JUDICIAL
APPOINTMENTS
COMMISSION

Judicial Appointments Commission

Annual report and accounts 2025 to 2026

For the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

HC 451

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Overview

Foreword by Helen Pitcher OBE, Chairman until 31 December 2025

I am pleased to introduce this report of the Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC) for 2025 to 2026, which reflects a year of significant delivery, development and organisational resilience.

As an independent statutory body, it is our duty to only select candidates for judicial office on merit, after a fair and open competition, who are of good character, while also encouraging applications from the widest possible pool of talent.

Throughout the year, the JAC successfully delivered a stretching programme of selection exercises, increasing capacity in response to courts and tribunals requirements while continuing to maintain high-quality selection processes and exceptional customer service standards.

A major milestone in 2025 to 2026 was the adoption of the new Judicial Skills and Abilities Framework (JSAF) in October. This important development brings greater coherence and alignment across judicial recruitment, training and appraisal processes, supporting consistency across the judiciary. A full evaluation will follow, but its ongoing implementation across all recruitment exercises already marks a significant step forward.

We also completed an evaluation of the revised operational approach to statutory consultation this year. The changes introduced following the independent review carried out in 2022 are working effectively, with those recommendations now fully implemented. We welcomed the Court of Appeal's important finding that our use of statutory consultation was lawful, while also identifying areas where the process can be further improved.

Supporting greater judicial diversity is a key priority for the JAC. As shown in the July 2025 publication,[1] we continued to see positive trends in legal exercises, with women representing 52% and candidates from ethnic minority backgrounds representing 17% of recommendations, both comparing favourably with the eligible pool. We remain focused on understanding and addressing barriers where disparities persist, including through targeted engagement with under-represented groups. We continued to work closely with Judicial Diversity Forum (JDF) partners this year, building on our joint action plan and the wide range of activities undertaken by members, individually and collectively, to drive and support greater diversity.

This year also saw a significant expansion in our outreach programme, including hosting the first JAC-led outreach event, marking a new phase in how we engage with potential applicants. The JAC Targeted Outreach Programme also continued to grow, supporting more candidates and facilitating more pairings with our 146 volunteer judicial guides. I am grateful to the senior judiciary for freeing up the time of those judges who support the scheme, and to the guides themselves, whose commitment continues to make a real difference to candidates.

In October, as part of our commitment to regularly review and improve our selection tools, we published the findings of an external review of neurodivergent inclusive judicial recruitment. As well as recognising existing good practice, the review's recommendations will guide further enhancements to our selection processes to fairly identify talented individuals with the skills and abilities required across all judicial roles.

Internally, the JAC successfully navigated the relocation of our offices while maintaining full business continuity and excellence in service delivery. We strengthened our workforce through recruitment and invested in our people through comprehensive induction and refresher training. The People Survey results reflect the organisation's continued strengths across a range of areas, and we remain committed to using the findings to drive further improvements.

In July, the Commission also received very positive findings from an external board effectiveness review, which confirmed that we are meeting our obligations as an arm's length body while identifying areas for the Board to build on in the coming period.

1. Ministry of Justice, 'Diversity of the judiciary: 2025 statistics', published July 2025: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/diversity-of-the-judiciary-2025-statistics

I would like to welcome new commissioners, Judge Clive Lane, Tony Harking OBE, Sarah Pittam and Siwan Davies, and thank departing commissioners in 2025, Judge Greg Sinfield, Sue Hoyle OBE and the Rt. Rev. Dr Barry Morgan for their hard work and commitment to the work of the JAC. I also want to pay tribute to our panel member community. This year we refreshed our panel cadre, and I would like to thank those who have continued to serve, those who have moved on after dedicated contributions, and those who have recently joined and brought fresh expertise and perspective. Their collective commitment remains central to everything we do.

Finally, I would also like to pay tribute to Lord Justice Warby, whose exceptional contribution as vice chair provided vital continuity and steady leadership through a significant period of transition for the organisation. My thanks equally go to the whole JAC team – staff, commissioners and panel members alike – whose professionalism and dedication made this year's achievements possible.

At the end of my three-year term in December 2025, I stepped down with confidence in the JAC's strong foundations, capable leadership and dedicated people. It was a privilege to serve, and I am grateful to all those who supported the JAC's work.

Helen Pitcher OBE
Chairman of the Judicial Appointments Commission
1 January 2023 to 31 December 2025

Foreword by Lord Justice Dove, Vice Chair and Mr Justice Adam Johnson, Interim Vice Chair

It has been a year of consistent progress for the JAC, and we would like to express our appreciation to Helen Pitcher OBE for her three years of dedicated service as chair, and equally to Lord Justice Warby, who provided important continuity in the period immediately following Helen's term of office.

The JAC has remained focused on delivering high-quality selection processes and maintaining exceptional service standards throughout, while maintaining progress against its strategic priorities. That continuity of delivery reflects the professionalism and dedication of our staff, commissioners and panel members across the organisation.

In January 2026, we launched a redesigned JAC website, representing a significant development in how the JAC engages with applicants and communicates with stakeholders across the justice system.

We also published new guidance for candidates on the use of artificial intelligence in judicial applications. The use of AI in recruitment contexts is a subject of wide interest and debate, and we were conscious of the need to provide clear and considered direction to applicants. The guidance was well received and generated a broader conversation about how the JAC continues to ensure that its selection processes identify merit fairly and consistently, whatever the tools available to candidates.

We would like to thank our fellow commissioners, lay panel members and staff for their continuing commitment and professionalism during this period of change. This annual report is published as the JAC marks its 20th anniversary – a moment that invites reflection on how far the Commission has come in establishing independent, merit-based judicial selection, and on the work still ahead. The Commission remains well placed to build on those two decades of progress, and we look forward to supporting its continued delivery of high-quality judicial selection in the coming years.

Lord Justice Dove
Vice Chair, from 1 March 2026

Mr Justice Adam Johnson
Interim Vice Chair,
6 February to 28 February 2026

Chief Executive's statement

I am proud to reflect on the JAC's continued strong performance and delivery this year. Following the departure of our Chair, Helen Pitcher, in December, we have continued our full programme of selection exercises and momentum against the objectives set out in our business plan 2025 to 2026. This has been a collective achievement, underpinned by the professionalism and commitment of our commissioners, panel members and staff team. I would like to place on record my sincere thanks to Helen for her leadership and dedication to the JAC during her term as chair.

Since December, the vice chair has undertaken the majority of the chair's responsibilities, ensuring continuity in leadership and governance. Over the course of this year, Lord Justice Warby, Mr Justice Adam Johnson and Lord Justice Dove have fulfilled this role with distinction – chairing the Commission Board and Selection and Character Committee and providing the decision-making necessary to steer the Executive in the smooth operation of the Commission. I am extremely grateful for their stewardship during this period.

To support the vice chair and to ensure that lay perspectives maintain their position within the Commission's leadership, Lord Justice Warby re-established the Commissioner Governance Sub-Group, made up of a majority of lay members and drawing on precedent from several years ago. Mr Justice Adam Johnson and Lord Justice Dove have continued to convene this group, which has played an important role in strengthening governance and providing additional oversight during a time of change.

There are certain responsibilities of the chair – most notably in relation to senior judicial appointments – that cannot be undertaken by a member of the judiciary under our statutory framework. I would like to express my particular thanks to our lay commissioners, who have stepped forward to take on these roles and duties during this period of transition and at an important period of recruitment for senior judicial roles.

This year has demonstrated the resilience and adaptability of the Commission. Through collaboration and a shared commitment to fairness and excellence, we have continued to deliver our statutory duties effectively and our People Survey results show that the commitment of my JAC colleagues has been fundamental to this success. I am deeply grateful to all those who have contributed to this effort.

A. McMurtrie

Alex McMurtrie
Chief Executive of the Judicial Appointments Commission

Purpose and activities

The Commission's role and structure

In this report, we use 'the JAC' to refer to the organisation, and 'the Commission' and 'the Board' to refer to its governing Board. In the performance report, 'Commission' also means the 'Board'. Then for the purposes of the financial report, 'the Board' and 'the Commission' have the same meaning and are used interchangeably.

The Commission consists of a lay chair and 15 other commissioners.[2] This includes five lay commissioners, who are drawn from a variety of professional fields. Membership of the Commission is also drawn from the courts and tribunals judiciary, the legal profession, and the lay magistracy or non-legal tribunal members. Commissioners are recruited through open competition, with the exception of three senior judicial members: two of these members are selected by the Judges' Council and the third is selected by the Tribunal Judges' Council.

The JAC's key statutory duties

Under the Constitutional Reform Act 2005, the JAC's statutory duties are to:

- select candidates solely on merit
- select only people of good character
- have regard to the need to encourage diversity in the range of persons available for judicial selection

The judicial appointments for which the JAC makes selections are set out in Schedule 14 to the Act.

2. The Judicial Appointments Commission (Amendment) Regulations 2025, made in December 2025, expanded the Board to provide for 16 commissioners, including a new commissioner position for a fellow of the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEx). Recruitment for this post is expected to take place in spring 2026.

Budget

The JAC's allocated resource budget in 2025 to 2026[3] was £11.05 million (£10.29 million in 2024 to 2025). It spent £10.72 million (£9.68 million in 2024 to 2025). In addition to funding it received, the JAC incurred £0.94 million (£0.88 million in 2024 to 2025) of overhead recharges from MoJ, giving a total expenditure of £11.65 million (£10.55 million in 2024 to 2025).

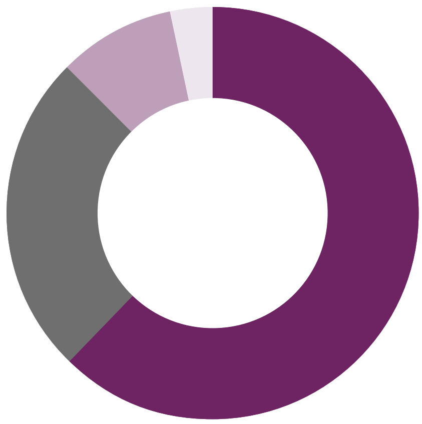
Total expenditure:

Pay: £7.27 million

Programme: £2.95 million

Non-cash charges: £1.06 million

Administration: £0.37 million



The JAC's aims

The JAC Strategy 2024 to 2027 set out our aims to:

- ensure we are a centre of excellence in selection, applying best practice to fairly select talented individuals with the necessary skills and abilities across the entirety of judicial roles
- work with partners to attract well-evidenced applications from the widest range of high-calibre candidates, supporting the achievement of greater judicial diversity
- ensure the JAC is widely recognised as the trusted expert body on independent, merit-based and inclusive appointment to the judiciary
- develop people and tools to support the delivery of the JAC's aims

3. References to 2025 to 2026 refer to the reporting year 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026 throughout this report.

Performance summary

What we spend our money on

The JAC contributes to MoJ's outcome delivery plan in delivering swift access to justice. Further details of the progress made by the JAC against the aims in the business plan 2025 to 2026 are in the performance analysis on pages 40 to 45.

The JAC reported on 34 selection exercises in 2025 to 2026 (34 in 2024 to 2025) and launched a further 24 exercises continuing into 2026 to 2027. The number of selections made, and applications received during the year are dependent on the mix of vacancies we are asked to fill by the Lord Chancellor.

In 2025 to 2026, the JAC ran a similar number of selection exercises compared with 2024 to 2025, and the expenditure reflects this. The Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure shows that net expenditure for the year was £11.63 million compared with £10.53 million the previous year. Excluding recharges from MoJ, net expenditure increased from £9.65 million to £10.69 million, a 10.8% increase.

Overall, there was:

- an increase of £0.92 million (11.9%) in pay costs
- an increase of £0.12 million (6.3%) in other operating costs
- an increase of £0.06 million (6.6%) in MoJ recharges

The JAC underspent against the budget allocation by £0.36 million (3.3%), which was originally £11.69 million, and subsequently decreased to £11.05 million, spending £10.69 million of our net allocation.

Pay costs for the year increased partly as a result of an MoJ funded increase in permanent staff headcount to meet demand for an anticipated increase in judicial recruitment in future years. This also included an average 3.5% pay award increase from August 2025. Other operating costs remained similar to the previous year and included a 17% increase in digital support costs to assess the accessibility and security of our digital platform.

The following judgment was received during the year in relation to legal claims brought against the JAC: R (Thomas) v Judicial Appointments Commission.

The JAC continues to make extensive use of shared services for central functions, such as the provision of accommodation, some HR, IT and finance by MoJ, to benefit from economies of scale. These costs are generally 'soft' charged, with no funds exchanged. In 2025 to 2026, the MoJ estates recharge increased from £0.15 million to £0.36 million due to higher building costs following the JAC's office move from Clive House to 102 Petty France in April 2025. The MoJ digital recharge also decreased from £0.52 million to £0.36 million due to a decrease in Justice Digital staff costs apportioned to the JAC. Further details of the soft charges can be found in note 5 to the financial statements.

Selection exercise programme

Selection exercises reported in 2025 to 2026

Exercises reported[4]	Applications received	Selections made[5]
34[6]	5,801	917

JAC selection exercises 2025 to 2026

Number of exercises
34

Applications
5,801

Selections
917

Court selections
381
(including 88 for a list to fill vacancies anticipated to arise in the future)

Tribunal selections
536
(including 25 for a list to fill vacancies anticipated to arise in the future)

4. Exercises reported means exercises that resulted in recommendations to the appropriate authority being made within the financial year. For exercises where a minority of recommendations are delayed to the subsequent financial year, the exercise is generally counted as reporting in the financial year of the initial recommendations, although in some circumstances it may be necessary for the JAC to report later, once all outcomes are known.
5. This is the number of selections made against the vacancy request that has been received. Requests can either be for immediate appointment, expected future appointment or a combination of both. Numbers here may differ from the numbers presented in JAC diversity statistics, where a headcount of individuals successfully recommended in each exercise is used. Most notably, when the same individual is recommended for two roles in the same exercise, this is counted as two selections here, but one in the diversity statistics.
6. This includes one exercise, with reference number 00181, which reported in 2024 to 2025 but made one further recommendation in 2025 to 2026, as detailed in the table below.

Tribunal selection exercises

Fee-paid roles

Legal/ non-legal	Judicial role	Reference	Selections made
Non-legal	Fee-paid Disability Qualified Tribunal Member of the First-tier Tribunal, Social Entitlement Chamber	00181	1[1]
Legal	Fee-paid Judge of the First-tier Tribunal	00203	166
Non-legal	Fee-paid Lay Member of the First-tier Tribunal, Property Chamber (Residential Property)	00211	65[2]
Non-legal	Fee-paid Medical Member of the First-tier Tribunal, Social Entitlement Chamber	00228	126
Non-legal	Fee-paid Valuer Chair and Fee-paid Valuer Member of the First-tier Tribunal, Property Chamber	00235	18
Non-legal	Fee-paid Member of the First-tier Tribunal, General Regulatory Chamber (Information Rights)	00264	11
Non-legal	Fee-paid Specialist Member of the Upper Tribunal, Administrative Appeals Chamber (Disclosure and Barring)	00266	7
Non-legal	Fee-paid Medical Member of the Mental Health Review Tribunal for Wales	00286	13
Legal	Fee-paid Appointed Person of the Appeal Tribunal (Trade Marks) and Fee-paid Appointed Person of the Appeal Tribunal (Registered and Unregistered Design)	00242	3[3]
Legal	Senior Chair of the Health Service Products Appeals Tribunal (Pricing, Cost Control and Information)	00275	1

1. Following completion of an exercise in 2024 to 2025, for which 194 candidates were selected for appointment as Fee-paid Disability Qualified Tribunal Members of the First-tier Tribunal, Social Entitlement Chamber, a further candidate was recommended for appointment in July 2025.
2. Includes 25 selected for future appointment under section 94 of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005.
3. Two candidates were recommended to fill three vacancies, with one of the candidates recommended for appointment as an Appointed Person, Trade Marks and as an Appointed Person, Registered and Unregistered Design.

Salaried roles

Legal/ non-legal	Judicial role	Reference	Selections made
Non-legal	Regional Medical Member of the First-tier Tribunal, Social Entitlement Chamber	00255	1
Legal	Judge of the First-tier Tribunal	00210	72
Legal	Judge of the Employment Tribunals (England and Wales)	00236	34
Legal	Regional Employment Judge of the Employment Tribunals (England and Wales)	00245	2
Legal	President of the Mental Health Review Tribunal for Wales	00254	1
Legal	Chamber President of the First-tier Tribunal, Social Entitlement Chamber	00258	1
Legal	Judge of the First-tier Tribunal, Tax Chamber	00243	4
Legal	Judge of the First-tier Tribunal, Property Chamber	00263	6
Legal	Chamber President of the First-tier Tribunal, Immigration and Asylum Chamber and Chamber President of the First-tier Tribunal, War Pensions and Armed Forces Compensation Chamber	00273	2
Legal	Regional Judge of the First-tier Tribunal, Property Chamber (Residential Property)	00284	2

Courts selection exercises

Fee-paid roles

Legal/ non-legal	Judicial role	Reference	Selections made
Legal	s9(4) Deputy High Court Judge	00201	27
Legal	Recorder	00227	87
Legal	Deputy District Judge (Magistrates' Courts)	00234	136[1]

1. Includes 86 selected for future appointment under section 94 of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005.

Salaried roles

Legal/ non-legal	Judicial role	Reference	Selections made
Legal	Circuit Judge	00212	37
Legal	High Court Judge	00216	10
Legal	District Judge (South East Circuit)	00229	39
Legal	Senior Circuit Judge, Resident Judge	00232	3
Legal	Senior Circuit Judge, Designated Family Judge	00233	4
Legal	King's Bench Master	00238	2
Legal	Specialist Circuit Judge	00244	1
Legal	District Judge (all other circuits)	00262	30[1]
Legal	Circuit Judge of the Employment Appeal Tribunal	00267	2
Legal	Costs Judge of the Senior Courts	00270	2
Legal	Specialist Circuit Judge	00274	1

1. Includes 2 selected for future appointment under section 94 of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005.

