

JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION (JAC) MEETING

11 March 2021

Minutes of Board Meeting

Present	
Commissioners	Staff
Ajay Kakkar (Chairman)	Chief Executive
Sue Carr (Vice Chairman)	Deputy Chief Executive
Mathangi Asokan	Head of Operations and Digital
Christa Christensen	Head of Operational Delivery
Anuja Dhir	Head of Selection Policy
Sarah Falk	Head of Diversity and Engagement
Emir Feisal	Head of Secretariat/Board Secretary
Jane Furniss	Head of Targeted Outreach and Research
Sue Hoyle	
Andrew Kennon	
Sarah Lee	
Barry Morgan	
Greg Sinfield	
Simon Wessely	
Brie Stevens-Hoare	
Apologies: None.	

1. Apologies and matters arising

- 1.1 The minutes of the 11 February 2021 meeting were agreed.
- 1.2 No interests were declared by any Commissioner in respect of any matter under discussion on the agenda.

2. Chief Executive's Report and Management Information Pack

2.1 The Chief Executive:

- reported on the agreed two-year programme with HMCTS and the work conducted to date;
- provided an update on the JAC's staff capacity; and
- provided an update on the JAC's financial position.

3. Report back from Committees and Working Groups

- 3.1 The Chairman asked Commissioners to report back on recent meetings of committees and working groups.

Advisory Group

- 3.2 Jane Furniss (JF) provided an update to the Board on the Advisory Group meeting which took place on 9 March.
- 3.3 The Group considered situational questions for Fee-Paid Medical Members of the Mental Health Review Tribunal for Wales and for Fee-Paid Valuer Chairs and Members, and the online scenario test for Deputy District Judge (Magistrates' Court).

4. Chairman's Report

- 4.1 The Chairman briefed the Board on his recent meeting with the Lord Chief Justice.
- 4.2 Sarah Lee reported that she took part in an outreach event hosted by the Law Society for in-house solicitors.
- 4.3 Jane Furniss reported that she spoke at an outreach event hosted by the Society of Legal Scholars for legal academics.

5. Business Continuity to September 2021

- 5.1 The Head of Operations and Digital presented a paper updating the Board on the business recovery activity of those exercises paused in March 2020.
- 5.2 The Board were also asked to consider a Business Continuity plan until the end of September 2021.
- 5.3 Following discussion, the Board endorsed the approach detailed for selection activity in the period June to September 2021.

6. Digital Strategy 2021-23

- 6.1 The Head of Operations and Digital presented an update on the 2019 Digital Strategy and the proposed 2021-23 Digital Strategy.
- 6.2 Following discussion the Commission endorsed the proposed strategy from April 2021 through to March 2023.

7. Previous Judicial Experience and required Sitting Days

- 7.1 The Head of Selection Policy presented a paper on the approach taken to the Lord Chancellor's requirement that candidates for most salaried judicial roles have previous judicial experience (PJE). The paper set out the approach taken to

assessing whether candidates were able to demonstrate the required sitting days, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic to, ensure consistency in the Selection and Character Committee's decision making.

- 7.2 The Board noted that recent practice of the SCC remains in line with the published approach that only "in exceptional circumstances, the JAC may consider allowing candidates who do not meet this requirement to proceed".
- 7.3 The Board confirmed that it would continue to adopt this approach to sitting days as a consistent and proportionate approach.

8. Progress Update on Targeted Outreach and Research Team 2021

- 8.1 The Head of Targeted Outreach and Research presented the Board with an update on the progress of the team to date.
- 8.2 The Board noted the positive progress made since their last update and the planned timeline for its three key initiatives in 2021. These are
 - Strand 1: Targeted Outreach Pilot
 - Strand 2: International research project to examine measures used by common law jurisdictions to improve judicial diversity
 - Strand 3: Ensure we consistently convene ethnically diverse JAC panels

9. Commissioner Board Evaluation

- 9.1 The Head of Secretariat presented for information the planned process for the Commission Board evaluation to be carried out in March 2021.
- 9.2 The Board noted the planned approach.

10. Forward Look and AOB

- 10.1 The Board noted the 2021 Forward Look and the Chairman confirmed the next Board meeting would be held on 15 April 2021.
- 10.2 This concluded the business of the Board.