JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION (JAC) MEETING
16 April 2026
Minutes of Commission Board Meeting

Present	
Commissioners	**Staff**
Ian Dove (Vice-Chair) Nicolina Andall Noel Arnold Chris Bones Tom Cross Siwan Davies Tony Harking Uchechi Igbokwe Tan Ikram Adam Johnson Clare McGlynn Sarah Pittam Angela Rafferty	Chief Executive Deputy Chief Executive/ Head of Strategy and Policy Head of Operational Delivery Head of Senior Appointments Head of Selection Policy Head of Targeted Outreach and Research Head of Diversity, Engagement and Communications Head of Analysis and Insight Senior Policy Advisor Senior Stakeholder Engagement and Diversity Manager Head of Secretariat Secretariat Manager Senior Executive Assistant Secretariat Support Officer

1. Apologies and matters arising

1.1. This meeting was chaired by the Vice Chair Ian Dove.

1.2. The minutes of the 12th March were agreed with one addendum to be made.

1.3. Apologies were received from Clive Lane

2. Chief Executive's Report and Management Information Pack

2.1. The Chief Executive provided an update on:

- the 2025/26 budget allocation.
- the 2025/26 Judicial recruitment programme.
- performance against the 2025-26 Business Plan.
- an update on complaints and ongoing litigation (legally privileged).

3. Report back from Working Groups

3.1. The Chair asked for report backs on recent meetings of committees and working groups.

3.2. Siwan Davies reported back on the Welsh Matters Committee meeting which took place on the 12th March. The Welsh Matters Committee:

- The Committee received an update from the Chair on the introductory meetings she had held with:
  - Welsh Language Liaison Judge, HHJ Mererid Edwards
  - The Welsh Presiding Judges, Justices Morgan, Nicklin and Stacey.

Forthcoming meetings with:
  - President of Welsh Tribunals, Sir Gary Hickinbottom
  - Welsh Language Commissioner

- The Committee received an update on progress from the action register and also considered exercises with Welsh posts currently in progress.

- The Chair reported she had re-recorded the online Welsh administration questions, with a Welsh language version also recorded!

- The Committee considered the Welsh Language Commissioner's 5 Year Report

- The Committee discussed how a potential outreach event held in Wales could assist with general candidate recruitment for Welsh based positions.

3.3. Noel Arnold reported back on the Digital Product Board meeting which took place on the 17th March. The Digital Product Board:

- The board were updated on learnings from the Legal Aid Agency (LAA) data breach, which mainly affected legacy systems. A key learning was the importance of robust and long term business continuity planning.

- The board noted that Paul Haigh, MoJ CTO, will be joining the Product Board as the third member at the next meeting.

- The board were updated that the recruitment for a permanent Technical Lead to join the Digital team which attracted 13 applicants with 4 shortlisted to interview in April.

- The board were updated on the presentation to the Commission board of a paper on candidate use of AI. The AI policy sets out acceptable and unacceptable AI use in the selection process.

- The board were updated on progress against the Roadmap since the last meeting:

- The board reviewed updates on the RAID log.

3.4. Tony Harking reported back on the Advisory Group meeting which took place on the 10 March. The Advisory Group:

- Welcomed two new members, a District Judge and a representative from the Bar Council, who replace members whose terms had come to an end.

- The group considered the following selection exercise materials:

- Situational Questions:
  - High Court (288)
  - Specialist Civil Circuit Judge (Chancery) (303)
  - Non-legal members of the Employment Tribunal (272)

- Situational Questions and Strategic Leadership Questions:
  - Regional Tribunal Judge of the First-tier Tribunal, Social Entitlement Chamber (295)

- Role-Play:
  - Fee-paid Judge of the First-tier Tribunal (287)
  - Fee-paid Judge of the First-tier Tribunal IAC (289)

- In addition, the Advisory Group were informed of recent updates following the evaluation into the revised approach to statutory consultation.

4. Chair's Report

4.1. The Vice Chair reported back on the following:

- The Vice Chair updated regarding his induction process, and gave his initial views on the JAC

- Adam Johnson as Acting Vice Chair conducted conversations with prospective candidates for the JAC Chair position.

5. Business Plan 2026-27

5.1. The Deputy Chief Executive presented the Business Plan for 2026-27

5.2. The Board noted the Business Plan, including the four strategic aims, and approved the draft for publication.

6. Weighting of skills and abilities follow-up paper

6.1. The Head of Selection Policy presented options for considering potential weighting of skills and abilities in future exercises.

6.2. The Board noted the options and agreed to a programme of stakeholder engagement over the summer to feed into a discussion in the autumn on next steps.

6.3. The Board requested a brief update on next steps to be brought to the next meeting

7. Update regarding implementation of social media checks in selection exercises

7.1. The Head of Secretariat presented an update on work that had been carried out to implement social media checks, including the identification of a proposed delivery partner.

7.2. The Board noted the update and requested that further information be provided to the June Board regarding the proposed search parameters and the Judicial Appointments Board for Scotland's approach to social media.

8. Annual Review of Indicators for Exercise Length

8.1. The Head of Operational Delivery presented the Annual Review of Indicators for Exercise Length.

8.2. The Board noted the performance of selection exercises in relation to indicator length for the previous financial year and confirmed they were content with the current indicator lengths for the next financial year.

8.3. The Board noted that they would like the executive to work with Commissioners to assess where there might be scope for shortening exercise timelines in order to facilitate discussion with the new JAC Chair on appointment.

9. Process Paper: 00326 Recorder

9.1. The Senior Exercise Manager presented the proposals for the selection process for 00326 Recorder.

9.2. The Board noted and agreed to the proposed process.

10. Process Paper: 00334 District Judge

10.1. The Senior Exercise Manager presented the proposals for the selection process for 00334 District Judge.

10.2. The Board noted and agreed to the proposed process.

11. Forward Look and AOB

11.1. The Board noted the 2026 Forward Look, and the Chair confirmed that the next Board meeting would take place on 11th June.

This concluded the business of the Board.