Other judicial selection activity

Selection exercise for senior roles

Exercise title	Selections made
Court of Appeal 2025-26	6
Chancellor of the High Court 2024-25	1
Senior President of Tribunals 2025	1

Under the Constitutional Reform Act 2005, the Lord Chancellor can request the JAC to convene a panel to select candidates for senior judicial posts such as Lord or Lady Chief Justice, Heads of Division, Senior President of Tribunals and Lord and Lady Justices of Appeal.

Concurrence required from the JAC

Exercise title	Selections made
Circuit Judges to sit in the Court of Appeal Criminal Division 2025-26	7

The JAC has agreed a process with the senior judiciary that allows for the selection and ongoing consideration of circuit judges suitable for authorisation to sit in the Court of Appeal Criminal Division. Following an expression of interest exercise initiated by the judiciary, a panel made up of the Vice-President of the Court of Appeal Criminal Division and a JAC lay commissioner will consider all the material and prepare a merit list. The Commission, sitting as the Selection and Character Committee, will provide concurrence of the recommendations, as provided by the Vice-President of the Court of Appeal Criminal Division.

Selection of candidates requiring section 9(1) authorisation

For some selection exercises that fall outside the JAC's remit, to carry out the full functions of the role, the post holder will require authorisation to act as a judge of the High Court under section 9(1) of the Senior Courts Act 1981. This requires the JAC to consider the suitability of the judge and to recommend them for inclusion to a pool from which such an authorisation can be granted. In 2025 to 2026, the JAC provided concurrence for one Designated Civil Judge and two Designated Family Judges.

Exercises run by JAC under section 83 of the Government of Wales Act 2006

Exercise title	Selections made
00249: Fee-paid Lay Member of the Welsh Language Tribunal	1
00259: Fee-paid Vice President of the Residential Property Tribunal for Wales (RPT)	1
00308: Legal Members of the Adjudication Panel for Wales (APW)	3

Under section 83 of the Government of Wales Act 2006, Welsh ministers can enter into agency arrangements with any relevant authority for any of their functions to be exercised by that relevant authority. The JAC is a relevant authority for the purposes of section 83. Under these provisions, we run selection exercises and make recommendations to the First Minister of Wales, who is responsible for the appointments.

Exercises launched but not completed in 2025 to 2026

A further 24 selection exercises were in progress as at 31 March 2026, and are due to report in 2026 to 2027. These exercises have a combined total of 1,009 vacancies and collectively attracted more than 5,500 applications.

Timeline indicator data

In March 2022, the JAC agreed a metric for assessing performance in relation to the length of time it takes to deliver selection exercises, from close of applications to recommendations. Selection exercises are categorised by type and by size, with a range of weeks indicating how long an exercise should usually take to deliver. Exercises that fall outside of the range are detailed below.

Exercise type	Salaried or fee-paid	Size	Indicator (weeks from when the application window closes to Selection and Character Committee recommendation to the appropriate authority)	Total number of exercises	Exceptions	Exercises meeting indicator within each category
Leadership	Both	Small (up to 2 vacancies)	14-22 weeks	10	0	00238, 00244, 00254, 00258, 00245, 00255, 00273, 00274, 00275, 00284

Exercise type	Salaried or fee-paid	Size	Indicator (weeks from when the application window closes to Selection and Character Committee recommendation to the appropriate authority)	Total number of exercises	Exceptions	Exercises meeting indicator within each category
Legal	Salaried	Small (up to 5 vacancies)	18-24 weeks	5	0	00232, 00233, 00243, 00267, 00270
		Medium (6 to 30 vacancies)	28-38 weeks	4	0	00216, 00236, 00262, 00263
		Large (31+ vacancies)	40-50 weeks	3	0	00210, 00229, 00212
	Fee-paid	Small (up to 5 vacancies)	18-22 weeks	1	0	00242
		Medium (6 to 30 vacancies)	30-38 weeks	1	0	00201

Exercise type	Salaried or fee-paid	Size	Indicator (weeks from when the application window closes to Selection and Character Committee recommendation to the appropriate authority)	Total number of exercises	Exceptions	Exercises meeting indicator within each category
Legal (continued)		Large (31+ vacancies)	42-50 weeks	3	3 exercises 00203: Fee-paid Judge of the First-tier Tribunal – 53 weeks and 3 days. Due to the requirement of additional character enquiries ahead of the final decision-making stage resulting in a delay to Selection and Character Committee (SCC) recommendations. 00227: Recorder – 51 weeks. Due to the appropriate authority (AA) report being delayed pending approval of the increased VR to take all selectable candidates. 00234: Deputy District Judge (Magistrates' Courts) – 52 weeks and 6 days. Due to the increase in vacancy request (VR) from 50 to 100 midway through the exercise, additional selection days were required, which impacted the overall timeline and delivery of the exercise.	

Exercise type	Salaried or fee-paid	Size	Indicator (weeks from when the application window closes to Selection and Character Committee recommendation to the appropriate authority)	Total number of exercises	Exceptions	Exercises meeting indicator within each category
Legal (continued)		Exceptionally high VR of 150+	44-52 weeks	0	0	
Non-legal	Both	Small (up to 10 vacancies)	16-22 weeks	2	2 exercises 00264: Fee-paid Member of the First-tier Tribunal, General Regulatory Chamber (Information Rights Jurisdiction) – 28 weeks and 3 days. Due to the AA report being delayed pending approval of the increased VR to take all selectable candidates. 00266: Fee-paid Specialist Members of the Upper Tribunal assigned to the Administrative Appeals Chamber (Disclosure and Barring Jurisdiction) – 32 weeks and 1 day. Due to a judicial resource issue midway through the exercise which impacted the overall timeline and delivery of the exercise.	

Exercise type	Salaried or fee-paid	Size	Indicator (weeks from when the application window closes to Selection and Character Committee recommendation to the appropriate authority)	Total number of exercises	Exceptions	Exercises meeting indicator within each category
Non-legal (continued)		Medium (11 to 30 vacancies)	24-30 weeks	2	0	00235, 00286
		Large (31+ vacancies)	30-40 weeks	2	0	00211, 00228
		Exceptionally high vacancy requests of 150+	40-50 weeks	1	0	00181

Key risks

The key risks the JAC is faced with are the delivery of the selection exercise programme and compliance with our statutory duties. These risks are summarised in our Corporate Risk Register.

On the date the accounts in this report were authorised for issue there were:

- two risks rated low
- eight risks rated medium
- zero risks rated high

1. Failure of the digital service

Risk: That the JAC's digital platform and website are not available to candidates, independent assessors or staff.

Rating at end of 2024 to 2025: Medium

Where we started: External IT consultants, Scott Logic, concluded their technical assurance of our digital platform in March 2025. The findings were shared with the JAC's digital board at the start of the year.

The review confirmed that the overall architecture of the platform was sound, but that further work was required to improve platform security, quality of the codebase and the effectiveness of the development process through to release.

In response to this, the JAC took some immediate remedial action to improve the legibility of the codebase, technical documentation and introduced a revised approach to code development pending further security improvements.

Scott Logic was further consulted early in the year to provide direction and additional proficiency to address the outstanding issues.

What we've done:

- The Board signed off on the new 2025 to 2028 Digital Strategy in September 2025. The paper outlined the findings from the Scott Logic review and captured the high-level areas of focus and key deliverables for the next three years.
- Several improvements were made to platform security during the year, including an upgrade to our virus scanning software and resolution of all actions that came out of the last penetration test.

- Following further engagement with Scott Logic, work was taken forward by our Technical Lead at Halcyon Solutions Group Ltd to ensure continued progress on the codebase.
- An independent accessibility audit of the digital platform was also undertaken in January 2026. All actions from this review were promptly addressed by the end of the financial year, with one outstanding action requiring content updates. In addition to this, a further penetration test of our platform was carried out in February 2026.
- To strengthen independent assurance of our digital systems, the Chief Technical Officer in MoJ has agreed to join the JAC's Digital Product Board from May 2026.
- We have also developed and published guidance for candidates on the appropriate use of AI through the application process.

Rating at end of 2025 to 2026: Medium

What we're going to do in 2026 to 2027:

- Support in implementing the actions from the technical stack review will continue to be provided by our technical lead at Halcyon.
- MoJ has approved our business case to recruit a new internal technical lead, with recruitment planned to launch before the summer.
- Following the penetration test that was undertaken in February 2026, all potential vulnerabilities will be addressed by the end of June 2026.
- We will continue to engage with MoJ to implement the Government Cyber Action Plan by the end of the financial year.
- We also intend to commission Scott Logic to undertake the next technical stack review in March 2027.
- Our roadmap for 2026 to 2027 includes a continuation of refactoring and test coverage, as well as development of a data schema to improve data quality and consistency.
- We will continue to consider how technology could be deployed to safeguard the integrity of our selection processes.
- Finally, we have established an internal AI working group to identify short, medium and long-term opportunities for implementing AI across our work.

2. Diversity of applicants and progression

Risk: That the four target groups – women, ethnic minority people, disabled people and solicitors – do not apply or progress in line with the eligible pool.

Rating at end of 2024 to 2025: Medium

Where we started: We continued to deliver on the actions outlined in the 2025 Judicial Diversity Forum (JDF) action plan. This included contributing towards the evaluation of the Pre-Application Judicial Education (PAJE) programme, working with the Black Judges Working Group, and publishing the 2025 combined statistics report.

The JAC also continued to work with its JDF partners to improve candidate understanding of the various outreach programmes available and the eligibility requirements.

Work to rebuild the JAC's website was also underway to understand the needs of our users and help shape the redesign. These findings demonstrated a need to provide a clearer understanding of the application journey, by improving information on non-legal roles, site navigation and the overall accessibility of the site.

Plans were also on track to review the JAC's Equal Merit Provision (EMP) to ensure the current implementation was being used effectively and to consider opportunities to further enhance and expand our approach.

What we've done:

- Throughout the year, we continued to expand our outreach with key groups within the judiciary and the wider legal sector to ensure we are able to target our messaging and reach currently unrepresented communities.
- The JAC launched its new website in January 2026 following a complete rebuild. The website has a new look and design and improved structure and navigation, thus increasing prominence of the roles available with improved accessibility. There is also new guidance for candidates on picking the best examples, steps to apply after an unsuccessful application, and a scenario test familiarisation tool, all aimed at improving the candidate experience.
- To support the JDF's working group focused on the representation of Black judges, the JAC co-hosted a roundtable discussion in December 2025 with influencer groups within the Black legal community to establish a meaningful dialogue and increase our understanding of the barriers to an inclusive profession, appointments process and judiciary. Insights from the roundtable were used to inform JDF and JAC activities for 2026, including a revised version of the 2025 JDF action plan published in January 2026.

- Collaboration with JDF partners continues to be a priority to address shared concerns and set the strategic direction of the JDF.
- A data seminar took place in February 2026 to provide Black legal professional groups with further insight into the work the JAC is doing to support the progress of Black candidates and the wider factors impacting the representation of Black judges. This work also aimed to challenge the perception in some areas that the JAC and other partners are not sufficiently focused on the static representation of Black judges within the judiciary.
- A review of the impact of EMP was presented to the Board in February 2026 and as a result, a number of operational enhancements have been implemented. In addition to this, the Board agreed that a suitable dataset exists to consider expansion of the EMP to the protected characteristic of disability. Further work will take place in 2026 to identify options for expansion, which will be presented to the Board for consideration towards the end of the year.

Rating at end of 2025 to 2026: Medium

What we're going to do in 2026 to 2027:

- An internal audit of our selection exercise outreach was conducted by the Government Internal Audit Agency (GIAA) in March 2026. The recommendations that came out of their review will be taken forward as part of a pre-agreed project to review our approach to outreach, which is aimed at deepening our relationship with key interested parties and those who represent JAC priority groups. This forms part of our wider stakeholder mapping, which will be used to inform future plans for both exercise and non-exercise specific outreach.
- We will continue our work with MoJ to incorporate JAC panel members into the Public Duties Act, which requires employers to grant paid leave for certain public duties. Bringing panel members within scope would remove a practical barrier to participation and help attract candidates from a broader range of backgrounds, supporting our diversity objectives.
- We will also conduct a review of our reasonable adjustments policy, considering the recommendations from the neurodiversity research.[7]
- We will continue to publish regular blog pieces to highlight the work of the JAC and the important constitutional role we play.

7. Work Psychology Group, 'External review on neuroinclusive judicial recruitment – executive summary', published October 2025: www.judicialappointments.gov.uk/corp-publication/external-review-on-neuroinclusive-judicial-recruitment-executive-summary/

3. Staff engagement and morale

Risk: That staff engagement and morale is negatively affected due to increased workloads, reduction in staff complement or poor performing systems.

Rating at end of 2024 to 2025: Medium

Where we started: The JAC began the year in preparation for its office move to 102 Petty France on 22 April 2025. The move was a success and was positively received by the whole organisation.

We continued to look for ways to improve our signposting for the support that is available on a variety of staff topics. This included interactive (QR code) staff network posters and signage to increase awareness, in addition to relevant guest speakers at our weekly staff meetings.

Preparations were also underway to plan for the next annual Civil Service People Survey.

What we've done:

- The Civil Service People Survey launched on 23 September 2025 with a closing date of 21 October 2025. Results were shared with staff on 10 December 2025 and featured an 82% completion rate, compared to 80% the previous year. Our engagement score also rose by 2% from 69% in 2024 to 71% in 2025, which was higher than the wider Civil Service engagement benchmark of 65%.
- At the beginning of July 2025, we were joined by the Professional Behaviours Unit in MoJ at one of our staff stand-ups, who provide advice and guidance for support with bullying, harassment and discrimination concerns.
- In support of World Mental Health Day, JAC wellbeing leads held an extended all-staff stand-up and accompanying 'time to talk' session to promote the JAC's cadre of mental health allies and to encourage employees to consider their mental wellbeing and how to reach out for support.
- The JAC's annual all-staff away day took place at the beginning of December 2025. Following the positive feedback received last year, this included court and tribunal observations with an afternoon session on inclusivity training.
- At the end of March 2026, we shared our updated office attendance guidance to further support line managers and staff in adhering to our flexible working policy.

Rating at end of 2025 to 2026: Medium

What we're going to do in 2026 to 2027:

- Our mental health allies are due to facilitate a session at one of our all-staff meetings in April 2026 for Stress Awareness Month. We will also use this opportunity to produce an organisational stress risk assessment. To do this, we will provide staff with a survey of questions to help identify, understand, and consult on suggestions to address workplace factors that may contribute to stress across groups of staff.
- We will also continue to provide regular 'time to talk' events to support the ongoing wellbeing of our staff.
- A review of our People Plan will be carried out to ensure that we are on track to achieve the commitments we made against our aims and objectives. A review paper will then be considered by the JAC's senior leadership team in May 2026 before being submitted to the Board in July 2026.

4. Loss of corporate knowledge

Risk: That sufficient experience and knowledge of staff and commissioners is lost and affects delivery of business priorities.

Rating at end of 2024 to 2025: Medium

Where we started: At the beginning of the year, the JAC was carrying a staff headcount of 108, made up of 102 permanent staff and six temporary agency staff.

The Public Appointments Team notified us that a submission regarding future commissioner recruitment had gone to the Lord Chancellor for approval.

JAC colleagues were also informed in early June 2025 that the JAC chair's term would come to an end in December 2025.

What we've done:

- During the year, three new lay commissioners, including a commissioner with special knowledge of Wales, joined the JAC along with a new judicial commissioner.
- The recruitment of a new JAC chair was re-run by the Public Appointments Team in early 2026, with a closing date of 2 March 2026. Interviews for the role are expected to take place in April 2026.
- In the absence of a chair, the vice chair, with the support of a Commissioner Governance Sub-Group, has covered the majority of the chair's duties since their term ended on 31 December 2025.

- The Judicial Appointments Commission (Amendment) Regulations 2025 order was made in December 2025 and amends the JAC Regulations, to make changes to the number of commissioners and eligibility for some commissioners.

Rating at end of 2025 to 2026: Medium

What we're going to do in 2026 to 2027: A full induction of the new JAC chair will take place as soon as they are in post. We will also work closely with MoJ colleagues in the recruitment of a CILEx commissioner.

5. Confidence in the selection process

Risk: That stakeholders, including candidates, the judiciary, commissioners, panel members, MoJ, or staff do not have sufficient confidence in the selection process.

Rating at end of 2024 to 2025: Medium

Where we started: We continued to develop and refine our processes on an iterative basis, including evaluation of every piece of work that we introduce to ensure changes are based on evidence.

The publication of the JSAF by the judiciary in January 2025 started a discussion on its usage within judicial recruitment exercises.

The evaluation of the operation of statutory consultation commenced with the development of considerations.

What we've done:

- The revised approach to statutory consultation was evaluated during 2025, implementing the findings of the Court of Appeal judgment, R (Thomas) v Judicial Appointments Commission. A full suite of documents, including the guidance provided to consultees and the evaluation, has been published on the JAC's website.[8]

- Details about the use of statutory consultations within specific exercises are detailed on their respective information pages.

- The Board also considered the evaluation of the revised approach to the operation of statutory consultation that took place in March 2025. This found that the approach was working effectively and the recommendations from the evaluation were discussed with the JDF before being implemented throughout 2025 to 2026.

8. The JAC, 'Evaluation on the revised approach to statutory consultation', published January 2026: www.judicialappointments.gov.uk/corp-publication/evaluation-on-the-revised-approach-to-statutory-consultation/

These steps are intended to make the operation of selection processes clearer to candidates and stakeholders, strengthen consistency across exercises, and support confidence that decisions continue to be made fairly, transparently and on merit.

- We have adopted the JSAF as the framework to be used across all exercises launching from October 2025 and published a range of guidance and information for candidates in May 2025. This dedicated section received over 15,000 views between May and December 2025, making it one of the most frequently visited sections of our website. All panel members and staff have been trained on the new framework, with clear messaging and guidance provided to all candidates.
- We have commissioned a research project to understand the latest information and best practice in supporting neurodivergent applicants through the recruitment process. The outcome of this research has been published on our website and will be considered as part of a review of our reasonable adjustments policy.

Rating at end of 2025 to 2026: Medium

What we're going to do in 2026 to 2027:

- The continued rollout of the JSAF will be a key priority over the coming year, as more exercises continue to launch with its use.
- Working with partners to address perceptions around the use of statutory consultation will continue, highlighting the publication of both the evaluation and guidance material provided, considering that the vast majority of candidates participate in exercises where statutory consultation has been waived by the relevant appropriate authority (Lord Chancellor, Lady Chief Justice or Senior President of Tribunals).
- We will also continue the review of our reasonable adjustments policy in line with the recommendations from the research into neurodiverse candidates within recruitment activity.

