

JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION (JAC) MEETING

11 July 2019

Minutes of Board Meeting

Present	
Commissioners	Staff
Ajay Kakkar (Chairman) Anne Rafferty (Vice chairman) Mathu Asokan Jane Furniss Andrew Kennon Sarah Lee Fiona Monk Brie Stevens-Hoare Valerie Strachan Philip Sycamore Simon Wessely Philippa Whipple	Chief Executive Deputy Chief Executive Head of Operations and Digital Head of Selection Policy Head of Secretariat/Board Secretary Programme Manager
Apologies: Anuja Dhir Emir Feisal	Observers: Executive Assistant to CEO's office

1. Apologies and matters arising

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Anuja Dhir and Emir Feisal.
- 1.2 The minutes of the 13 June 2019 meeting were agreed.
- 1.3 No interests were declared by any Commissioner in respect of any matter under discussion on the agenda.

2. Chief Executive's Report and Management Information Pack

- 2.1 The Chief Executive reported on:
 - the progress of activity in response to the recent Pulse Survey of staff
 - the publication of the approach to equal merit provisions at shortlisting
 - the JAC's financial position

3. Report back from Committees and Working Groups

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

Audit and Risk Committee

- 3.2 Jane Furniss (JF) reported on the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) meeting held on 27 June 2019. JF highlighted that ARC considered the latest draft of the JAC 2018–19 Annual Report and Accounts, ahead of laying the report to Parliament on 18 July 2019.
- 3.3 JF updated the Board on the very positive results of the external audit from the National Audit Office. The Board acknowledged the efforts of the executive team in achieving these results.

Advisory Group

- 3.4 JF reported back on the Advisory Group (AG) including that three new members were welcomed to AG, increasing the breadth and diversity of the AG. JF updated the Board on the AG consideration of the online qualifying test for Recorder 2019 and situational questioning for a number of upcoming exercises.

Digital Board

- 3.5 Andrew Kennon (AK) reported back to the Board on the Digital Board (DB) held on 10 July 2019. AK reported that DB was updated on the progress of the digital strategy and development of various selection tools.
- 3.6 AK reported that DB received a positive update on the helpdesk data from the recent qualifying tests with a reduction in the number of calls now being received.

4. Chairman's Report

- 4.1 The Chairman reported on his activities since the previous Board meeting in June including that he received positive feedback on the organisation whilst attending the Annual Judges Dinner with the Vice chairman on 3 July 2019.
- 4.2 The Chairman also reported that he was due to meet with the newly appointed President of the Queen's Bench Division later this month and further updated the Board on the newly reconstituted Judicial Diversity Forum which would be due to meet later in the year.
- 4.3 Commissioners were invited to update the Board on any activities in which they had participated since the last meeting. Sarah Lee reported that she had attended various events hosted by The Law Society including the recent inauguration of the new President of The Law Society, Simon Davis.

- 4.4 Fiona Monk reported that she had attended the Employment Lawyers Association Conference on 25 June 2019 where the JAC presentation on positive action was well received.
- 4.5 Andrew Kennon updated the Board on a meeting he attended with the Vice Chairman and Heads of Division following the recent High Court exercise.

5. 118 Senior Circuit Judge, Employment Appeal Tribunal: Review of s94 List

- 5.1 The Programme Manager presented a paper setting out the details of a request to extend a reserve list for a Senior Circuit Judge of the Employment Appeal Tribunal.
- 5.2 The Board was asked to review the list, as established under section 94 (s94) of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 (CRA), and agree to keep the list open for a further period of no more than six months, in the knowledge that a vacancy would be arising in the very near future for a Senior Circuit Judge of the Employment Appeal Tribunal.
- 5.3 Following discussion, the Board agreed to keep the list open for a further period of six months.

6. 113 Circuit Judge 2019: Review of s94 List

- 6.1 The Programme Manager presented a paper seeking the Board's approval on a request from the Senior Presiding Judge (SPJ) to maintain the 2019 Circuit Judge s94 list, due to be established following Selection and Character Committee (SCC) decisions in October 2019, beyond launch of the next Circuit Judge selection exercise, due to launch in January 2020.
- 6.2 The Board was asked to agree to the SPJ's request and to close the next Circuit Judge s94 list before the sift in the next exercise takes place. The Programme Manager advised that it was envisaged that this would provide Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS) with a reasonable length of time in which to identify business needs and to utilise the list to fill unforeseen vacancies during this period.
- 6.3 Following a detailed discussion, the Board agreed to extend the list on an exceptional basis.

7. Review of Panel Member Support

- 7.1 The Deputy Chief Executive presented a report reviewing the support provided to JAC panel members from the point of recruitment onward. The report outlined a series of short-, medium- and longer-term measures aimed at ensuring that the best practice identified is consistent across all selection exercises, and to further enhance the support provided. The Board was asked to note the conclusions of the review, and provide any comment on the measures under way or planned.
- 7.2 The Board noted the report and endorsed the measures outlined. It further noted that an update report on implementation would be presented to the Board in February 2020.

8. Forward Look and AOB

- 8.1 The Board noted the Forward Look and the Chairman confirmed the next Board meeting would be held on 12 September 2019.
- 8.2 The Chairman offered the gratitude and appreciation of the Board to Valerie Strachan for her professional contribution and personal support to JAC during her tenure as a Lay Commissioner since 2012.
- 8.3 This concluded the business of the Board.