

JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION (JAC) MEETING

14 October 2021

Minutes of Board Meeting

Present	
Commissioners	Staff
Ajay Kakkar (Chairman)	Chief Executive
Sue Carr (Vice Chairman)	Deputy Chief Executive
Christa Christensen	Head of Operations and Digital
Sarah Falk	Head of Senior Appointments
Emir Feisal	Senior Selection Exercise Manager
Sue Hoyle	Head of Selection Policy
Sarah Lee	Head of Diversity and Engagement
Barry Morgan	Head of Targeted Outreach and Research
Simon Wessely	Head of Secretariat/Board Secretary
Greg Sinfield	Senior Policy Advisor
Brie Stevens-Hoare	Senior Selection Exercise Manager
	Selection Exercise Manager
Apologies:	
Mathangi Asokan	
Brie Stevens-Hoare	
Anuja Dhir	
Jane Furniss	
Andrew Kennon	

1. Apologies and matters arising

- 1.1 The minutes of the 9 September 2021 meeting were agreed.
- 1.2 Lay Commissioners declared an interest but not a conflict in item 6, s9(4) Deputy High Court Judge selection process.

2. Chief Executive's Report and Management Information Pack

2.1 The Chief Executive:

- provided an update on the business plan and 2021 -22 programme at the mid-point of the financial year;
- provided an update on the positive Judicial Diversity Forum Officials meeting held on 6 October;
- provided an update on the successful adoption of the JAC hybrid working arrangements;

- provided an update on the cross-government Spending Review to set the funding for the next three years and provided details of the JAC's bid for funds;
- provided an update to the changes in JAC senior staffing taking place over the next few months;
- reported on the agreed two-year programme with HMCTS and the work conducted to date; 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.

Welsh Matters Committee

3.2 Barry Morgan (BM) provided an update to the Board on the Welsh Matters Committee which took place on 9 September.

3.3 The Committee considered exercises with Welsh posts currently in progress and heard an update on progress from the action register.

3.4 BM reported back on his meeting with the Welsh language liaison judges HHJ Edwards and HHJ James on 30 September.

3.5 BM reported back he had attended the Legal Wales Conference held virtually on 8 October.

3.6 BM also attended the Welsh Legal Services at Llandaff Cathedral.

Advisory Group

3.7 Emir Feisal (EF) provided an update to the Board on the Advisory Group (AG)

3.8 The AG considered the following:

- Situational questions for Fee-paid Judge of the Restricted Patients Panel, First-tier Tribunal, Health Education and Social Care Chamber (Mental Health).
- Scenario test for Fee-paid Judge of the First-tier Tribunal and Fee-paid Judge of the Employment Tribunal.
- Situational judgement questions and critical analysis test for Employment Judge.

3.9 The AG also agreed to invite drafting judges on an ongoing basis to meetings.

Digital Board

3.10 Sue Hoyle (SH) provided an update to the Board on the Digital Board meeting from 23 September.

3.11 The DB was updated on progress made against the Digital Strategy and on the progress of the Road Map with focus on the next 3 months.

3.12 The DB was updated on progress to developing off-platform tools to support candidates in their preparation for the application and selection process.

3.13 The DB reviewed the results of a recent online qualifying test for Deputy District Judge, drawing out the lessons learned.

3.14 The DB also received an update on the Risks, Assumptions, Issues and Dependencies (RAID) log and recent staff changes within the digital team.

4. Chairman's Report

4.1 The Chairman briefed the Board on his attendance at the new Lord Chancellor's swearing in ceremony and his attendance at the Opening of the Legal Year.

4.2 Commissioners reported back on the outreach activity they undertook throughout September.

4.3 Anuja Dhir and Jane Furniss attended an outreach event via Zoom on 14 September to encourage junior barristers from underrepresented backgrounds to consider a future judicial career.

4.4 Sarah Lee attended a Judicial Office seminar on 21 September for the North Eastern circuit on the upcoming District Judge competition.

4.5 Sarah Lee and the Head of Diversity met with the Society of Asian Lawyers.

4.6 Brie Stevens-Hoare attended an outreach event on 22 September aimed at encouraging Intellectual Property Office lawyers to consider judicial careers.

4.7 Greg Sinfield and the Chief Executive met with the SPT on Thursday 7 October as part of their quarterly meetings.

4.8 Greg Sinfield attended an online Judicial Office Tax Chamber outreach event on 12 October where they launched the Judicial Recruitment Support Scheme.

4.9 Christa Christensen attended an Employment Lawyers Association webinar on 12 October to encourage Employment lawyers to consider applying for the upcoming salaried Employment Judge exercise and upcoming Fee-paid Judge of the First-tier Tribunal and Fee-paid Judge of the Employment Tribunals.

5. Evaluation of Skills and Abilities and the selection process for leadership roles

- 5.1 The Senior Policy Advisor presented the evaluation of the standardised selection process for leadership roles, and the use of concise Skills and Abilities to assess candidates for such roles.
- 5.2 Following discussion, the Commission agreed to continue the standardised process for all leadership exercises, subject to a minor amendment to the Skills and Abilities framework which will be reflected for all exercises; and to expand the use of the Skills and Abilities framework in several further exercises.

6. s9(4) Deputy High Court Judge selection process

- 6.1 The Selection Exercise Manager presented the selection process for the forthcoming s9(4) Deputy High Court Judge selection exercise.
- 6.2 Following discussion, the Commission endorsed the proposed selection process for this exercise and agreed to evaluate the process at the end of the exercise.

7. Commission Board Terms of Reference: Periodic Review

- 7.1 The Head of Secretariat presented a paper recommending the adoption of updated Terms of Reference (ToR) for Commission Board and Selection and Character Committee (SCC) meetings, to reflect hybrid remote/face-to-face working practices that have been implemented over the last year.
- 7.2 Following a discussion, the Commission approved the proposed changes to the Terms of Reference for both the SCC and Board meetings.

8. 2020-21 Update on Targeted Outreach and Research Pilot

- 8.1 The Head of the Targeted Outreach and Research team presented the Board with a review of the first year of the Targeted Outreach pilot programme.
- 8.2 The Commission noted the update for information.

9. Forward Look and AOB

9.1 The Board noted the 2021 Forward Look and the Chairman confirmed the next Board meeting would be held on 11 November 2021.

9.2 This concluded the business of the Board.