6. Confidence in the effective delivery of selection exercises

Risk: That stakeholders do not have sufficient confidence that the JAC can deliver the selection exercise programme in an efficient and effective manner.

Rating at end of 2024 to 2025: Medium

Where we started: The JAC continued its work with MoJ to confirm future funding requirements to bolster its capacity ahead of an anticipated increase in the demand for judicial recruitment over the coming years as a result of legislative changes, including Renters' Rights and Leasehold reform.

In addition to further staff recruitment, the Board signed off on the process to run First-tier Tribunal exercises separately by jurisdiction for the first time since 2017.

We also undertook a pilot in the use of social media checks as part of our selection processes.

What we've done:

- During the year, we have delivered another 34 judicial recruitment exercises, with over 900 recommendations made. Of the 34 exercises to report this year, 29 were within the timeline indicators, with the five not within the indicators predominantly being due to factors outside the JAC's control.
- We have also successfully increased our permanent staff headcount from 102 to 116 in preparation for what we expect to be a significant increase in activity next year.
- The GIAA conducted an audit of the JAC's Selection Exercise Programme Board (SEPB) in November 2025. The SEPB provides strategic leadership, governance, and oversight for the selection exercise programme. GIAA provided an overall substantial assurance opinion and found that our SEPB meetings are well run, organised effectively and demonstrate strategic oversight and constructive challenge.
- The Board agreed to implement a process for undertaking social media checks on candidates as part of broader good character checks. The JAC is developing the parameters and scope that will be applied to these checks and then a procurement exercise will be run to identify a suitable partner to carry them out on our behalf.
- To deal with an increase in the size of the programme we have recruited a further 21 selection panel members, who will support the increase of the programme to 40 exercises in 2026 to 2027.
- We have also worked with Judicial Office colleagues to address concerns around the provision of judicial resource for selection exercises and ensure this can support the increase in programme activity.

Rating at end of 2025 to 2026: Medium

What we're going to do in 2026 to 2027:

- We will continue to monitor uncertainty around the longer-term programme and how that is impacted by government policies and legislation that increase demand on courts and tribunals and therefore require higher levels of recruitment to increase capacity.
- The ongoing risk around the provision of judicial resource will continue to be flagged with our key stakeholders and we will continue to update our operations manual to ensure new and existing staff are properly trained and up to speed with the latest digital working practices available on our platform.
- Following the Independent Review of the Criminal Courts, we will look at the timeliness of selection exercises alongside our stakeholders and consider what action might be taken to reduce the length of certain exercises and how that might be balanced against the JAC's duties to ensure a meritorious and fair process.
- We will provide training to all new panel members to prepare them for sitting on selection exercises, as well as continuing to provide updates and training, where required, to our existing panel member cadre.
- With a programme of 40 exercises across 2026 to 2027, we will also continue to monitor resourcing levels to ensure we have the appropriate level of staffing required to deliver the selection exercises and act where necessary to address this.

7. Financial resources

Risk: That overall financial resources are insufficient, either in the current year or next year, particularly if major exercises are brought forward or delayed.

Rating at end of 2024 to 2025: Low

Where we started: The JAC secured a fiscal budget of £11.5 million for the year to deliver the agreed programme of selection exercises for 2025 to 2026. This included additional funding of £482,000, received from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to strengthen JAC capacity ahead of the anticipated increased demand for judicial recruitment over the next few years.

In addition to increasing our headcount, we agreed via our MoJ policy sponsors to prepare a formal submission to ministers to increase the daily rate paid to our panel members. This had not been increased for over a decade and so had not kept up with comparable rates, ahead of further panel recruitment due to take place in September 2025.

What we've done:

- By the mid-point of the year, the JAC had recognised various changes in the planned 2025 to 2026 selection exercise programme. This included an overall difficulty in being able to estimate application numbers following the splintering of First-tier Tribunal exercises, with fee-paid recruitment for the Property Chamber and salaried and fee-paid recruitment for the Immigration and Asylum Chamber all running in isolation of generic campaigns for the first time since 2017.
- Our efforts to recruit additional staff also encountered delays which meant lower-than-expected staff costs during the year. As a result, the JAC returned £550,000 of its budget to MoJ in November 2025.
- The GIAA conducted an audit of the JAC's budget management in December 2025 and provided a substantial assurance rating with no formal recommendations made in their report.

Rating at end of 2025 to 2026: Low

What we're going to do in 2026 to 2027:

- Further work will be undertaken to estimate costs of the 2026 to 2027 selection exercise programme.
- While the programme is not finalised in terms of vacancy numbers, we anticipate that the total spend on selection exercises will increase but remain affordable within the JAC's indicative budget allocation for next year.
- The total budget allocation provided by MoJ will increase from £11.05 million in 2025 to 2026 to £12.50 million in 2026 to 2027.

8. Information security

Risk: That data will be lost or presumed to be lost, or obtained by unauthorised persons, including through activities of third parties.

Rating at end of 2024 to 2025: Medium

Where we started: The JAC continued to explore the creation of a new Information Management Governance Committee. This included setting out the scope and terms of reference for the committee and where it would fit in terms of the organisation's overall governance structure.

An in-depth review of the JAC's Security Policy was also underway and all staff successfully completed their annual information assurance training via the Civil Service Learning Platform.

What we've done:

- A functional partnership arrangement between Justice Digital and MoJ-sponsored public bodies was issued at the start of the year. This document provides greater clarity around the technology services owned by Justice Digital and the support that is available via end user compute services and our dedicated Senior Business Relationship Manager.
- A new privacy notice has also been produced and published alongside the launch of the JAC's new website.
- The membership and remit of our new Information Management Governance Committee was finalised during the year. The first meeting will take place at the beginning of April 2026 to allow timely feedback to the JAC's Audit and Risk Committee.

Rating at end of 2025 to 2026: Medium

What we're going to do in 2026 to 2027:

- A revised JAC Security Policy will be considered by the Information Management Governance Committee in April 2026. This will be signed off by the JAC senior leadership team before being shared with staff.
- For all individuals involved in reported security incidents, we will continue to signpost them to relevant training and remind them of their responsibilities in relation to asset management and information security.
- The JAC will also continue to monitor the impacts of AI and explore opportunities to increase efficiency while considering the risks to our business.

9. Provision of finance, procurement and human resources through shared services

Risk: That the shared services system, known as the Single Operating Platform (SOP), does not meet the JAC's needs.

Rating at end of 2024 to 2025: Low

Where we started: The JAC continues to make use of SOP and shared services providers to facilitate its HR and finance functions. We continued to work with our MoJ finance, HR and commercial business partners, escalating any issues when required.

What we've done:

- During the year, we continued to engage with the Synergy Programme which will implement a new HR and Finance system across MoJ, Home Office, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). It is managed by a central DWP team, with a team in MoJ leading and co-ordinating MoJ input.
- We also responded to stock issues for new IT equipment which resulted in delays to providing laptops for new starters. The JAC successfully implemented temporary workarounds to the issue by sourcing loan devices from the MoJ IT helpdesk.
- MoJ appointed a new Senior HR Business Partner to work with the JAC, who provided a good level of support and guidance on a variety of matters throughout the year.

Rating at end of 2025 to 2026: Low

What we're going to do in 2026 to 2027: The JAC will continue to engage with MoJ colleagues on the Synergy Programme to adopt a new shared services system. Key staff within the organisation will be attending a variety of sessions related to the rollout of the programme over the coming year to ensure that the JAC's needs are factored into the final build of the new platform. This platform is not expected to be implemented in MoJ until 2028.

10. Business continuity arrangements

Risk: That the JAC is unable to deliver its business objectives during or after the occurrence of a disruptive event.

Rating at end of 2024 to 2025: Medium

Where we started: Following the additional staff resource we dedicated to this area last year, plans were put in place to develop sessions for staff to test their understanding and knowledge in handling various disruptive scenarios, with subsequent training and guidance materials to be developed following the feedback from those sessions.

What we've done:

- Throughout the year, we have completed our Business Continuity Self-Assessment returns, which are submitted to MoJ on a regular basis. These assessments involve a series of questions to help us identify where improvements are needed in our coverage, but also provide MoJ assurance on business continuity preparedness across all its ALBs.

- The JAC's Business Continuity Plan is under continuous review to enable us to respond to emerging risks and adopt new tools and technology. During the year, this has included a rollout of communication tests for all staff to evaluate our preparedness and response time as an organisation.

Rating at end of 2025 to 2026: Medium

What we're going to do in 2026 to 2027:

- The JAC has arranged for the GIAA to carry out an audit of its Business Continuity Plan in the second half of next year. In addition, work will continue on the JAC's Business Continuity Plan, to ensure it fully reflects the organisation's current operating model and risk profile.
- We also intend to deliver four tabletop business continuity exercises for staff, which will cover various scenarios, including system failure, accommodation issues, data breaches and loss of critical services.

Going concern

The Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure shows a deficit in 2025 to 2026. Due to timing of the draw-down of grant-in-aid funding, the Statement of Financial Position at 31 March 2026 shows an excess of assets over liabilities of £216,000. The closing bank balance relates to grant-in-aid drawn down by the JAC to pay its liabilities due shortly after the year end. See note 8 to the financial statements for further information.

We know of no intention to suspend the JAC's activities. It has therefore been considered appropriate to adopt a 'going concern' basis for the preparation of the financial statements in this report. Grant-in-aid for 2026 to 2027, considering the amounts required to meet the JAC's liabilities, has already been agreed with MoJ. The budget allocation provided by MoJ will increase from £11.05 million in 2025 to 2026 to £12.49 million in 2026 to 2027 (a 13.2% increase).

Performance analysis

How the JAC measures performance

The JAC's aims were set out in the JAC Strategy 2024 to 2027 which incorporated the 2025 to 2026 Business Plan.

The aims are to:

1. ensure we are a centre of excellence in selection, applying best practice to fairly select talented individuals with the necessary skills and abilities across the entirety of judicial roles
2. work with partners to attract well-evidenced applications from the widest range of high-calibre candidates, supporting the achievement of greater judicial diversity
3. ensure the JAC is widely recognised as the trusted expert body on independent, merit-based and inclusive appointment to the judiciary
4. develop people and tools to support the delivery of the JAC's aims

Every month the detailed objectives behind these measures are reviewed by JAC senior leaders, with a full review every quarter. Information on progress is detailed in the JAC's internal management information pack. This pack is provided to the Commission at every Board meeting for consideration and review. It is then shared with MoJ to inform its sponsorship discussions with the JAC.

Key indicators

Key area	Performance 2025-26	Performance 2024-25
Proportion of candidates rating the quality of customer service received as good or excellent following the first stage of the selection process (either after submitting a full application or following a qualifying test). Responses of Not Applicable have been removed.	93% (897 responses)	93% (1,258 responses)
Website usage	Approximately 573,000 views from 143,000 users between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026. Following the launch of our new website, viewership figures are not directly comparable to those previously recorded. This reflects a change in how visitors interact with our cookie settings, and we are treating the figures from February 2026 onwards as a new baseline.	Approximately 689,000 views from 224,800 users between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025.
Proportion of recommendations accepted by the appropriate authority	Of the responses received from the appropriate authority, 100% of the recommendations have been accepted (with four outstanding).	Of the responses received from the appropriate authority, 100% of recommendations were accepted.

Key area	Performance 2025-26	Performance 2024-25
Annual JAC People Survey indicators. Comparison with other MoJ arm's length bodies – benchmarks in brackets	Response rate: 82% (72%) Engagement index: 71% (64%) My work: 88% (80%) Organisational objectives and purpose: 98% (89%) My manager: 87% (74%) My team: 81% (79%) Learning and development: 54% (47%) Inclusion and fair treatment: 87% (78%) Resources and workload: 84% (77%) Pay and benefits: 38% (37%) Leadership and managing change: 74% (58%)	Response rate: 80% (72%) Engagement index: 69% (64%) My work: 82% (77%) Organisational objectives and purpose: 95% (87%) My manager: 83% (77%) My team: 85% (81%) Learning and development: 55% (51%) Inclusion and fair treatment: 91% (79%) Resources and workload: 81% (76%) Pay and benefits: 22% (28%) Leadership and managing change: 66% (57%)

Key area	Performance 2025-26	Performance 2024-25
Proportion of applications from under-represented groups, and progression through selection exercises when compared to the pool of eligible candidates	Will be included in the Judicial Diversity Forum's combined statistical report, which will be published in July 2026.	**Legal exercises** Women: 49% of applicants, 52% of recommendations (eligible pool 49%). Ethnic minority candidates: 27% of applicants, 17% of recommendations (eligible pool 15%). Solicitors: 56% of applicants, 37% of recommendations (for posts not requiring judicial experience, approximately 90% of the eligible pool based on current legal role are solicitors). Declared disability: 11% of applicants, 8% of recommendations (7% of the combined pool of barristers and Chartered Legal Executives eligible for judicial appointment declared having a disability. Disability data for solicitors is currently unavailable). **Non-legal exercises** Women: 63% of applicants, 69% of recommendations. Ethnic minority candidates: 28% of applicants, 23% of recommendations. Declared disability: 33% of applicants, 31% of recommendations.

Key area	Performance 2025-26	Performance 2024-25
Complaints upheld by the Judicial Appointments and Conduct Ombudsman (JACO)	The Constitutional Reform Act 2005 provides for any candidate “who claims to have been adversely affected as an applicant for selection” to formally make a complaint to the JAC. Where a candidate remains dissatisfied after having their complaint investigated by the JAC Complaints Manager, they may refer their complaint to the JACO. For 2025 to 2026, we are awaiting the outcome of four complaints that have been progressed to JACO. All JACO complaints which remained outstanding from previous years have been concluded and none have been upheld.	For 2024 to 2025, we are aware that one case has been taken to JACO which is still currently being investigated. We had a further case concluded from the previous year 2023 to 2024 which was not upheld.

Analysis and explanation of the performance of the JAC

Other measures on performance are also in the management information pack, including sections on selection exercise activity, finance, staffing and outreach activity, as well as a summary risk analysis. This allows the Commission Board a complete overview of performance and to gain an understanding of the overall position of the JAC.

The JAC’s initial 2025 to 2026 fiscal budget allocation was £11.69 million, which subsequently decreased to £11.05 million as a result of delays in recruiting additional permanent staff and some selection exercise activity moving into 2026 to 2027.

Achievement against our aims (2024 to 2027 Strategy)

1 Ensure we are a centre of excellence in selection, applying best practice to identify talented candidates with skills and abilities across the entirety of judicial roles

Implementing improvements to selection tools

We continued to implement improvements to our selection tools as planned. In December 2025, the Board considered the evaluation of the operation of the revised approach to statutory consultation, introduced in 2022. This also included changes brought in following the Court of Appeal judicial review, R(Thomas) v Judicial Appointments Commission. The evaluation was published in January 2026 alongside the updated guidance documentation provided to consultees. Overall, the evaluation found that the operation of statutory consultation was working effectively and because of the changes made, the majority of candidates took part in exercises where statutory consultation was waived.

In March 2026, we published additional information for candidates on considering and understanding the requirement – in some selection exercises – for previous judicial experience, to better inform their decision-making on whether their experience would count as providing evidence of meeting this criterion.

We commissioned independent research into what alternative methods of shortlisting are available and whether any of them could be practically implemented or piloted within the judicial appointments process. Overall, the research found that our approach followed best practice across shortlisting methods, using online qualifying tests for the larger exercises, and name-blind paper sifts for the smaller exercises. The research also found that the approach of competency-based interviewing was an effective and efficient means to gather evidence alongside other tools. Some updates to the guidance and material provided to candidates have been completed as a result of this research.

Introduction of the Judicial Skills and Abilities Framework

Following the publication of the revised JSAF by the judiciary in January 2025 and our involvement in the judicial-led steering group, the Board agreed to adopt the JSAF as the framework against which all judicial office holders would demonstrate their skills and abilities throughout the application process. As such, all exercises that launched from October 2025 used the JSAF as the framework for assessing the evidence and merit of each application.

Throughout the year, communication with candidates has been a key focus. A dedicated section of the previous website was launched in May 2025 and received over 15,000 views, making it one of the most viewed sections on the website. Information on the JSAF has now been embedded across the JAC's website.

Outreach events have been held with specific focus on the JSAF and its introduction. This has also been supported by additional training and material produced for the numerous support programmes hosted by our partners. Training has also been provided to all panel members and staff involved in selection exercises to ensure a consistent and thorough understanding of the JSAF and its implications for recruitment activity.

The implementation of the JSAF will be subject to an evaluation once enough data has been collected to assess its effectiveness.

Publication of the research project into best practice for neurodivergent candidates in recruitment exercises

Last year we launched a research project to improve our understanding of the latest research and best practice in supporting neurodivergent applicants through recruitment processes, so that this can be practically applied within the judicial appointments process. We published an executive summary of the research findings and the accompanying action plan to address the recommendations in October 2025,[9] with the majority of actions completed in early 2026. The remaining actions will be considered during 2026 to 2027.

9. Work Psychology Group, 'External review on neuroinclusive judicial recruitment – executive summary', published October 2025: www.judicialappointments.gov.uk/corp-publication/external-review-on-neuroinclusive-judicial-recruitment-executive-summary/

2 Work with partners to attract well-evidenced applications from the widest range of high-calibre candidates, supporting the achievement of greater judicial diversity

During 2025 to 2026, diversity continued to be a core part of the JAC's work. We believe the judiciary should better reflect the society it serves, and we aim to attract strong, suitably qualified and diverse applicants from a wide field.

Statutory diversity and equality duties

Under the Constitutional Reform Act 2005, the JAC must select candidates solely on merit, while also encouraging diversity in the range of people available for selection.

The Equality Act 2010 applies a general equality duty to all public authorities to have due regard to the:

- elimination of discrimination
- advancement of equality of opportunity
- fostering of good relations between diverse groups

There are three aspects to the JAC's diversity strategy:

- outreach
- fair and non-discriminatory selection processes
- working with others to break down barriers

Outreach

The JAC carries out exercise-specific and broader outreach activities to attract a diverse range of candidates to apply when they are ready. We continued delivery of our Communications and Engagement Strategy, with a focus on using clear, targeted, and accessible communications to ensure all eligible candidates feel informed and supported.

