

# JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION (JAC) MEETING

12 March 2020

## Minutes of Board Meeting

<b>Present</b>	
<b>Commissioners</b>	<b>Staff</b>
Ajay Kakkar (Chairman) Anne Rafferty (Vice Chairman) Jane Furniss Brie Stevens-Hoare Andrew Kennon Sarah Lee Philip Sycamore Anuja Dhir Sarah Falk Sue Hoyle Emir Feisal Mathangi Asokan	Chief Executive Deputy Chief Executive Head of Operations and Digital Head of Operational Delivery Head of Selection Policy Head of Secretariat/Board Secretary Head of Diversity and Engagement Senior Selection Exercise Team Manager
<b>Apologies:</b> Simon Wessely	

### 1. Apologies and matters arising

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Simon Wessely.
- 1.2 The minutes of the 13 February 2020 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:

- provided an update on JAC's business continuity plans in response to the COVID 19 outbreak. The Commission noted its previous in principle decision, taken in line with legal advice, that it would consider an initial tranche of recommendations where there was an urgent business need; this was in respect of the Recorder 2018 exercise and had not been required in that event. The JAC will continue to meet its statutory duties and will ensure that arrangements put in place are fair to all candidates.

- reported on the agreed two-year programme with HMCTS and the work conducted to date;
- provided an update on the 2019 People Survey; and
- provided an oral update on the JAC's financial position.

### **3. Report back from Committees and Working Groups**

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

#### **Welsh Matters Committee**

3.2 Brie Stevens-Hoare (BSH) reported back from the Welsh Matters Committee (WMC) held on 13 February 2020.

3.3 The Committee were updated on the meeting held between the JAC Chairman and the First Minister of Wales.

3.4 The Committee noted the request from the Welsh Government regarding the Welsh Language Standards and the JAC agreed to continue to have regard to the provisions of the Standards.

3.5 The Committee noted and were grateful to Commissioner Mathangi Asokan (MA) for agreeing to provide the Wales Training Committee e-letters when available.

3.6 The Committee were updated on the meeting between JAC officials and Welsh Government officials

3.7 The Committee undertook to invite Welsh government officials to an upcoming WMC meeting.

#### **Advisory Group**

3.8 Jane Furniss (JF) reported back from the Advisory Group (AG) held on 10 March 2020.

3.9 The AG considered the situational questioning for a number of upcoming exercises.

3.10 The AG also considered the critical analysis test for Fee-Paid Legal Members of the Mental Health Review Tribunal for Wales.

3.11 The AG has welcomed new members and the diversity of the group continues to improve.

### **4. Chairman's Report**

4.1 The Chairman reported that he met with Amanda Pinto, the new Chairman of the Bar Council on 13 February.

4.2 The Chairman updated Commissioners on his oral evidence to the Senior Salary Review Board (SSRB) on 25 February.

4.3 The Chairman interviewed candidates for the roles of Lay Commissioner with special knowledge of Wales and Judicial (Tribunal Judge) Commissioner in late February / beginning of March.

4.4 The Chairman attended a bilateral with the Lord Chancellor on 3 March.

## **5. Selection processes for Deputy District Judge and Fee-paid Judge of the First-tier Tribunal and Fee-paid Employment Judge selection exercises**

5.1 The Selection Exercise Team Manager presented a paper which outlined the planned process for the forthcoming Deputy District Judge and Fee-paid Judge of the First-tier Tribunal and Fee-paid Employment Judge selection exercises

5.2 Further to the Board's decision in November 2019, and building on the successful delivery of the joint qualifying test last year, the JAC will run a Combined Qualifying Test in June 2020.

5.3 Following discussion, the Board approved the high-level process for these exercises.

## **6. Commission Board Strategy 2020-23**

6.1 The Deputy Chief Executive presented the 2020-23 Board Strategy paper and summarised the discussion from the Board Dinner on 11 February.

6.2 The Deputy Chief Executive outlined the next steps with regard to engagement with senior stakeholders.

6.3 Following discussion, the Board agreed with the planned process.

## **7. Reasonable Length of Service**

7.1 The Head of Selection Policy presented a short information paper setting out the recent approach taken by the Commission with regards to Reasonable Length of Service (RLS). The paper concluded that the Commission had taken a consistent approach when considering applying discretion, where there had been an exceptional reason for a candidate who cannot meet the full RLS to proceed in a selection exercise.

7.2 The Commission noted the contents of the paper and agreed to continue to exercise its discretion as appropriate.

## **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 9 April 2020.

8.2 This concluded the business of the Board.