

**JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION (JAC) MEETING  
10 MAY 2013  
MINUTES OF MEETING**

<b>PRESENT Commissioners</b>	<b>Staff</b>
Christopher Stephens (Chair) Jill Black David Bean Noel Lloyd Alexandra Marks Andrew Ridgway Ranjit Sondhi Valerie Strachan Deborah Taylor John Thornhill Alan Wilkie	Chief Executive Operational Services Director Selection Exercise Director Assistant Director, Judicial Appointments Project Team (for item 5 only) Private Secretary to the Chairman Board Secretary

### **1. Apologies and matters arising**

1.1 Apologies were received from Malcolm Birchall, Martin Forde, Alison McKenna and Stella Pantelides.

1.2 All Commissioners confirmed that they had no personal interest in any matters to be discussed on the agenda.

1.3 The minutes of the 14 March meeting were agreed.

1.4 The Board Action Register was discussed and it was noted that the action with regards to “reviewing the section 9(1) protocol in 12 months time” would be removed, as the protocol would be superseded by provisions under the Crime and Courts Act 2013.

### **2. Chairman’s Report**

2.1 The Chairman provided an update on his activities since his last report at the March meeting. He had met the Lord Chancellor and Lord Chief Justice (LCJ) for a trilateral meeting and separately again for bilateral discussions. He had met Sir Jeremy Sullivan, the Senior President of Tribunals; the First Minister of Wales for an introductory meeting together with Noel Lloyd and David Bean; and had attended a dinner with Lord Macdonald. In addition, he had chaired the meetings of the selection panel for the LCJ post which included Noel Lloyd and Valerie Strachan.

2.2 For the remainder of the month he would be chairing the first LCJ interview planning meeting, attending a Law Society Presidential dinner, and would also be meeting with Baroness Hale.

2.3 The Chairman then asked Commissioners to provide updates on key activities with which they had been involved.

2.4 Alexandra Marks updated the Commission on a series of meetings she had attended between Mr Justice Hickinbottom and some senior partners of city solicitor firms. She reported that there had been productive discussions regarding how to further encourage applications from solicitors.

### **3. Chief Executive's Report**

3.1 The Chief Executive provided his report to the Commission. He confirmed that the 2013/14 budget allocation was £4.91m.

3.2 He informed the Commission that he had held a staff briefing event on 29 April, and presented to Commissioners a revised staff structure that would come into effect from 3 June. The restructuring had been devised to make the structure more flexible and better able to meet the challenges ahead. The structure would be formally reviewed later in the year to ensure that it is operating effectively. The Commission noted the new staff structure.

3.3 The Chief Executive also informed the Commission that a paper on the implementation of the Crime and Courts Act 2013 and proposals on the end-to-end appointments process would come before the Board before the summer break, and that a further Selection Process workshop would be held on 12 September. The Secretariat would confirm arrangements.

### **4. Selection Exercise Programme 2013/14**

4.1 The Selection Exercise Director presented a paper setting out the 2013/14 Programme that had been agreed by Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service. She confirmed that the programme was deliverable and affordable both within the budget and the staff resources available. She also highlighted the degree of flexibility that was necessary and assured the Commission that this had been accommodated within the programme.

4.2 The Commission noted and endorsed the 2013/14 programme.

### **5. Consultation - Equal Merit Provision**

5.1 The Assistant Director of the Judicial Appointments Project Team presented a paper to the Commission setting out a proposed public consultation on the potential application of the “equal merit” provision under the Crime and Courts Act 2013.

5.2 The Commission discussed and agreed to proceed with the consultation document, subject to some drafting changes. The Assistant Director would share a revised version with the Chairman and David Bean, prior to proceeding to launch the public consultation.

## **6. Q4 Performance Report and Corporate Risk Register**

6.1. The Operational Services Director provided the Board with the Quarter 4 Performance Report and the Corporate Risk Register, which had been reviewed and approved by the Audit and Risk Committee on 25 April.

6. 2 The Commission noted the content of the documents.

## **7. Report back from Working Groups**

7.1 Sarah Gane, on behalf of Stella Pantelides, provided an update on the work of the Advisory Group which had last met on 23 April to discuss: both the Situational Scenario and the Technical Questions for the War Pensions Tribunal exercise; the Qualifying Test for the Fee-paid Judicial Member (Health Education and Social Care) and the Fee-paid Disability Member of the First-tier Tribunal (Social Entitlement Chamber).

7.2 Valerie Strachan, Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, provided a report on the work of the Committee which had last met on 25 April. It had reviewed the End of Year Performance Report, the Corporate Risk Register and the Quarterly Finance Update, as well as the Directors’ Assurance Statements, and the Annual Accounts. It had also discussed progress towards the implementation of recommendations arising from internal and external audit reports and the Chair of the Committee’s Annual Report.

## **8. Directors’ Reports**

8.1 The Selection Exercise Director referred to her report and provided an oral update on selection exercise activities. She also informed Commissioners that a training event for panel members would be held on 18 June and indicated that attendance from Commissioners, if available, would be welcomed. A further date in September was also being planned and would be confirmed in due course.

8.2 The Operational Director referred to his report and also provided an update on IT procurement and the adjusted timeline to agree the contract. He informed the Commission that a paper would come before the Board in July for endorsement.

### **9. Any other Business**

9.1 Alexandra Marks raised the issue of whether the Judicial Appointments Commission should seek an exemption from the proposed new regime under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions Order) 1975.

9.2 The Commission debated the issue and its merits at some length and agreed that, on balance, it would be appropriate to seek an exemption. The Operational Services Director would take this forward with the Ministry of Justice.

### **Date of the next meeting**

The Chairman confirmed that the next Board meeting would be held on Thursday 13 June.