We delivered a mixture of remote and in-person outreach activity, supporting targeted events for prospective candidates organised by associations and societies within the legal professions, including the Government Legal Department, Official Solicitor and Public Trustee, Westminster Policy Forum, Western Circuit Women's Forum and Her Bar. We also regularly spoke about the selection process at events run by the legal professions, the Judicial Office, and other groups.

In November 2025, the JAC hosted its first large-scale candidate seminar, attended by over 400 prospective applicants. The seminar provided candidates with an overview of the selection process and the skills and abilities we ask candidates to demonstrate.

We continued to take a tailored approach to selection exercise outreach, ensuring appropriate resource is dedicated to exercises where enhanced support is likely to have the highest impact. We continued to advertise all judicial vacancies across JAC channels, including social media, monthly newsletters, and the JAC website.

Work is underway to improve our monitoring and evaluation approaches, to assess the impact of our outreach efforts and inform our work with partners across the judiciary and legal professions.

The JAC aims to highlight stories from under-represented candidate groups, promoting diverse pathways into and within the judiciary, with the aim of encouraging candidates from different professional backgrounds and under-represented groups to pursue a role in the judiciary. This included publishing various blogs on the JAC website.

Targeted Outreach Programme

The Targeted Outreach Programme supports the progression of legally qualified candidates from the JAC's four target groups: women, ethnic minority candidates, disabled candidates, and solicitors, through live judicial selection exercises across all jurisdictions. The programme focuses on supporting progression to selection and recommendation. The programme is now in its sixth year.

Support is centred on individual candidate needs and may include tailored consultations with former JAC commissioners, engagement with an experienced judicial guide, and signposting to complementary development schemes where appropriate.

The Judicial Guide Scheme, comprising 146 volunteer judicial guides, provides additional, needs-based support to programme participants. The scheme is co-delivered with the judiciary and endorsed by the Lady Chief Justice, the Senior Presiding Judge, and the Senior President of Tribunals, who have allocated limited protected time each year to support judicial participation.

As of March 2026, the Targeted Outreach Programme has received over 1,274 applications, with 719 candidates actively participating and receiving support from a former commissioner and/or a judicial guide. The participant cohort reflects the programme's focus on under-represented groups: 72% are women, 60% are from an ethnic minority background, 20% have declared a disability, and 68% are solicitors.

Programme participants demonstrate strong progression through judicial selection processes. Among those who had been on the programme for at least 12 months and had made at least one application, 44% reached selection day or a later stage, with 24% successfully recommended for a judicial role as of March 2026.

In total, 218 recommendations have been reached by 159 Targeted Outreach candidates.

We have also developed a suite of stage-specific support packs to improve clarity and transparency across the selection process. This work is being informed by user testing with Targeted Outreach Programme participants and aligned with wider updates to selection guidance following the introduction of the JSAF, to ensure materials remain accurate and accessible. Alongside these resources, the JAC has broadened routes through which candidates can access support, including strengthening signposting across partner schemes, and has expanded the pool of JAC-nominated candidates (typically drawn from key selection exercises) to extend access to Targeted Outreach Programme support where it is most beneficial.

Over 2025 to 2026, the JAC has worked closely with the PAJE programme, the Judicial Outreach Mentoring Scheme and Judicial Work Shadowing Scheme to develop a referral loop across schemes, supporting candidates to access the right support, at the right time. We continue to work collaboratively to achieve our common strategic objectives and goals. The JAC has also worked with the judiciary and the Judicial Office to deliver targeted communications to encourage judicial talent spotting and referrals to the programme.

Fair and non-discriminatory selection processes

In 2025 to 2026, the JAC continued to monitor the diversity of applicants and those selected for judicial posts. The selection process is carefully monitored, including analysis of progression of target groups at key points in the selection process and investigating reasons for significant drops in target groups.

The JAC applies quality and equality assurance checks throughout the selection process to ensure proper procedures are followed, high standards are maintained, and all stages of recruitment are free from bias by:

- using name-blind shortlisting in all selection exercises
- assigning a commissioner to all exercises to oversee quality assurance and fair selection
- training JAC panel members on fair selection, bias, and assessing transferable evidence

- monitoring the ethnic diversity of selection panels across each rolling judicial recruitment programme and working with the Judicial Office to strengthen the completeness and quality of diversity information used for monitoring and evaluation
- reviewing all selection materials, with the assistance of an advisory group, to ensure they do not unfairly advantage or disadvantage any candidate based on their protected characteristics or professional background
- ensuring that the content and tone of selection exercise materials do not contain inappropriate stereotypes, colloquialisms or language
- testing all materials with mock candidates and analysing the results, making any necessary adjustments to the content, timing, preparation materials or other aspects of selection materials
- conducting observations of all elements of the selection process to ensure consistency and the use of fair selection principles across panels
- seeking feedback from candidates after each stage of the selection process
- producing exercise-wide feedback and evaluation reports, and tailored feedback to candidates who met the required standard but could not be recommended owing to the overall strength of the field
- completing equality impact assessments for any significant changes to the selection process
- ensuring requests for reasonable adjustments are considered at all stages of the process for candidates with disabilities and long-term health conditions, with our policy published on our website

We have commenced a review of our reasonable adjustments policy to ensure we are doing all we can to support disabled candidates and those with long-term health conditions to participate fully and fairly in all stages of the selection process.

Working with others to promote diversity

The JAC continues to work with partners in the Judicial Office, the judiciary, MoJ and the legal professional bodies to break down barriers to increasing diversity among the judiciary. We work with these partners individually and through the JDF, which is chaired by the JAC chair.

In January 2026, the JDF provided an update on progress against its 2025 action plan. The action plan outlines the wide range of actions that its members are undertaking to achieve a more diverse and inclusive judiciary, aligned to four strategic priorities, and how the impact of each initiative will be measured and evaluated.

In July 2025, the JDF published a sixth annual combined statistical report. These reports bring together data on the diversity of the judiciary, judicial appointments and from the relevant legal professions (solicitors, barristers and chartered legal executives) offering insight into the factors that impact on judicial diversity. The data demonstrates that since its inception in 2006, the JAC has overseen, on average, positive steps towards increased diversity in applications and appointments across all groups. The 2025 report shows that for legal exercises, women constituted 52% of recommendations and candidates from ethnic minority backgrounds made up 17% of recommendations in line with (or slightly above) ethnic minority representation in the eligible pool for the third year in succession. 17% is the highest representation of ethnic minority candidates in recommendations on record. For the first time, the JAC published data in the combined statistical report on a new socio-economic question, which asked candidates about the occupation of the main household earner in their home at age 14. For all legal exercises completed in 2024 to 2025, candidates from a working class or lower socio-economic background made up 29% of applications and 21% of recommendations.

Data from the annual statistics report has been used positively over the years to drive and evaluate diversity interventions by partners. The statistics are used to inform the JDF's work, providing evidence to help tailor support for currently under-represented groups and removing barriers to judicial diversity. We are currently working with our partners in MoJ and judiciary to develop an online centralised candidate support platform. This is designed to help candidates access the full range of support available when making a judicial application.

Pre-Application Judicial Education Programme

The PAJE Programme is a joint partnership initiative of the JDF and supports potential candidates from under-represented groups in developing their understanding of the role and skills required of a judge.

PAJE also offers courses of judge-facilitated discussion groups with priority being given to lawyers from under-represented groups. In 2025 to 2026, three judge-led discussion group courses were run with a total of 127 participants, 99% of those were from an under-represented group.

As of December 2025, for the 951 participants who completed PAJE at least a year ago, 699 (74%, up from 71% in 2024 to 2025) have since applied for a judicial role. 25% (171 participants) of those have been recommended for appointment, up from 23% a year earlier. Of the 171 participants recommended, 78% (134) are female, 47% (81) are from an ethnic minority background, 63% (108) are solicitors and 15% (25) are disabled.

Monitoring panel diversity

In 2025 to 2026, the JAC continued to monitor the diversity of both judicial and lay panel members, including commissioners.

Panel ethnicity data is reviewed and reported monthly to the Selection Exercise Programme Board, enabling the JAC to monitor average levels of ethnic minority representation across the programme of selection exercises and to act where required. This approach ensures oversight at programme level, rather than reliance on individual panels in isolation.

In parallel, the Judicial Office has refreshed the pool of judges available for deployment on JAC selection exercises, increasing the proportion of ethnic minority judges available to serve on panels and supporting more consistent delivery of ethnically diverse panels across jurisdictions.

Aggregated monitoring data on ethnic minority representation among judicial and lay panel members, covering the 2025 to 2026 programme of selection exercises, is set out below.

Grouping	All exercises	Legal exercises	Non-legal exercises
Exercise count	34	27	7
Total panel members	404	337	67
Declaration rate (ethnicity – all declarations)	95% (385)	95% (321)	96% (64)
Ethnic minority panel members (as of percentage of those declared)	14% (54)	14% (45)	14% (9)
Exercises with ethnic minority panel representation of 17% or over[1]	15/34	12/27	3/7

1. The current target of 17% aligns with the ethnicity comparison figure agreed for the JDF's annual statistical publication. This is drawn from 2021 Census data released by the Office for National Statistics in November 2022 and represents the proportion of adults in England and Wales aged 25 to 74 who identify as coming from an ethnic minority background.

Equal merit policy

The JAC continues to apply its policy on equal merit during selection exercises at the shortlisting and final decision-making stages. The approach enables the JAC to select a candidate for the purpose of increasing judicial diversity where two or more candidates are considered to be of equal merit. This approach ensures that the JAC continues to take all measures possible, consistent with the statutory framework, to support the aim of increasing diversity.

For exercises reporting in the 2025 to 2026 period, the equal merit provision (EMP) was applied at the shortlisting stage seven times across five exercises, resulting in 54 candidates proceeding to the next stage. EMP was applied at the selection stage four times across four exercises, resulting in 14 recommendations.

We have undertaken a comprehensive review of EMP, which currently applies to women and ethnic minority candidates. This review examines how EMP is implemented and whether the evidence supports extending the provision to cover additional protected characteristics, such as disability. The Board agreed that there is sufficient data to consider expansion of EMP to the protected characteristic of disability. Further work will be undertaken to consider potential expansion in 2026 to 2027.

3 Ensure the JAC is widely recognised as the trusted expert body on independent, merit-based appointment to the judiciary

We have continued to engage with our delivery partners and wider stakeholders building strong and productive relationships and ensuring we remain a trusted expert body on merit-based judicial appointments, both domestically and internationally.

Sharing best practice

To support the effective assessment of merit, we share best practice with selection bodies from other sectors, as well as other judicial appointments bodies in the United Kingdom and internationally.

We continued to work alongside the Judicial Office and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office to support and engage with judicial appointments bodies and judicial office holders from other jurisdictions. This year we shared knowledge and best practice about merit-based appointment, selection tools and judicial diversity with delegations of judges and officials from Nepal and Malaysia.

In November 2025, we participated in a judicial appointments tripartite pre-engagement meeting – ahead of a full conference scheduled for autumn 2026 – with the Judicial Appointments Board for Scotland and the Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission. The session was led by the JAC chair and had a specific focus on enhancing outreach, communications and engagement within each of our jurisdictions and settings. Discussions also explored aligning messages to promote the shared responsibility we have for judicial appointments in the UK.

We continue to share evidence and insight with government, the judiciary and the legal professions to strengthen support for independent, diverse appointments through fair and open competition. In September 2025, we submitted evidence to the Senior Salaries Review Body (SSRB) for its annual review of judicial salaries. The JAC chair provided supplementary oral evidence at a hearing in November 2025. Senior JAC officials are members of the Advisory and Evidence Group which is providing strategic direction for the SSRB's 2025 to 2026 major review of judicial salaries. The JAC submitted evidence to the major review through a data pack and a response to the SSRB stakeholder survey.

Over the course of the year, we shared selection exercise data and analytical insights to inform MoJ projects such as their evaluation of the PAJE Programme and the evaluation of regional approaches to recruitment of district judges. We shared analysis with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government about recruitment of Valuation Tribunal for England members and chairs for their review of the operation of the tribunal.

Fostering a better understanding among key audiences of the JAC's approach and how we deliver in partnership

The JAC chair met with key partners and stakeholders throughout 2025 to highlight progress towards meeting the key strategic priorities within our business plan, and to emphasise the importance of partnership working in successful delivery of our selection exercise programme. Information and insight about our approach was shared with other key audiences, including at a roundtable event with Black legal professionals which was co-chaired by the JAC and the judiciary.

In January 2026, the JAC launched its new website to ensure that information about our work could be more clearly displayed and navigated. Several blog posts have been published on the new site, including one focusing on dispelling myths about judicial appointments. This year, we have also published enhanced guidance on how candidates can prepare for online tests, and a practice scenario test resource.

As part of our work within the JDF, we continue to provide input into partners' professional development programmes and judicial appointment schemes, and we share information and data to raise awareness about different elements of our selection process. Across 2025 to 2026 we published two editions of our diversity update report, providing details about how we are meeting our objectives within our diversity strategy. The updates also included statistical insights from the annual combined diversity of the judiciary report, providing additional context about application and progression rates within JAC exercises and the composition of the eligible pools from which the majority of judges are drawn.

4 Support the delivery of Commission aims in line with our values, including by way of a new digital system and tools

Our organisational values of fairness, professionalism, clarity and openness, learning and respect remain the foundation of everything we do.

They shape the approach to our statutory responsibilities in delivery of our busy programme of judicial selection activity, but they also guide how we engage with our candidates, stakeholders, and colleagues. These principles are not simply statements of intent; they are the driving force behind our approach to work as an organisation.

We uphold our consistent commitment to wellbeing

The welfare of our staff, panel members, commissioners, and candidates is a central consideration in all aspects of our work. This commitment ensures that our processes are not only effective and rigorous from a delivery perspective, but are supportive, inclusive, and grounded in respect for every individual.

We continue to operate in a hybrid way in line with government policy for civil servants. Whether colleagues are based in the office or working from home, their health, safety and wellbeing remain a priority. We carry out regular display screen equipment assessments, ensuring that any recommended equipment or support is provided as needed.

Selection day recruitment for salaried judicial roles is conducted face-to-face, and we continue to monitor any risks (such as public transport strikes) to the delivery of the programme very closely, to ensure disruption is kept to the absolute minimum. In April 2025, we successfully relocated offices. This has allowed us to maximise the use of our own premises, beyond just our smaller exercises, to host selection days, including for our District Judge exercise in June 2025.

Our weekly all staff meetings continue to provide staff with the opportunity to hear about the organisation’s current activity and our ongoing priorities. We continue to facilitate spotlight sessions, highlighting support services for staff and inviting along guest speakers. Our Chief Executive leads these meetings, with senior leaders also covering on a rotational basis to ensure visibility of the leadership team across the organisation.

In summer 2024, we launched our three-year People Plan for 2024 to 2027, designed to support our staff, which aligned closely with the organisation's three-year Business Strategy. Following its first full year of implementation, we have seen strong progress across all priority areas. We will undertake a formal review of our achievements and lessons learned to ensure we continue to build on this successful foundation.

The People Plan's aims and objectives are to:

- attract, retain and value our workforce
- celebrate the benefits of a career with the JAC and promote a consultation-based approach to management and leadership
- provide opportunities for staff to grow and develop in their role and career while delivering JAC objectives
- continue developing a culture that reflects our values and supports our staff as colleagues and individuals

We continue to support the effective delivery of our programme while balancing staff workloads. Recruitment into vacant roles remains as timely and efficient as possible. As at end of March 2026, our workforce comprised 116 permanent staff, which has increased since last year in anticipation of a heavier judicial recruitment programme in 2026 to 2027 and beyond.

We place great importance on supporting new joiners to the organisation, delivering a tailored induction programme that equips each colleague with the specific knowledge and skills required for their role. To further strengthen personal and professional development, our staff continue to use the 'personal growth map' assessment tool, enabling them to reflect on their strengths, identify development needs and work with their line managers to set meaningful objectives. Insights from these growth maps have helped us to shape learning and development opportunities to better support colleagues across the JAC. This has included providing 'Presenting Confidently' training courses to our members of staff who regularly present papers to our committees and our Commission Board.

Our staff networks remain a key part of our organisation, offering invaluable support and delivering events that help bring colleagues together. Our change agents helped to facilitate our annual away day event, which allowed colleagues to observe courts and tribunals in the morning, before coming back together in the afternoon for wider discussion and reflections.

Our mental health allies network and wellbeing leads continue to find ways to highlight support for staff through ‘time to talk’ events and wellbeing sessions. Our race and inclusion champions are identifying opportunities to provide space for open and honest conversations to foster an organisational culture which supports colleagues across all levels and have helped to organise training for our senior leadership team on ‘Leading Inclusive Teams’ and ‘Enhancing Leadership Capabilities’. Our dignity at work advisers continue to communicate the help they can provide to any colleagues who have concerns about bullying or harassment issues in the workplace.

Developing our digital tools

Following a thorough review of the technology that underpins our platform carried out by a specialist digital consultancy in 2024 to 2025, the Commission approved a new digital strategy through to 2028. The conclusion of the review was that the technology is modern, flexible and efficient and that, with the right enhancements, it will continue to support the JAC’s processes effectively for the foreseeable future. As such, the focus of the new digital strategy is on security and compliance, development processes, governance and monitoring, the user experience and accessibility.

In 2025 to 2026, we began a programme of work to improve the underlying code that powers our digital systems and introduced a new approach to quality assurance. We also strengthened security by introducing multifactor authentication, tighter access controls for staff, automatic session timeouts for all users, and improved data validation at the application stage. We resolved the security weaknesses identified in an IT health check commissioned in 2024 to 2025, and carried out a further IT health check along with a full accessibility audit. The findings from these will be acted on in 2026 to 2027.

Over the course of the reporting year, more than 3,200 candidates undertook one or more of the four online qualifying tests administered by the JAC. The online tests are integrated with the JAC’s digital platform and are used to shortlist candidates for selection day. The online tests are easy for candidates to access and navigate and can be undertaken at a time and place that best suits their needs.

