecured creditors, company records show.

The company funded law firms pursuing consumer claims over what they said were undisclosed commissions on motor finance loans. Woodville raised money through loan notes — a form of high-risk mini-bond that promises investors fixed quarterly returns — which the FCA has advised consumers to avoid.

"There is a disparity between the total funds raised and those funds that have been ultimately lent to law firms," according to Paul Muscatt, a solicitor acting for creditors. Muscatt spoke to Law360 on Tuesday, before the report was released to creditors.

According to Woodville's promotional material, the company had since 2019 "successfully funded over 300,000 legal claims, helping thousands of consumers get access to justice."

But the litigation-funder was forced into administration by investors. They had argued that the FCA's pause on the motor finance complaints process prevented the underlying law firms from moving ahead with claims and recovering money that would have been used to repay Woodville.

The latest administrators' report shows that millions of pounds in Woodville funds were sent to companies linked to its directors, Ann Marie Bell and Peter Legge. They included entities connected to an investment company, Integrity Protect 1 Ltd.

"In excess of £17 million of funds appear to have been paid to certain Integrity entities, which does not seem in accordance with the Woodville investment scheme," Muscatt said. He described the transfers as "hard to understand and justify."

The administrators said they are investigating these connected entities and will seek repayment and supporting evidence for the basis upon which money was received and retained. The administrators also said that some connected party loans had accrued interest at rates comparable to those applied to law firm funding arrangements.

They said that, although the rationale for applying such rates was under review, "the existence of substantial interest-bearing balances between connected parties has prompted further examination of the commerciality of these transactions."

Law360 analyzed the accounts of businesses linked to Integrity Protect, including another investment company, Integrity Life Solutions Ltd, where Bell is a director.

Integrity Life Solutions still paid coupons to investors despite being dormant from 2019 and recording no income, according to the bank statements of an investor in the business seen by Law360. Integrity Life Solutions also repaid several loans as late as October 2022, filings at Companies House show.

Integrity Protect 1 was placed under restrictions by the FCA in 2022 when the regulator ruled that it posed a significant risk to consumers. It ceased to be registered with the FCA in 2023.

The Woodville administrators have also "identified some unusual and unexpected transactions," Muscatt said. Company accounts of those transactions stated that some law firms were the recipients of funds, "but, actually, when checked with the bank, the funds went to different entities first," Muscatt added.

Muscatt alleged that Bell and Legge are not fully cooperating with the investigation and said it is likely that the administrators "will be required to exercise their enforcement powers to compel cooperation."

Insolvency practitioners have also warned investors that their money might be difficult to recover.

Woodville's lending to law firms was concentrated among 10 firms, mostly based in Wales and northwest England, "as opposed to larger, established national practices," according to the administrators' report. The report added that Woodville "surprisingly" appears to hold security over only one law firm — funding was provided to the other firms where no security has been registered against those businesses at Companies House.

The administrators told investors that they have "significant concerns as to the realisable value of the loan book, and it appears clear that there will be a significant shortfall from law firm realisations as compared to the amounts due."

Law360 reported in August that the administrators were investigating whether Woodville lied to investors over the protection offered by insurance bonds. Muscatt said that Woodville bought a large number of after-the-event insurance policies, including in scenarios in which "litigation or liability was not in issue."

Bell did not immediately respond when approached for comment via phone and email. Legge could not be reached for comment.

--Editing by Ed Harris.