Supporting our panel members and increasing diversity

We continue to provide support to our panel members, who play a crucial role in our selection process. Regular communication is maintained through newsletters that highlight key priorities, and we routinely share performance feedback to help them in their roles. We have also introduced several improvements to the recruitment process to help attract and retain a wider pool of panel members, enabling us to successfully deliver a series of panel member recruitment interviews this year. We look forward to onboarding and welcoming new members to our panel cadre. In addition, we offer thorough induction and ongoing training, including our annual event for lay panel members and monthly training sessions for judicial members, delivered as needed.

20% (16) of our panel member cadre are from an ethnic minority background as of March 2026.

Plans for the future

In the year ahead, we will continue to select candidates of the highest quality for judicial office, managing an expanded volume of recruitment while keeping our processes under review to ensure they are efficient, fair and in line with best practice.

Our priorities for 2026 to 2027 include:

- leadership and governance – supporting the welcome and induction of a new chair, ensuring continuity of leadership and clear strategic direction for the JAC
- delivery at scale – delivering an expanded programme of selection exercises, with plans for up to 40 exercises to fill up to 1,200 vacancies, while maintaining the quality and fairness of our processes
- responding to system reform – considering the JAC's response to recommendations arising from the Independent Review of Criminal Courts and assessing any implications for judicial selection
- efficient use of judicial resources – recognising ongoing pressures on judicial time, exploring ways to reduce reliance on serving judges in selection exercises while maintaining rigour, confidence, and the quality of assessment
- best practice – continuing to review our selection approaches to ensure best practice throughout the appointment process, in particular considering the usage and impact of AI and reviewing processes to ensure that they are as efficient and robust as possible
- partnership working – continuing to work closely with MoJ, the Judicial Office and legal professions as part of the new Judicial and Legal Diversity Board, which has replaced the JDF, supporting the aim of greater judicial diversity
- fairness and accessibility – reviewing our reasonable adjustments policy following an independent review of neurodiversity, to ensure our processes are inclusive and accessible to all candidates
- organisational planning – preparing for a future office move, in line with plans for the Ministry of Justice to exit 102 Petty France.

A. McMurtrie

Alex McMurtrie
Accounting Officer
Judicial Appointments Commission
26 June 2026

Accountability report

Corporate governance report

Directors' report

For the purposes of this report, directors are defined as those who influence the decisions of the JAC as a whole, including commissioners and those in the Senior Civil Service. Commissioners and the chief executive who served during 2025 to 2026 are set out in the remuneration and staff report on pages 82 to 98.

In accordance with the Code of Conduct for the Judicial Appointments Commissioners, a register of financial and other interests was maintained and updated throughout the year by the commissioners' secretariat.

It is published online: https://judicialappointments.gov.uk/corp-publication/jac-register-of-interests/

The secretariat can be contacted at Judicial Appointments Commission, 12th Floor, 102 Petty France, London SW1H 9AJ or by emailing: jacsecretariat@judicialappointments.gov.uk.

There were no losses of personal data during the year – as set out in the governance statement (nil in 2024 to 2025).

The Commission (as of 31 March 2026)

The members of the Commission are drawn from the lay public, the legal professions, courts and tribunals judiciary, and lay magistracy or non-legal tribunal members.

13 commissioners, including the chair, are appointed through open competition. The other three are selected by the Judges' Council (two senior members of the courts judiciary) and the Tribunal Judges' Council (one senior member of the tribunals judiciary).

The chair of the Commission must always be a lay member. Of the 15 other commissioners:

- five must be lay members
- six must be judicial members (including two tribunal judges)
- three must be professional members (each of which must hold a qualification listed below but must not hold the same qualification as each other)
- one must be a non-legally qualified judicial member

The commissioners are appointed in their own right and are not representatives of the professions that they may come from. Commissioners during 2025 to 2026 were:

- Helen Pitcher OBE, Chair (until 31 December 2025)
- Lord Justice Dove, Vice Chair (from 1 March 2026)
- Lord Justice Mark Warby, Vice Chair (until 6 February 2026)
- Mr Justice Adam Johnson (judicial)
- Judge Clive Lane (judicial: tribunal) (from 1 July 2025)
- Her Honour Judge Angela Rafferty KC (judicial)
- Senior District Judge Tanweer Ikram (judicial)
- Judge Noel Arnold (judicial: tribunal)
- Uchechi Igbokwe (judicial: non-legally qualified)
- Professor Christopher Bones (lay)
- Professor Clare McGlynn (lay)
- Sarah Pittam (lay) (from 1 October 2025)
- Siwan Davies (lay) (from 1 December 2025)
- Tony Harking OBE (lay) (from 1 October 2025)
- Nicolina Andall (professional: solicitor)
- Tom Cross KC (professional: barrister)
- Sue Hoyle OBE (lay) (until 30 September 2025)
- Rt. Rev. Dr Barry Morgan (lay) (until 30 November 2025)

* The legal qualifications are:

- barrister in England and Wales
- solicitor in England and Wales
- fellow of the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives

Commission, Selection and Character Committee (SCC), and Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) attendance 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026

Commissioner details	Meetings attended in 2025-26		
	Board	SCC	ARC
Number of meetings: 01/04/2025 to 31/3/26	8	19	5
Helen Pitcher OBE (Chair)	6 of 6	16 of 16	
Lord Justice Warby (Vice Chair)	7 of 7	16 of 18	
Mr Justice Adam Johnson	6 of 8	15 of 19	
Judge Greg Sinfield	1 of 1	1 of 2	
Judge Noel Arnold	6 of 8	16 of 19	
Professor Christopher Bones	7 of 8	15 of 19	2 of 3
Susan Hoyle OBE	3 of 4	10 of 11	
Uchechi Igbokwe	8 of 8	16 of 19	
District Judge Tanweer Ikram	7 of 8	18 of 19	4 of 5
Judge Clive Lane	5 of 6	9 of 13	
Rt. Rev. Dr Barry Morgan	5 of 6	14 of 15	
Professor Clare McGlynn	8 of 8	18 of 19	
Sarah Pittam	3 of 3	5 of 5	1 of 1
Tony Harking OBE	2 of 3	4 of 5	
Siwan Davies	3 of 3	4 of 4	
Her Honour Judge Angela Rafferty KC	6 of 8	15 of 19	
Tom Cross KC	6 of 8	14 of 19	
Nicolina Andall	8 of 8	18 of 19	4 of 5

Statement of Accounting Officer's responsibilities

Under the Constitutional Reform Act 2005, the Lord Chancellor with the consent of HM Treasury has directed the JAC to prepare for each financial year a statement of accounts in the form and on the basis set out in the accounts direction. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the JAC and of its income and expenditure, Statement of Financial Position and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts, the Accounting Officer is required to comply with the requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual and in particular to:

- confirm that, as far as he is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the entity's auditors are unaware
- confirm that he has taken all steps that he ought to have taken to make himself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the entity's auditors are aware of that information
- confirm that the annual report and accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable
- confirm that he takes personal responsibility for the annual report and accounts and judgements required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable
- observe the accounts direction issued by the Lord Chancellor including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis
- state whether applicable accounting standards as set out in the Government Financial Reporting Manual have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the accounts
- prepare the accounts on a going concern basis

The MoJ Accounting Officer has designated the Chief Executive as Accounting Officer of the JAC. The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, including responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records and for safeguarding the JAC's assets, are set out in Managing Public Money published by HM Treasury.

Auditors

Under paragraph 31(7), Schedule 12 of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005, the Commission's external auditor is the Comptroller and Auditor General. The cost of the audit is disclosed in note 4 to the financial statements and relates solely to statutory audit work.

The JAC framework document requires that internal audit arrangements should be maintained in accordance with the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards. Internal audit services are provided by the GIAA, which provides an independent and objective opinion to the Accounting Officer on the adequacy and effectiveness of the organisation's risk management, control and governance arrangements through a dedicated internal audit service to the JAC. Internal Audit attends the JAC Audit and Risk Committee, which provides oversight on governance and risk management.

Governance statement

As Accounting Officer for the JAC I have overall responsibility for ensuring the JAC applies high standards of corporate governance – including effective support for the Board's performance and management of risks – to ensure it is well placed to deliver its objectives and is sufficiently robust to face its challenges.

I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the JAC's policies, aims and objectives, while safeguarding public funds and JAC assets for which I am responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me in Managing Public Money.

Committee structure

In order to achieve these aims we have the following committee structure in place, which is supported by a senior leadership team who in turn are supported by our staff. The chair and other commissioners are served by the secretariat.

- The Commission (made up of 16 commissioners including the chair as set out in the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 as amended, and the Judicial Appointments Regulations 2013) met monthly (except in January, May, August and November). Members of the Commission come from a range of backgrounds and are drawn from the lay public, academia, governance, the legal profession and the judiciary – both courts and tribunals.
- The Commission has overall responsibility for our strategic direction, within the provisions of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 as amended, and as set out in the framework document agreed between MoJ and the JAC Accounting Officer.
- The term of the JAC chair came to an end on 31 December 2025. As permitted by statute, in the absence of the chair, the vice chair, as the most senior of the judicial commissioners, assumes responsibility for the majority of the core functions undertaken by the chair. In anticipation of the chair's departure, a Commissioner Governance Sub-Group was set up to support the vice chair from 1 January 2026, pending recruitment of a new JAC chair. The Board signed off on these interim governance arrangements in December 2025, with the appropriate legal advice being sought and key risks identified and addressed.
- This resulted in the effective management of subsequent turnover in the vice chair's role between February and March 2026, following the departure of Lord Justice Warby and appointment of Lord Justice Dove. For these reasons, I am confident that the proper measures are in place to manage the organisation during this transition period.

- The Selection and Character Committee generally meets twice a month (with some variation depending on business need). Membership is the same as the Commission, and the committee is chaired by the JAC chair. The committee identifies candidates suitable for recommendation to the appropriate authority for appointment to all judicial offices under Schedule 14 to the Constitutional Reform Act, as amended by the Crime and Courts Act, and to other offices as required by the Lord Chancellor under section 98 of the Constitutional Reform Act.
- The Audit and Risk Committee is made up of the chair (a commissioner), an independent (non-JAC) member and two other commissioners. The committee generally meets four times a year, with an additional meeting to consider the annual accounts. The committee may convene additional meetings as and when required. The committee advises the Chief Executive on the adequacy and effectiveness of risk management and internal control, including the strategic risk register processes. The committee also assesses the internal and external audit activity plans and the results of such activity.

Working with partners

In addition to various ad hoc meetings throughout the year, the JAC either hosts or participates in the following forums, to assist it in achieving its aims, in collaboration with its partners.

Judicial Diversity Forum

The JDF, which last met in July 2025, brought together organisations from across the legal sector to identify ways of improving judicial diversity. The forum provided strategic direction in the areas of challenging structural barriers to appointment, analysing and addressing the reasons behind differential progression, the gathering and use of data and evidence, resolving issues of common concern and the co-ordination of agreed activities aimed at encouraging greater judicial diversity.

The members of the JDF were:

- Chair of the JAC (also chair of the forum)
- Lord Chancellor
- Lady Chief Justice
- Chair of The Bar Council
- President of The Law Society
- President of the Chartered Institute of Legal Executives
- Chair of the Legal Services Board

The forum was supported by an Officials' Group comprising senior representatives from each of the member organisations, and ensured delivery of the agreed actions against the shared strategic priorities.

JAC Advisory Group

The JAC Advisory Group meets every one or two months as required. The group comprises the chair and deputy chair (both are JAC commissioners), members of the judiciary and legal professions, and two JAC panel members. The Advisory Group considers the suitability of materials to be used in selection processes for specific exercises.

Lady Chief Justice

Bilateral meetings between the JAC chair and the Lady Chief Justice take place during the year to discuss judicial strategy, resourcing and policy matters. Judicial diversity is a standing agenda item.

Board and committee performance

Board papers follow a standard template to ensure they are comprehensive, taking account of all dependencies such as finance, risk, digital requirements, presentation and handling, General Data Protection Regulation and diversity and equality implications. This enables Commission members to make sound decisions.

Board discussions

I am content with the wide range of issues covered over the year, including:

- discussing and setting JAC Business Plan 2025 to 2026
- annual review of indicators for exercise length
- consideration of weighting of skills and abilities
- statutory consultation forward programme
- JSAF implementation
- PAJE guidance
- JAC information management governance
- JAC digital strategy
- social media checks in selection exercises
- an update on the neurodiversity report
- statistical insight from the 2025 Diversity of Judiciary Report
- JAC interim governance arrangements
- management of AI risks
- a review of EMP
- annual update on the Targeted Outreach Programme

The Board also discussed high-level arrangements for a number of exercises run by the JAC, where these were either large, high profile, or involved a change to the selection processes applied previously:

- Circuit Judge
- High Court
- Deputy High Court Judge
- District Judge
- Judge of the First-tier Tribunal
- Authorisation to Act as Judges of the High Court

The chairs of the Audit and Risk Committee, Advisory Group, Welsh Matters Committee and Digital Programme Board briefed the Board on the highlights of their respective meetings.

Changes to the Commission

The following changes to the Commission took place during the year:

- one commissioner's term came to an end on 30 April 2025: Judge Greg Sinfield
- one commissioner was appointed on 1 July 2025: Upper Tribunal Judge Clive Lane
- one commissioner's term came to an end on 30 September 2025: Susan Hoyle OBE
- two commissioners were appointed on 1 October 2025: Sarah Pittam and Tony Harking OBE
- one commissioner's term came to an end on 30 November 2025: The Rt. Rev. Dr. Barry Morgan
- one commissioner was appointed on 1 December 2025: Siwan Davies
- the JAC chair's term came to an end on 31 December 2025: Helen Pitcher
- the JAC vice chair ended their term early on 6 February 2026: The Rt. Hon. Lord Justice Mark Warby
- one commissioner acted as interim vice chair from 6 February 2026 to 1 March 2026: Mr Justice Adam Johnson
- the new JAC vice chair was appointed on 1 March 2026: The Rt. Hon. Lord Justice Ian Dove

Board performance evaluation

In line with the HM Treasury and Cabinet Office Public Bodies Reform Programme guidance for arm's length body (ALB) boards, the JAC is committed to conducting an externally facilitated board effectiveness review every three years. This was carried out by third-party evaluators, Forvis Mazars LLP. Forvis Mazars carried out an external review and provided its report in June 2025, assessing the Board as functioning well. The findings of this report were discussed by the JAC Board at its meeting in July 2025, and an action plan to address suggested improvements was agreed at its meeting in December 2025.

Audit and Risk Committee performance

The committee conducted a review of its own effectiveness using the NAO's self-assessment checklist in March 2025. This was considered by the committee at its meeting in April 2025. General compliance with the checklist was found to be very good with only a few minor suggestions for improvement. This included updates to the Audit and Risk Committee's terms of reference and improvements to the management information pack to increase the level of risk detail relayed to the Board. The committee will conduct its next review at the end of 2026.

Commission Board, Selection and Character Committee, and Audit and Risk Committee attendance is on page 66.

Business Continuity

The JAC continued to deliver its judicial recruitment programme, with all salaried judicial recruitment being conducted via face-to-face selection processes. Recruitment to the majority of fee-paid roles continue to be delivered remotely. We also monitored any risks or disruption which could occur throughout the year, including strike action affecting travel in London, to ensure that delivery of the programme remained on track.

Resource within the JAC has been reinforced during the year to help drive forward confidence in our business continuity planning and resilience as an organisation. We continue to assess and report our business continuity preparedness to MoJ at regular intervals.

Corporate governance

Guidance followed

The JAC follows HM Treasury/Cabinet Office guidance in 'Corporate governance in central government departments: code of good practice', as far as possible in its capacity as a small arm's length body. As such it does not comply with the code provisions relating to a minister, nor have a separate professionally qualified finance director sitting on the Board given its independent status. The JAC operates under a finance service model where support is provided through a finance business partner based in MoJ Finance. The Board membership is also governed by the requirements of the Constitutional Reform Act, as amended by the Crime and Courts Act.

There is no formal Nominations and Governance Committee in place identifying leadership potential. Compliance with corporate governance guidance is outlined in greater depth in the framework document between MoJ and JAC as signed by the JAC in December 2022.

Responsibility

The JAC Board and its other committees provide the necessary leadership, effectiveness, accountability and sustainability to ensure the JAC delivers its objectives, while maintaining an open and transparent dialogue with MoJ and other key interested parties. As Accounting Officer, I also take seriously my responsibilities on the use of public funds that have been provided to the JAC, to ensure the most effective and efficient use of those funds. The JAC has a balanced Board in place, which consists of the chair and the commissioners, who all have equal decision-making rights. As Chief Executive I attend Board meetings, in a non-voting capacity. Of utmost importance is that all Board members uphold the seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.

Assurance

Assurance process

The JAC has an Assurance Framework that enables our organisation to identify and map the main sources and types of assurance we have in place across the four lines of defence and continues to be used in the development of future internal audit plans. Each member of the senior leadership team reports on exceptions that occurred in their areas of responsibility where processes have not operated as intended. These are scrutinised through the Audit and Risk Committee, and so I am confident that all assurance matters have been brought to my attention, and that assurance is well managed. There were no significant control exceptions identified this year.

Internal audit

The JAC uses the GIAA service, which is accountable to me as Accounting Officer. The service operates to Public Sector Internal Audit Standards and submits regular reports, which include the Head of Internal Audit's annual independent opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the arrangements for risk management, control and governance, together with recommendations for improvement.

The GIAA draws up its annual audit plan based on the key risks facing the organisation and through discussions with members of the senior leadership team. The plan is endorsed by the Audit and Risk Committee and approved by the Chief Executive. The implementation of accepted recommendations, resulting from internal audits, is monitored by the Audit and Risk Committee.

The GIAA issues assurance ratings for completed audits. The assurance rating definitions are detailed below.

Assurance rating	Definition
Substantial	The framework of governance, risk management and control is adequate and effective.
Moderate	Some improvements are required to enhance the adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control.
Limited	There are significant weaknesses in the framework of governance, risk management and control such that it could or could become inadequate and ineffective.
Unsatisfactory	There are fundamental weaknesses in the framework of governance, risk management and control such that it is inadequate and ineffective or is likely to fail.

The commissioned and completed audits for 2025 to 2026 are tabled below, alongside the GIAA's assurance rating:

Audit undertaken	Assurance rating
Gathering selection exercise materials	Substantial
Selection Exercise Programme Board	Substantial
Budgetary management	Substantial
Exercise-specific outreach	Moderate

The annual report from the Head of Internal Audit reflects well on the organisation and they provided an annual opinion of 'moderate' on the adequacy and effectiveness of the framework of governance, risk management and control. This gives me additional assurance that the organisation is managed well.

External audit

The Comptroller and Auditor General, through Deloitte and the National Audit Office, provides the external audit function for the JAC, and provided an unqualified opinion on our financial statements. In addition, they identified no significant internal control weaknesses, no issues concerning the regularity of expenditure, nor any material misstatements.

Sponsor department (MoJ)

I have regular meetings with the Lord Chancellor's officials to discuss progress in meeting the JAC's strategic objectives as set out in our business plan. These meetings are very constructive and demonstrate that there is a great deal of co-operation between us.

Data quality

Data considered by the Board

At each Board meeting, commissioners consider the management information pack. The pack contains progress against business plan objectives, statistical data relating to selection exercises (including diversity data), finance, human resources, complaints, Freedom of Information Act requests, outreach activity and a summary of the corporate risks. The pack is updated each month and is reviewed by the senior leadership team prior to Board meetings.

Immediately prior to the release of annual official statistics, including diversity data, the reports are circulated to the JAC chair and vice chair for information, in addition to key partners, in line with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. Data produced as a result of selection processes is regularly checked to ensure it is up-to-date and that figures are correct and consistent.

Data considered by the Selection and Character Committee

At its meetings, the Selection and Character Committee considers proposal papers when agreeing its recommendations to the appropriate authority. The committee looks at the progress of candidates of different backgrounds through selection processes. To help the committee do this, it is provided with anonymised diversity statistics for each exercise.

If the equal merit provision is applied, the JAC will rely on the diversity data provided in the candidate's application form. The information provided on diversity does not play a part in the selection process under any other circumstances.

Data considered by the Audit and Risk Committee

As stated above, the Audit and Risk Committee is provided with a copy of the latest management information pack when it meets. In addition, the committee considers data presented in other documents, including internal and external audit findings, security incidents and a summary of the JAC's quarterly accounts that are consolidated with MoJ.

Risk

Risk is managed in the JAC through risk registers throughout the organisation, overseen by a Framework and Risk Improvement Manager and underpinned by a Risk Management Policy and Framework. This provides guidance and assistance as required, whether through the handling of individual queries, attendance at various meetings, or to support my role as Accounting Officer.

Audit and Risk Committee

The committee monitors the key risks to achieving our strategic objectives through the Corporate Risk Register, which is updated by members of the senior leadership team. Commissioners have delegated to the committee responsibility for advising on the adequacy and effectiveness of risk management and internal control, including the risk management process.

Risk Management Policy and Framework

The JAC's Risk Management Policy and Framework outlines the key principles underpinning the JAC's approach to risk management and explains the risk management processes and the roles and responsibilities of staff. The JAC has a low to medium risk appetite, which means that the JAC is prepared to accept, tolerate or be exposed to a low to medium level of risk at any one point in time. The framework is reviewed annually by the Audit and Risk Committee. We maintain risk at a tolerable level rather than try to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives. We can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. I am satisfied that this is a proportionate approach.

Risk management and training

All staff have been informed of their responsibility for managing risk and new staff receive a summary on managing risk in their induction packs. Many staff members are involved actively in the management of risk through reporting at individual project boards and other forums.

Risk registers

The JAC regularly reviews risks to its objectives and monitors controls to mitigate these risks through the effective use of risk registers. We follow the guidance in HM Treasury's The Orange Book, by evaluating risks in terms of their impact on corporate objectives and likelihood of occurrence.

There is a hierarchy of risk registers, starting with the organisation-wide Corporate Risk Register at the top (the key risks in the Corporate Risk Register are set out in the overview section of the performance report on pages 6 to 39). Feeding into this are detailed registers on: health and safety, digital, information security, and operational and policy risks. These are identified and discussed at regular selection exercise checkpoints where risks are escalated, as appropriate, to the senior leadership team. I consider this to be appropriate for the JAC.

Information security, fraud and whistleblowing

Senior Information and Risk Owner

The Senior Information Risk Owner is responsible for managing information risk on behalf of myself, as Accounting Officer, and the Board, and for providing the necessary assurance.

Any data recorded on the JAC's digital platforms are subject to specific legislative provisions set out in the Constitutional Reform Act, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. User access is strictly controlled, and trail logs are kept for security checks and audit purposes. Requests for information are handled in full compliance with both the Data Protection Act and the Freedom of Information Act.

Any operational requirements to deviate from the JAC Security Policy regarding data security require Senior Information Risk Owner agreement.

Fourteen security incidents were reported during 2025 to 2026, six more than in the previous year. Of the incidents reported, none required escalation to the Information Commissioner's Office. The majority of incidents involved information being sent to the wrong email recipient or staff reporting their mobile devices as lost. Staff are regularly reminded of their responsibilities when handling sensitive information and taking ownership of MoJ equipment.

Following the joint Audit and Risk Committee and Digital Board workshop in October 2024 to discuss governance arrangements in respect to information management, the Board signed off the creation of a new Information Management Governance Committee. This committee is in place for 2026 to 2027 and will meet quarterly, ahead of each Audit and Risk Committee meeting, to ensure that progress updates are promptly reported via the Corporate Risk Register.

A new functional partnership agreement between Justice Digital and the JAC was produced during the year. This functional partnership agreement provides greater clarity around the ownership and responsibilities of the technology the JAC procures through MoJ.

As part of our ongoing efforts to ensure we remain vigilant to any potential threats to our system, we commissioned a penetration test of the JAC's digital platform, which took place in February 2026. The test was conducted by KPMG LLP, the contracted supplier MoJ uses to carry out testing of digital systems. In addition to this, we commissioned an accessibility audit of our digital platform in January 2026. This review, carried out by User Vision Ltd, assessed the accessibility of the JAC's digital platform to ensure that it can be used effectively, safely and independently by all users.

The JAC also continues to monitor new and emerging risks around the increasing use of AI tools and has amended the scope of its risk profile accordingly. In addition to this, the JAC commissioned the Work Psychology Group to conduct a high-level research project on AI in recruitment in March 2026.

A Counter Fraud Strategy and Response Plan are available to all staff, panel members and Board members and we have a whistleblowing policy in place. I am content that the measures we have in place are effective to enable anyone in the JAC to report any concerns that they may have and that we are well placed to deal with such concerns should they arise.

Summary

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control, including the risk management framework. My review is informed by the work of the internal auditors and the senior leadership team within the JAC who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework, and comments made by the external auditors in their management letter and other reports.

I have been advised on the implications of the result of my review by the Board and the Audit and Risk Committee. I am satisfied that a plan to address weaknesses in the system of internal control and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place. I am also satisfied that all material risks have been identified, and that those risks are being properly managed.

I am therefore able to confirm that there have been no known significant governance issues that could undermine the integrity or reputation of the JAC up to 31 March 2026 and up to the date of this report.

Remuneration and staff report

Chief Executive

The Chief Executive (a senior civil servant) is a permanent member of the JAC. The terms and conditions of his appointment, including termination payments, are governed by his contract.

The remuneration of senior civil servants is set by the Prime Minister following independent advice from the SSRB. The board also advises the Prime Minister from time to time on the pay and pensions of Members of Parliament and their allowances, on peers' allowances, and on the pay and pensions and allowances of ministers and others whose pay is determined by the Ministerial and Other Salaries Act 1975.

Further information about the work of the SSRB is on the Office for the Pay Review Bodies' website at: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-for-the-pay-review-bodies

The Chief Executive served during the year, and details of his appointment are set out below:

	Date of appointment	Date of leaving	Contract
Chief Executive: Alex McMurtrie	01/06/2023	n/a	Permanent member of staff (three-month notice period)

Service contracts

The Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010 requires Civil Service appointments to be made on merit on the basis of fair and open competition. The recruitment principles published by the Civil Service Commission specify the circumstances when appointments may be made otherwise.

Unless otherwise stated below, the officials covered by this report hold appointments which are open-ended. Early termination, other than for misconduct, would result in the individual receiving compensation as set out in the Civil Service Compensation Scheme.

Further information about the work of the Civil Service Commission can be found at: https://civilservicecommission.independent.gov.uk/

Panel members

The JAC has appointed panel members who are used, when required, to assess candidates for selection. Panel members may be required to chair the panel or participate as another member alongside the chair. The panel chairs provide a summary report for commissioners on candidates' suitability for selection. These panel chairs and members are paid a fee for each day worked and are entitled to reimbursement for travel and subsistence. The taxation on such expenses is borne by the JAC. They do not have any pension entitlements.

Commissioners

Commissioners are appointed by the Lord Chancellor for fixed terms in accordance with Schedule 12 of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005. No commissioner is permitted to serve for periods (whether or not consecutive) longer than 10 years. Commissioners are public appointees and provide strategic direction to the JAC and select candidates for recommendation for judicial office to the appropriate authority.

Commissioners, excluding the chair and those who are members of the judiciary, are paid a fee by the JAC. The fee is neither performance related nor pensionable. Any increase in the level of fees is at the discretion of the Lord Chancellor. Commissioners who are in salaried state employment, including judges, receive no additional pay for their work for the JAC. Commissioners do not receive any pension benefits.

Commissioners who are entitled to a fee are paid for 28 days' service a year. In exceptional circumstances they may be paid for additional days' work at the agreed daily rate of £355.25. In recognition of the continuing high demand on the judicial recruitment programme, an additional 10 days' service was paid to all commissioners who were entitled to a fee. The remuneration of the chair is included in the chief executive's remuneration table on page 85.

The members of the Commission during 2025 to 2026 and details of their appointments are set out below.

Commissioner	Date of original appointment	End of term
Chair: Helen Pitcher OBE	01/01/2023	31/12/2025
Vice Chair: Lord Justice Warby	29/06/2023	06/02/2026
Vice Chair: Lord Justice Dove	01/03/2026	28/02/2029
Mr Justice Adam Johnson	01/10/2022	30/09/2026
Judge Greg Sinfield	09/06/2020	30/04/2025
Judge Clive Lane	01/07/2025	30/06/2028
Her Honour Judge Angela Rafferty KC	09/06/2024	08/06/2027
District Judge Tanweer Ikram	14/12/2023	13/12/2026
Judge Noel Arnold	01/01/2024	31/12/2026
Sue Hoyle OBE	01/08/2019	30/09/2025
Rt. Rev. Dr Barry Morgan	06/07/2020	30/11/2025
Professor Christopher Bones	01/01/2024	31/12/2026
Professor Clare McGlynn	01/01/2024	31/12/2026
Uchechi Igbokwe	01/01/2024	31/12/2026
Tom Cross KC	01/07/2024	30/06/2027
Nicolina Andall	01/07/2024	30/06/2027
Sarah Pittam	01/10/2025	30/09/2028
Tony Harking OBE	01/10/2025	30/09/2028
Siwan Davies	01/12/2025	30/11/2028

Total figure of remuneration

Remuneration and pension entitlements

Remuneration (including salary) and pension entitlements (including the chair).

The following sections provide details of the remuneration and pension interests of the Chair and Chief Executive of the JAC (audited), which were as shown below:

Single total figure of remuneration:

Officials	Salary £000		Bonus payments £000		Benefits in kind (to nearest £100) £000		Pension benefits[1] £000		Total £000	
	2025-26	2024-25	2025-26	2024-25	2025-26	2024-25	2025-26	2024-25	2025-26	2024-25
Alex McMurtrie[2]	90-95	90-95	10-15	5-10	–	–	32	125	135-140	220-225
Helen Pitcher OBE[3]	50-55[4]	55-60[5]	–	–	–	–	–	–	50-55	55-60

1. The value of pension benefits accrued during the year is calculated as (the real increase in pension multiplied by 20) plus (the real increase in any lump sum) less (the contributions made by the individual). The real increase excludes increases due to inflation or any increase or decrease due to a transfer of pension rights.
2. Accrued pension benefits included in this table for any individual affected by the Public Service Pensions Remedy have been calculated based on their inclusion in the legacy scheme for the period between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022, following the McCloud judgment. The Public Service Pensions Remedy applies to individuals that were members, or eligible to be members, of a public service pension scheme on 31 March 2012 and were members of a public service pension scheme between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022. The basis for the calculation reflects the legal position that impacted members have been rolled back into the relevant legacy scheme for the remedy period and that this will apply unless the member actively exercises their entitlement on retirement to decide instead to receive benefits calculated under the terms of the Alpha scheme for the period from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2022.
3. The figure is the rate based on a 0.4 full-time equivalent, full-year equivalent rate being £135,000-140,000.
4. An additional 17 days' payment was paid to Helen Pitcher in 2025 to 2026.
5. An additional 7.5 days' payment was paid to Helen Pitcher in 2024 to 2025.

Benefits in kind

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the JAC and treated by HM Revenue and Customs as a taxable emolument. Benefits recognised relate to travel and subsistence. In 2025 to 2026 no director received benefits in kind (2024 to 2025: nil).

Total travel and subsistence claims over the reporting period for directors were as follows: 2025 to 2026: nil (2024 to 2025: £470).

Bonuses

Bonuses are based on performance levels attained and are made as part of the appraisal process. Bonuses relate to the performance in the year in which they become payable to the individual. The bonuses reported in 2025 to 2026 relate to performance in 2024 to 2025 and 2025 to 2026.

Commissioners' remuneration

The commissioners' remuneration (audited) for the year is as shown below (for joining or leaving dates see the governance statement) including payments to commissioners for acting as panellists in selection exercises: 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026.

			2025-26			2024-25
	Remuneration[1] (to nearest £500) £000	**Benefits in kind**[2] (to nearest £100) £000	**Total** (to nearest £500) £000	**Remuneration**[1] (to nearest £500) £000	**Benefits in kind**[2] (to nearest £100) £000	**Total** (to nearest £500) £000
Lord Justice Mark Warby[3]	–	–	–	–	–	–
Lord Justice Ian Dove[3]	–	–	–			
Mr Justice Adam Johnson[3]	–	–	–	–	–	–
Judge Greg Sinfield[3]	–	–	–	–	–	–
District Judge Tanweer Ikram[3]	–	–	–	–	–	–
Judge Clive Lane[3]	–	–	–	–	–	–
Her Honour Judge Angela Rafferty KC[3]	–	–	–	–	–	–
Judge Noel Arnold[3]	–	–	–	–	–	–
Sue Hoyle OBE	10.5	–	10.5	15	–	15
Rt. Rev. Dr Barry Morgan	14	4.9	19	23	3.1	26

	2025-26			2024-25		
	Remuneration[1] (to nearest £500) £000	**Benefits in kind**[2] (to nearest £100) £000	**Total** (to nearest £500) £000	**Remuneration**[1] (to nearest £500) £000	**Benefits in kind**[2] (to nearest £100) £000	**Total** (to nearest £500) £000
Professor Christopher Bones	17	4.3	21	13	3	16
Professor Clare McGlynn	14.5	6.9	21.5	13	2.9	16
Uchechi Igbokwe	15.5	–	15.5	13	–	13
Tom Cross KC	14.5	–	14.5	9.5	–	9.5
Nicolina Andall	13.5	0.4	14	9.5	0.2	9.5
Sarah Pittam	5.5	0.5	6	–	–	–
Tony Harking OBE	5.5	0.1	5.5	–	–	–
Siwan Davies	4.5	1.6	6	–	–	–

1. Remuneration in excess of the £9,000 payable for their role as a commissioner is due to additional days worked as a panellist on selection exercises.
2. Commissioners' benefits in kind are reimbursed in cash for expense claims relating to their travel and subsistence costs in relation to JAC business.
3. Nil balances are disclosed for judicial commissioners as they are not directly paid by the JAC.

All remuneration is based on the time each commissioner was in office, so does not necessarily represent a full year's service – see dates for original appointments on page 84.

Benefits in kind

Commissioners may be reimbursed for their travel and subsistence costs in attending JAC business if the cost of their journey is greater than they would otherwise have incurred with their other employment. Since non-judicial commissioners are deemed to be employees of the JAC, the amounts of these reimbursements are treated as benefits in kind and are disclosed in the table above and incorporated into the benefits in kind amounts. The taxation on such expenses is borne by the JAC. There are no other benefits in kind.

Judicial commissioners are not deemed to be employees of the JAC. There were no claims made by judicial commissioners.

Pension entitlements

The pension entitlements of the Chair and Chief Executive (audited) were as follows:

2025-26					
	Total accrued pension at pension age as at 31/03/2026 and related lump sum £000	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at pension age £000	CETV at 31/03/26 £000	CETV at 31/03/25 £000	Real increase in CETV £000
Helen Pitcher OBE[1]	–	–	–	–	–
Alex McMurtrie	45-50 plus a lump sum of 115-120	0-2.5 plus a lump sum of 0	1,114	1,029	23

1. Is not entitled to pension benefits.

Civil Service pensions

Pension benefits are provided through the Civil Service Pension Scheme and are administered by Capita, which became the scheme administrator on 1 December 2025.

From 1 April 2015, a new pension scheme for civil servants was introduced – the Civil Servants and Others Pension Scheme or **alpha**, which provides benefits on a career average basis with a normal pension age equal to the member's state pension age (or 65 if higher). From that date all newly appointed civil servants and the majority of those already in service joined **alpha**. Prior to that date, civil servants participated in the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS). The PCSPS has four sections: three providing benefits on a final salary basis (**classic**, **premium** or **classic plus**) with a normal pension age of 60, and one providing benefits on a whole career basis (**nuvos**) with a normal pension age of 65.

These statutory arrangements are unfunded with the cost of benefits met by monies voted by Parliament each year. Pensions payable under **classic**, **premium**, **classic plus**, **nuvos** and **alpha** are increased annually in line with pensions increase legislation. Existing members of the PCSPS who were within 10 years of their normal pension age on 1 April 2012 remained in the PCSPS after 1 April 2015. Those who were between 10 years and 13 years and 5 months from their normal pension age on 1 April 2012 switched into **alpha** sometime between 1 June 2015 and 1 February 2022. All members who switched to **alpha** had their PCSPS benefits 'banked', with those with earlier benefits in one of the final salary sections of the PCSPS having those benefits based on their final salary when they left **alpha**. The pension figures quoted for officials show pension earned in PCSPS or **alpha** – as appropriate. Where the official has benefits in both the PCSPS and **alpha**, the figure quoted is the combined value of their benefits in the two schemes. Members joining from October 2002 may opt for either the appropriate defined benefit arrangement or a 'money purchase' stakeholder pension with an employer contribution (partnership pension account).

In 2018, the Court of Appeal found that the rules put in place in 2015 to protect older workers by allowing them to remain in their original scheme were discriminatory on the basis of age. As a result, steps have been taken to remedy those 2015 reforms, making the pension scheme provisions fair to all members. The pensions of those in scope of the 2015 remedy have been reported in the remuneration report on the basis of being in their relevant legacy scheme for the period between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022. On retirement, individuals will have a choice to elect to instead receive benefits under the terms of the **alpha** scheme for the remedy period.

The 2015 Remedy (McCloud) legislation remains in implementation. From July 2025, eligible members who opted out of the Civil Service Pension Scheme between 12 March 2012 and 28 February 2022 were able to apply to buy back pension service for the Remedy period (1 April 2015 to 31 March 2022), in accordance with Employer Pension Notice 738, issued by the Civil Service Pension Scheme administrator (Capita).

Please refer to: https://www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk/employerhub/employer-pension-notices/

Employee contributions are salary-related and range between 4.6% and 8.05% for members of **classic**, **premium**, **classic plus**, **nuvos** and **alpha**. Benefits in **classic** accrue at the rate of one-eightieth of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. In addition, a lump sum equivalent to three years' initial pension is payable on retirement. For **premium**, benefits accrue at the rate of one-sixtieth of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. Unlike **classic**, there is no automatic lump sum. Classic plus is essentially a hybrid with benefits for service before 1 October 2002 calculated broadly as per **classic** and benefits for service from October 2002 worked out as in **premium**. In **nuvos** a member builds up a pension based on their pensionable earnings during their period of scheme membership. At the end of the scheme year (31 March) the member's earned pension account is credited with 2.3% of their pensionable earnings in that scheme year and the accrued pension is uprated in line with pensions increase legislation. Benefits in **alpha** build up in a similar way to **nuvos**, except that the accrual rate is 2.32%. In all cases members may opt to give up (commute) their pension for a lump sum up to the limits set by the Finance Act 2004.

The partnership pension account is a stakeholder pension arrangement. The employer makes a basic contribution of between 8% and 14.75% (depending on the age of the member) into a stakeholder pension product chosen by the employee from a panel of providers. The employee does not have to contribute, but where they do make contributions, the employer will match these up to a limit of 3% of pensionable salary (in addition to the employer's basic contribution). Employers also contribute a further 0.5% of pensionable salary to cover the cost of centrally provided risk benefit cover (death in service and ill health retirement).

The accrued pension quoted is the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are already at or over pension age. Pension age is 60 for members of **classic**, **premium** and **classic plus**, 65 for members of **nuvos**, and the higher of 65 or state pension age for members of **alpha**. The pension figures quoted for officials show pension earned in PCSPS or **alpha** – as appropriate. Where the official has benefits in both the PCSPS and **alpha**, the figure quoted is the combined value of their benefits in the two schemes but note that part of that pension may be payable from different ages.

Further details about the Civil Service pension arrangements can be found at the website: www.civilservicepensionscheme.org.uk

Cash equivalent transfer values

A cash equivalent transfer value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies.

The figures include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the member has transferred to the Civil Service pension arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their buying additional pension benefits at their own cost. CETVs are worked out in accordance with the Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 and do not take account of any actual or potential reduction to benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

CETV figures are calculated using the guidance on discount rates for calculating unfunded public service pension contribution rates that was extant at 31 March 2026. HM Treasury published updated guidance on 27 April 2023, which remained in force at the reporting date. Further updated guidance was issued on 19 May 2026 – this guidance will be used in the calculation of 2026 to 2027 CETV figures.

Real increase in CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV that is funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

Fair pay disclosure

The JAC is required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the highest-paid director in their organisation and the lower quartile, median and upper quartile remuneration of the organisation's workforce (audited).

Percentage change from previous year in total salary and bonuses for the highest paid director and the staff average.

	2025-26		2024-25	
	Total salary	Bonus payments	Total salary	Bonus payments
Staff average	1.57%	-22.07%	5.48%	145.22%
Highest paid director	0.0%	66.67%	5.71%	200.00%

Ratio between the highest paid directors' total remuneration and the pay and benefits of employees in the lower quartile, median and upper quartile

	Lower quartile	Median	Upper quartile
2025-26	2.70:1	2.60:1	2.10:1
2024-25	2.90:1	2.50:1	2.00:1

Lower quartile, median and upper quartile for staff pay for salaries and total pay and benefits.

	Lower quartile		Median		Upper quartile	
	2025-26	2024-25	2025-26	2024-25	2025-26	2024-25
Basic salary	36,027	32,838	40,862	39,259	50,305	48,410
Total pay and benefits	**40,014**	**33,953**	**40,862**	**39,559**	**50,389**	**48,560**

The annualised banded remuneration of the highest paid director, who we have deemed to be the Chief Executive in the JAC in 2025 to 2026, was £105,000 to £110,000 (2024 to 2025, £95,000 to £100,000). This was 2.6 times (2024 to 2025: 2.5) the median remuneration of the workforce, which was £40,862 (2024 to 2025, £39,559). The increase in median remuneration is due to the pay award of 3.25%.

In 2025 to 2026, nil (2024 to 2025, nil) employees received remuneration in excess of the highest-paid director. Remuneration ranged from £25,000 to £30,000, to £105,000 to £110,000 in 2025 to 2026 (2024 to 2025: £25,000 to £30,000 to £95,000 to £100,000).

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay, allowances and benefits in kind. It does not include severance payments, employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

The 2025 to 2026 pay remit year is covered by Civil Service Pay Remit Guidance approved by the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury. This guidance allows departments to make average pay awards of up to 3.25%, with a further 0.5% available to address specific workforce issues. The JAC implemented pay awards during the year in line with this framework. Further information is available in the Civil Service Pay Remit Guidance 2025 to 2026 at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-service-pay-remit-guidance-2025-to-2026

There has been a decrease in the ratio between the highest paid director's total remuneration and the pay and benefits of the employee at the lower quartile in 2025 to 2026 from 2.90:1 to 2.70:1. This is primarily due to the employee at the lower quartile being a higher grade in 2025 to 2026 than in 2024 to 2025.

The highest paid director's bonus has increased by 66.67% due to an increase in their banded remuneration. This has increased the ratio between the highest paid director's total remuneration and the pay and benefits of the employees in the upper quartile ratio from 2.00:1 to 2.10:1.

The salary component of total pay and benefits of staff at the lower quartile, median and upper quartile has increased in 2025 to 2026. This reflects the pay award of 3.25% made to permanent staff in 2025 to 2026.

Fee-paid staff are excluded from the fair pay disclosure because they are independent office holders.

Staff report

Staff composition

The split of the staff as at 31 March 2026 is as follows:

	Male	Female	Total
Director (senior civil servant)	1	–	1
Senior leaders	1	1	2
Other staff	41	72	113
Total	**43**	**73**	**116**

These correspond to the total of permanent, fixed-term contracts and seconded staff as set out below (audited):

							Staff costs comprise
						2025-26	2024-25
	Commissioners	Panel chairs and lay panel members	Permanent staff	Seconded staff	Other contracted staff	Total	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Wages and salaries	122	1,189	4,816	99	286	6,512	5,923
Social security costs	21	183	663	–	–	867	660
Other pension costs	–	–	1,267	–	–	1,267	1,145
Total	**143**	**1,372**	**6,746**	**99**	**286**	**8,646**	**7,728**

During the year, no staff costs were capitalised (£0 in 2024 to 2025).

In 2025 to 2026 the JAC employed its own staff (permanent staff, on loan and those on fixed-term contracts). Other contracted staff are supplied by agencies. All irrecoverable Value Added Tax (VAT) is included within wages and salaries. No VAT is included in social security or other pension costs.

The JAC did not have any costs associated with staff who were relevant trade union officials during 2025 to 2026.

The PCSPS and the Civil Servants and Others Pension Scheme (CSOPS) – known as alpha – are unfunded multi-employer defined benefit schemes where the JAC is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. The Scheme Actuary valued the scheme as at 31 March 2020. Details can be found in the Civil Superannuation annual accounts 2024 to 2025 at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-superannuation-annual-account-2024-to-2025

For 2025 to 2026, employers' contributions of £1.25 million were payable to the PCSPS (2024 to 2025: £1.13 million) at a flat rate of 28.97% (2024 to 2025: 28.97%) of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. The Scheme Actuary reviews employer contributions usually every four years following a full scheme valuation. The contribution rates are set to meet the cost of the benefits accruing during 2025 to 2026 to be paid when the member retires and not the benefits paid during this period to existing pensioners.

Employees can opt to open a partnership pension account, a stakeholder pension with an employer contribution. Employers' contributions to partnership pension accounts in 2025 to 2026 were £18,314 (2024 to 2025: £13,842). Employer contributions, which are age-related, ranged from 8% to 14.75% (2024 to 2025: 8% to 14.75%) of pensionable pay. Employers also match employee contributions up to 3% of pensionable pay.

In addition, employer pension contributions equivalent to 0.5% (2024 to 2025: 0.5%) of pensionable pay were payable to the PCSPS to cover the cost of the future provision of lump sum benefits on death in service and ill health retirement of employees in the PCSPS.

The average numbers of full-time equivalent persons employed during the year were as follows (audited):

	Commissioners	Panel chairs and lay panel members	Permanent staff	Seconded staff	Fixed term contracts	Other contracted staff	Total
2025-26	2	15	107	1	–	5	**130**
2024-25	2	17	101	1	–	3	**124**

The average numbers for commissioners, panel chairs and lay panel members represent their total respective input into the JAC in full-time equivalent terms.

Civil Service and other compensation schemes

There were no departures, voluntary or otherwise (audited), in 2025 to 2026 (2024 to 2025: nil departures).

Spend on consultancy

During 2025 to 2026 the JAC spent £78,000 on consultancy (2024 to 2025: £121,000). This related to various projects to review and enhance the JAC's selection processes and strategic communication services.

Off-payroll engagements

During the financial year 2025 to 2026, the JAC has reviewed off-payroll engagements where we are required to consider intermediaries (IR35) legislation using HMRC's guidance and online status indicator. We have advised our contracting body of the outcome of the status determinations so that, where appropriate, tax deductions are made at source from payments made in respect of the engagement with the JAC.

Highly paid off-payroll worker engagements as at 31 March 2026, earning £245 per day or greater

Number of existing engagements as of 31 March 2026	1
Of which:	
Number that have existed for less than one year at time of reporting	1

All highly paid off-payroll workers engaged at any point during the year ended 31 March 2026, earning £245 per day or greater

Number of temporary off-payroll workers engaged during the year ended 31 March 2026	1
Of which:	
Not subject to off-payroll legislation	1

For any off-payroll engagements of board members and/or senior officials with significant financial responsibility, between 1 April 2025 and 31 March 2026

Number of off-payroll engagements of board members, and/or, senior officials with significant financial responsibility, during the financial year	–
Total number of individuals on payroll and off-payroll that have been deemed 'board members and/or senior officials with significant financial responsibility', during the financial year. This figure should include both on-payroll and off-payroll engagements	12[1]

1. This figure includes all lay and professional commissioners that were in post during 2025 to 2026, including the JAC Chair and Chief Executive.

Sickness absence data

Staff sickness absence levels rose this year but remain comparable to the average observed across other Civil Service organisations. For 2025 to 2026 an average figure of 9.22 days was lost against our staff numbers in post due to absences (compared to a figure of 6.14 days in 2024 to 2025). This remains below the department's average working days lost of 10.7 days in 2024 to 2025.

Staff turnover

In 2025 to 2026, staff turnover was 6.41% (2024 to 2025: 12.75%). This includes transfers of staff within the Civil Service. The JAC continues to monitor turnover rates and support initiatives to maintain a healthy level of turnover. The annual Civil Service People Survey, coupled with other research, helps us to understand our people's experience of working in the JAC and take appropriate action. Our engagement score in the People Survey rose by 2% from 69% in 2024 to 71% in 2025, which was higher than the wider Civil Service engagement benchmark of 65%.

Staff policies

Other staff policies (not already covered in the report)

The JAC meets its responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and uses name-blind recruitment for all staff appointments.

The JAC works to ensure that disability is not regarded as a barrier to recruitment, learning and development or promotion. We are committed to ensuring that staff with a disability have access to equal opportunities when they first join the JAC and at all stages in their career. This includes making sure that they have the right workplace adjustments to be fully effective in their roles, irrespective of whether their condition is pre-existing or acquired while employed by the JAC. Additionally, we provide internal support to staff with disabilities through the MoJ disability network. We also link into a range of other MoJ networks where staff with disabilities can obtain peer support and advice.

Parliamentary accountability and audit report

Government Functional Standards

The Government Functional Standards provide a mandate for the various corporate and professional functions that operate within the JAC, and include:

- analysis
- commercial
- communications
- counter fraud
- debt
- digital
- finance
- people
- project delivery
- property
- security

We also work closely with the GIAA to test our resilience across these areas where necessary.

These functional standards were mandated across government in September 2021 and help to:

- set a coherent way of doing business, bringing together what needs to be done and why
- support the governance, planning, delivery and assurance of functional work
- provide a key reference point that allows users to organise and manage all the other guidance that people are expected to follow
- support continuous improvement and professional development

The JAC is an arm's length body of MoJ. MoJ's Business Architecture and Transformation Directorate leads in driving forward a broad agenda of functional reform. This directorate is responsible for:

- ensuring that best practice from the standards is integrated into functional operating models by monitoring continuous improvement and establishing a realistic level of ambition for improvement via the Functional Forum
- ensuring that functional stakeholders receive a seamless service from MoJ's professional functions, via engagement activities with users of those functional services
- identifying opportunities to build capability and improve cross-cutting skills throughout the functional workforce

Corporate and professional functions play a vital role in the JAC and are provided centrally by MoJ to support more effective collaboration, drive efficiency and strengthen the organisation. These include analytical services, commercial, communications, counter fraud, debt, digital, finance, people, project delivery, property, and security. The centralised functional leadership model brings together specialists into single, unified teams and is in line with operating requirements set through the overarching Government Functional Standards.

The maturity of functions is assessed through regular 'health checks', supported by self-assessments using the Cabinet Office continuous improvement assessment. The JAC continues to work closely with each of the MoJ functions to ensure shared objectives are clearly articulated with agreed ways of working. The arrangements are regularly reviewed as part of continuous improvement to strengthen the functional offer and ensure a high standard of service.

Regularity of expenditure

In addition to the primary financial statements prepared under International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) requires the JAC to report on losses, special payments, and remote contingent liabilities. These notes and disclosures were audited.

Losses statement

A balance of £4,671 was written off in 2025 to 2026 (£15,151 in 2024 to 2025) representing unrecoverable payroll overpayments and an unallocated procurement card balance.

Special payments

There was one special payment of £91,400 in 2025 to 2026 (nil in 2024 to 2025) representing legal costs paid as a result of a Court of Appeal ruling.

Remote contingent liabilities

In addition to the contingent liabilities reported in accordance with International Accounting Standard (IAS) 37, the JAC is required to disclose details of any liabilities for which the likelihood of a transfer of economic benefit in settlement is too remote to meet the definition of contingent liability.

As at 31 March 2026, the JAC had no remote contingent liabilities (nil in 2024 to 2025).

A. McMurtrie

Alex McMurtrie
Accounting Officer
Judicial Appointments Commission
26 June 2026

The certificate and report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Houses of Parliament

Opinion on financial statements

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Judicial Appointments Commission for the year ended 31 March 2026 under the Constitutional Reform Act 2005.

The financial statements comprise the Judicial Appointments Commission's

- Statement of Financial Position as at 31 March 2026;
- Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, Statement of Cash Flows and Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for the year then ended; and
- the related notes including the significant accounting policies.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in the preparation of the financial statements is applicable law and UK adopted International Accounting Standards.

In my opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Judicial Appointments Commission's affairs as at 31 March 2026 and its net expenditure for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 and Lord Chancellor directions issued thereunder.

Opinion on regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects, the income and expenditure recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Basis for opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs UK), applicable law and Practice Note 10 *Audit of Financial Statements and Regularity of Public Sector Bodies in the United Kingdom (2024)*. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of my certificate.

Those standards require me and my staff to comply with the Financial Reporting Council's *Revised Ethical Standard 2024*. I am independent of the Judicial Appointments Commission in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK. My staff and I have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, I have concluded that the Judicial Appointments Commission's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Judicial Appointments Commission's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Accounting Officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this certificate.

The going concern basis of accounting for the Judicial Appointments Commission is adopted in consideration of the requirements set out in HM Treasury's Government Financial Reporting Manual, which requires entities to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements where it is anticipated that the services which they provide will continue into the future.

Other Information

The other information comprises information included in the Annual Report, but does not include the financial statements and my auditor's certificate thereon. The Accounting Officer is responsible for the other information.

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in my certificate, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

My responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated.

If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion the part of the Remuneration and Staff Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with Lord Chancellor directions issued under the Constitutional Reform Act 2005.

In my opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the parts of the Accountability Report subject to audit have been properly prepared in accordance with directions issued by the Lord Chancellor under the Constitutional Reform Act 2005; and
- the information given in the Accountability Report and Performance Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements and is in accordance with the applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which I report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Judicial Appointments Commission and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Accountability Report and Performance Report.

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the Judicial Appointments Commission or returns adequate for my audit have not been received from branches not visited by my staff; or
- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- the financial statements and the parts of the Accountability Report subject to audit are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of remuneration specified by HM Treasury's Government Financial Reporting Manual have not been made or parts of the Remuneration and Staff Report to be audited is not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with HM Treasury's guidance.

Responsibilities of the Accounting Officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities, the Accounting Officer is responsible for:

- maintaining proper accounting records;
- providing the C&AG with access to all information of which management is aware that is relevant to the preparation of the financial statements such as records, documentation and other matters;
- providing the C&AG with additional information and explanations needed for his audit;

- providing the C&AG with unrestricted access to persons within the Judicial Appointments Commission from whom the auditor determines it necessary to obtain audit evidence;
- ensuring such internal controls are in place as deemed necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements to be free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error;
- preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view in accordance with Lord Chancellor directions under the Constitutional Reform Act 2005;
- preparing the annual report, which includes the Remuneration and Staff Report, in accordance with Lord Chancellor directions under the Constitutional Reform Act 2005; and
- assessing the Judicial Appointments Commission's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Accounting Office anticipates that the services provided by the Judicial Appointments Commission will not continue to be provided in the future.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My responsibility is to audit, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with the Constitutional Reform Act 2005.

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a certificate that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations including fraud

I design procedures in line with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud. The extent to which my procedures are capable of detecting non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud is detailed below.

Identifying and assessing potential risks related to non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, I:

- considered the nature of the sector, control environment and operational performance including the design of the Judicial Appointments Commission's accounting policies.
- inquired of management, Judicial Appointments Commission's head of internal audit and those charged with governance, including obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation relating to the Judicial Appointments Commission's policies and procedures on:
  - identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations;
  - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud; and
  - the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations including the Judicial Appointments Commission's controls relating to the Judicial Appointments Commission's compliance with the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 and Managing Public Money;
- inquired of management, the Judicial Appointments Commission's head of internal audit and those charged with governance whether:
  - they were aware of any instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations;
  - they had knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
- discussed with the engagement team including IT specialists regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud.

As a result of these procedures, I considered the opportunities and incentives that may exist within the Judicial Appointments Commission for fraud and identified the greatest potential for fraud in the following areas: revenue recognition, posting of unusual journals, complex transactions and bias in management estimates. In common with all audits under ISAs (UK), I am required to perform specific procedures to respond to the risk of management override.

I obtained an understanding of the Judicial Appointments Commission's framework of authority and other legal and regulatory frameworks in which the Judicial Appointments Commission operates. I focused on those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on material amounts and disclosures in the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the Judicial Appointments Commission. The key laws and regulations I considered in this context included the Constitutional Reform Act 2005, Managing Public Money, Employment Law and Tax Legislation.

Audit response to identified risk

To respond to the identified risks resulting from the above procedures:

- I reviewed the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described above as having direct effect on the financial statements;
- I enquired of management, the Audit and Risk Committee and legal counsel concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- I reviewed minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and the Board and internal audit reports;
- I addressed the risk of fraud through management override of controls by testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements on estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business; and

I communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential risks of fraud to all engagement team members including internal specialists and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of my certificate.

Other auditor's responsibilities

I am required to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control I identify during my audit.

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

Gareth Davies
Comptroller and Auditor General
6 July 2026

National Audit Office
157-197 Buckingham Palace Road
Victoria
London
SW1W 9SP

Financial statements

Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure

for the year ended 31 March 2026

		2025-26	2024-25
	Notes	£000	£000
Income	2	(26)	(27)
Expenditure			
Staff costs	3	8,646	7,728
Other operating costs	4	2,071	1,948
Services and facilities provided by sponsoring department	5	935	877
Net expenditure for the year		**11,626**	**10,526**
Comprehensive net expenditure for the year		**11,626**	**10,526**

The notes on pages 114 to 123 form part of these accounts.

Statement of Financial Position

as at 31 March 2026

	Notes	31 March 2026 £000	31 March 2025 £000
Non-Current Assets			
Intangible assets	6	240	328
Total non-current assets		**240**	**328**
Current Assets			
Trade and other receivables	7	92	80
Cash at bank	8	758	1,836
Total current assets		**850**	**1,916**
Total assets		**1,090**	**2,244**
Current Liabilities			
Trade and other payables	9	(177)	(173)
Other liabilities	9	(663)	(797)
Provisions	10	(34)	–
Total current liabilities		**(874)**	**(970)**
Total assets less total liabilities		**216**	**1,274**
Taxpayers' equity:			
Revaluation reserve		11	16
General reserve		205	1,258
Total taxpayers' equity		**216**	**1,274**

The notes on pages 114 to 123 form part of these accounts.

A. McMurtrie

Alex McMurtrie
Accounting Officer
Judicial Appointments Commission
26 June 2026

Statement of Cash Flows

as at 31 March 2026

	Notes	2025-26 £000	2024-25 £000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net expenditure for the year		(11,626)	(10,526)
Adjustments for non-cash transactions:			
- MoJ overhead recharges		935	877
- Intangible asset adjustment	6	2	–
- Amortisation	4	86	183
- Provisions provided in year	10	34	–
(Increase)/Decrease in trade and other receivables	7	(12)	8
(Decrease)/Increase in trade and other payables	9	(130)	221
Net cash outflow from operating activities		**(10,711)**	**(9,237)**
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of intangible assets	6	–	–
Net cash outflow from investing activities		**–**	**–**
Cash flows from financing activities			
Grant-in-aid received from MoJ		9,633	10,968
Net financing		**9,633**	**10,968**
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the year		**(1,078)**	**1,731**
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		1,836	105
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	8	**758**	**1,836**

The notes on pages 114 to 123 form part of these accounts.

Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity

as at 31 March 2026

	General Reserve £000	Revaluation Reserve £000	Total £000
Balance at 1 April 2024	**(71)**	**26**	**(45)**
Changes in taxpayers' equity – 2024-25			
Net expenditure for year ended 31 March 2025	(10,526)	–	(10,526)
Grant-in-aid towards expenditure	10,968	–	10,968
Grant-in-aid received, being costs settled by MoJ	877	–	877
Transfers between reserves	10	(10)	–
Balance at 31 March 2025	**1,258**	**16**	**1,274**
Changes in taxpayers' equity – 2025-26			
Net expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2026	(11,626)	–	(11,626)
Grant-in-aid towards expenditure	9,633	–	9,633
Grant-in-aid received, being costs settled by MoJ	935	–	935
Transfers between reserves	5	(5)	–
Balance at 31 March 2026	**205**	**11**	**216**

The notes on pages 114 to 123 form part of these accounts.

Notes to the accounts

for the year ended 31 March 2026

Note 1. Statement of accounting policies

These financial statements are prepared on a going concern basis in accordance with the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 and with the 2025 to 2026 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) issued by HM Treasury. The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public-sector context.

Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which is judged to be most appropriate to the circumstances of the JAC for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected.

The policies adopted by the JAC are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the account and are in a form as directed by the Lord Chancellor with the approval of HM Treasury.

The accounts have been prepared on an accruals basis under the historical cost convention, modified to account for the revaluation of non-current assets.

The functional and presentational currency of the department is the British pound sterling (£).

a) Changes in accounting policy and disclosures, and accounting standards issued but not adopted

New and amended standards adopted.

IFRS 17 Insurance Contracts replaces IFRS 4 Insurance Contracts and is effective for the public sector organisations from 1 April 2025. It establishes the principles for the recognition, measurement, presentation and disclosure of insurance contracts within the scope of this standard. We do not expect IFRS 17 to have a material impact.

The 2025 to 2026 FReM includes guidance on accounting for social benefits. It defines social benefits as “current transfers received by households (including individuals) intended to provide for the needs that arise from certain events or circumstances, for example, sickness, unemployment, retirement, housing, education, or family circumstances”. We do not expect this to have a material impact.

The 2025 to 2026 FReM removes the option to remeasure intangible assets using the revaluation model. With approval from HM Treasury, JAC early adopted this change effective from 1 April 2024. The amendment has been applied prospectively, with the carrying values as at the transition date (1 April 2024) now treated as deemed historical cost.

New standards, amendments and interpretations issued but not effective for the financial year beginning 1 April 2025 and not early adopted.

IFRS 18 will replace IAS 1 Presentation of Financial Statements and is effective for annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2027 in the private sector. The impact of IFRS 18 on the public sector is still being assessed, and a decision has not yet been taken on an implementation date.

IFRS 19 allows eligible subsidiaries to apply IFRS Accounting Standards with reduced disclosure requirements and is effective for annual reporting periods beginning on or after the 1 January 2027 in the private sector. The impact of IFRS 19 on the public sector is still being assessed, and a decision has not yet been taken on an implementation date.

We do not consider that any other new, or revised standard, or interpretation will have a material impact.

b) Funding

The JAC receives grant-in-aid funding from MoJ, which is accounted for on a cash basis through the general fund.

c) Accounting for VAT

The JAC is not permitted to recover any VAT on expenditure incurred. All VAT is therefore non-recoverable and charged to the relevant expenditure category.

d) Critical judgements and key sources of estimation uncertainty

In preparing its financial statements, the JAC is required to make judgements (other than those involving estimates) that affect the application of accounting policies and the reported results disclosed in these statements. The preparation of financial statements also requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect the reported and future amounts of assets, liabilities, income and expenses. Actual outcomes may differ from those estimates. Estimates and the underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis, with any revisions recognised in the period in which they are revised and in any future periods affected.

Critical judgements

The JAC has reviewed the selection, development and disclosure of critical accounting policies, judgements and estimates and their application. There are no critical judgements affecting the financial statements.

Key sources of estimation uncertainty

There are no estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amount of assets within the next financial year.

e) Intangible assets

An intangible asset, as specified in IAS 38 Intangible Assets, is an identifiable asset without physical substance. Intangible assets are capitalised if it is probable that future service potential attributable to them will flow to the JAC and if their cost can be measured reliably.

The intangible asset associated with the current digital platform comprises internally developed software for internal use and software developed by third parties. Development costs directly attributable to the design and testing of this identifiable and unique software product controlled by the JAC were capitalised when they met the criteria specified in the FReM, which has been adapted from IAS 38 'Intangible Assets'. Other development expenditure that did not meet these criteria were recognised as an expense as incurred. Development costs previously recognised as an expense are not recognised as an asset in a subsequent period.

Subsequent to initial recognition, intangible assets are recognised at fair value. As no active market exists for the JAC's intangible asset, fair value is assessed as replacement cost less any accumulated amortisation and impairment losses. This is known as depreciated replacement cost (DRC).

The capitalisation threshold for software projects and for subsequent additions that enhance the economic benefit of the asset is £5,000. Intangible assets were revalued at the end of each reporting period using the Producer Price Index issued by the Office for National Statistics (ONS) up to 31 March 2024. From 1 April 2024 the JAC was granted permission to early adopt the 2025 to 2026 FReM adaptation withdrawing the revaluation model for intangible assets. The carrying values at the transition date of 1 April 2024 are considered historical cost and will be amortised over the remaining lives of the assets.

The current digital platform went live on 21 January 2020 with the useful economic life of the asset set at 7 years. An independent review of the platform in 2024 to 2025 concluded that the useful economic life of the asset should be extended by 2 years to 9 years. This extension has reduced the annual amortisation charge, contributing to the significant decrease in intangible asset amortisation disclosed in Note 6.

f) Leases

Accounting standard IFRS 16 prescribes the accounting policies for leases, requiring lessees to recognise assets and liabilities for all leases unless the lease term is 12 months or less, or the underlying asset is of low value.

The JAC occupies office space at 102 Petty France, London, under agreement with the Core Department.

In assessing this arrangement against the criteria of IFRS 16, it is evident that MoJ may amend accommodation arrangements at relatively short notice as part of its wider management of the estate and there is no enforceable lease term. It has therefore been determined that these arrangements do not meet the threshold to be recognised as a lease under IFRS 16.

Lease assets and liabilities relating to 102 Petty France have been recognised in the MoJ Annual Report and Accounts, with the related accommodation charges for JAC recognised in these accounts as estates costs under services and facilities provided by the sponsoring department.

g) Provisions

In line with accounting standard IAS 37 Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets, the JAC recognises a provision as a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of past events. Where the likelihood of a liability crystallising is deemed probable, and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation. See note 10 for further information.

h) Contingent liabilities

A contingent liability is disclosed when the likelihood of a payment is less than probable, but more than remote. Where the time value of money is material, contingent liabilities required to be disclosed under IAS 37 are stated at discounted amounts.

See note 11 for further information.

i) Pensions policy

Past and present employees are covered by the provisions of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS). The PCSPS is an unfunded defined benefit scheme although, in accordance with the FReM paragraph 8.2 adaptation of IAS 19, the JAC accounts for it as a defined contribution scheme and recognises contributions it pays as an expense in the year in which they are incurred. The legal or constructive obligation is limited to the amount that it agrees to contribute to the fund.

j) Employee benefits

In compliance with IAS 19 Employee Benefits, an accrual is made for holiday pay in respect of leave which has not been taken at the year end and this is included within payables.

k) Services and facilities provided by sponsoring department

In accordance with the Framework Document, the JAC does not meet the costs of certain services as these are provided by MoJ and are non-cash charges. These services are agreed between the JAC and MoJ, and include communications, finance support, estates management, human resources, the provision of IT equipment and internet/intranet facilities, shared services, and commercial and contract management advice.

Note 2. Income

	2025-26	2024-25
	£000	£000
Recovery of selection exercise costs	(26)	(27)
Total	**(26)**	**(27)**

Note 3. Staff and member costs

	Commissioners	Panel chairs and lay panel members	Permanent staff	Seconded staff	Other contracted staff	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
2025-26						
Wages and salaries	122	1,189	4,816	99	286	**6,512**
Social security costs	21	183	663	–	–	**867**
Pension contributions	–	–	1,267	–	–	**1,267**
Total	**143**	**1,372**	**6,746**	**99**	**286**	**8,646**
2024-25						
Wages and salaries	110	1,223	4,364	85	142	**5,924**
Social security costs	14	151	495	–	–	**660**
Pension contributions	–	–	1,144	–	–	**1,144**
Total	**124**	**1,374**	**6,003**	**85**	**142**	**7,728**

Note 4. Other operating costs

	2025-26 £000	2024-25 £000
Selection exercise programme		
Panel members' travel and subsistence	84	55
Judicial recharge costs	4	–
Selection day costs	306	260
Advertising	29	19
Direct selection process costs	34	38
	457	**372**
Other programme costs		
Communications	22	21
Commissioners' travel and subsistence	21	12
Staff travel and subsistence	–	1
Consultancy	78	121
Digital support costs	1,000	855
Building costs	–	21
Write offs	5	15
	1,126	**1,046**
Administration costs		
Staff training	11	15
Office expenses	3	5
Legal costs	250	245
External audit	48	47
Internal audit	52	43
Bank charges	2	2
	366	**357**
Non-cash items		
Amortisation	86	183
Provision expense	34	–
Intangible asset adjustment	2	–
Increase/(decrease) in bad debt provision	–	(10)
	122	**173**
Total other operating costs	**2,071**	**1,948**

Note 5. Services and facilities provided by sponsoring department

	2025-26	2024-25
	£000	£000
Communications	8	7
Finance	128	128
Estates	357	145
Human resources	12	13
Digital	359	521
Shared services	71	63
Total corporate overhead charge	**935**	**877**

Note 6. Intangible assets

	2025-26	2024-25
	£000	£000
Cost or valuation		
At 1 April	1,169	1,169
Additions	–	–
Disposals	–	–
At 31 March	**1,169**	**1,169**
Amortisation		
At 1 April	841	658
Charged in year	86	183
Disposals	2	–
At 31 March	**929**	**841**
Carrying value at 1 April	**328**	**511**
Carrying value at 31 March	**240**	**328**

Note 7. Trade and other receivables

	31 March 2026	31 March 2025
Amounts falling due within one year	£000	£000
Trade receivables	6	8
Deposits and advances	12	17
Other receivables	10	–
Prepayments	64	55
Total	**92**	**80**

Note 8. Cash at bank

	31 March 2026	31 March 2025
	£000	£000
Balance at 1 April	1,836	105
Net change in cash and cash equivalent balances	(1,078)	1,731
Balance at 31 March	758	1,836
Total cash held at Government Banking Service	**758**	**1,836**

Note 9. Trade and other payables

	31 March 2026	31 March 2025
Amounts falling due within one year	£000	£000
Trade payables	43	26
Other payables	134	147
	177	**173**
Tax and social security	193	182
Accruals	314	505
Accrued holiday pay	156	110
	663	**797**
Total	**840**	**970**

Note 10. Provisions for liabilities and charges

	31 March 2026 £000	31 March 2025 £000
Balance at 1 April	–	–
Provided in the year	34	–
Provisions utilised in the year	–	–
Provisions released in the year	–	–
Balance at 31 March	**34**	**–**

The provision represents the best estimate of the remaining legal costs expected to be incurred as a result of a Court of Appeal ruling during the year. No provision was recognised in 2024 to 25, as no legal claims arose that created a present obligation at that time.

Note 11. Contingent liabilities

There are ongoing legal cases against the JAC that may lead to possible obligations. These cases are at an early stage and at present they are unquantified as the timing is uncertain and they cannot be reliably measured. Disclosing further details of these cases in accordance with IAS 37 Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets could be expected to seriously prejudice ongoing litigation.

Note 12. Commitments

At 31 March 2026, the JAC had no capital or other financial commitments (nil at 31 March 2025).

Note 13. Financial instruments

Financial instruments play a limited role as the cash requirements of the JAC are met through grant-in-aid provided by MoJ. The majority of financial instruments relate to contracts to buy non-financial items in line with the JAC's expected purchase and usage requirements and the JAC is therefore exposed to little credit, liquidity or market risk.

Note 14. Related party transactions

The JAC is a non-departmental public body sponsored by MoJ. MoJ is regarded as a related party with which the JAC has had various material transactions during the year. In addition, the JAC had a number of transactions with other government departments and central government bodies. The most significant of these transactions has been with HM Revenue and Customs, the Cabinet Office and the Government Legal Department.

No Board members or senior executives of the JAC engaged in activities that gave rise to related party transactions during the 2025 to 2026 year. The remuneration report provides information on key management compensation.

Note 15. Events after the reporting period

There were no significant events after the reporting period. In accordance with IAS 10 Events After the Reporting Period, accounting adjustments and disclosures are considered up to the point where the financial statements are 'authorised for issue'. In the context of the JAC, this is interpreted as the date on the Comptroller and Auditor General's audit certificate.

There are no events after the reporting period which require disclosure.

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