

JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION (JAC) MEETING

14 October 2010

MINUTES OF MEETING

PRESENT

Commissioners

Roger Toulson (Vice-Chairman)

Jill Black

Lorna Boreland-Kelly

Geoffrey Inkin

Frances Kirkham

Sara Nathan

Charles Newman

Francis Plowden

Harriet Spicer

Staff

Chief Executive

Director, Courts Appointments

Director, Tribunals Appointments, Corporate Accounting & Planning

Director, Operational Services

Director, Strategy & Outreach

Assistant Director, Business Development

Assistant Director, Finance

Private Secretary to the Vice-Chairman

Apologies and matters arising

1. Apologies were received from Hazel Genn, Jonathan Sumption, Ed Nally and David Pearl.
2. All Commissioners confirmed they had no personal interest in any matters to be discussed.
3. The minutes of the September meeting were approved with one minor amendment required.
4. The Vice-Chairman informed Commissioners of the interim arrangements for the conduct of the Board until the Ministry of Justice recruited a new Chairman.

Update on operating model (JAC/10/58)

5. Following on from the September board meeting, the Commission considered specific options to achieve the possible budget reductions required by the Spending Review.
6. Each option was discussed and it was agreed they should be explored further by staff, with particular consideration being given to the potential impact of budget reductions on the quality of selection exercises.

Efficiency update (JAC/10/59)

7. The Commission noted the efficiency measures that had been taken since October 2009 and congratulated staff on their achievements.

Report back from working groups

Diversity Forum

8. The Diversity Forum last met on 20 September and discussed the achievements of the forum to date and future priorities.

Audit and Risk Committee

9. The Audit and Risk Committee last met on 20 September and discussed risk control, the statement of internal control and approved the letter of assurance for the new Accounting Officer.

Outreach Working Group

10. The Outreach Working Group had met earlier that day to discuss the analysis of trends in solicitor appointments, preparations for the Equality Act and web site relocation.

Advisory Group

11. The Advisory Group last met on 22 September to discuss the qualifying tests for District Judge (Magistrates) and the feedback report for the Circuit Bench qualifying test.

Update on panel chair appraisals and renewal of contracts (JAC/10/60)

12. The Commission noted and agreed the reduction in the number of panel chairs and the revisions to the appraisal process.
13. The Commission agreed the renewal of all remaining panel chair contracts for 12 months, subject to ongoing performance review. It was also agreed that staff would investigate staggering the start dates for renewed contracts.
14. It was agreed that the appraisal system for independent panellist would be discussed at the December board meeting.

Directors' reports (JAC/10/61)

15. The Director of Courts Appointments provided an update on relevant selection exercises and noted that the feedback report for the Circuit Bench selection exercise would be published shortly.
16. The Director of Tribunal Appointments, Corporate Accounting and Planning presented a paper on risk management arrangements for the JAC (**JAC/10/62**). It was noted that risk management training would be considered.

17. The Director of Tribunal Appointments, Corporate Accounting and Planning also provided an update on selection exercises due to launch and the transparency agenda.
18. The Director of Operational Services updated the Commission on IT systems and the Information Assurance training. It was agreed that this would be delivered to Commissioners at the December board meeting.
19. The Director of Strategy and Outreach informed Commissioners that an analysis of trends in solicitor appointments would be published shortly and that work was progressing well to update the process manual.
20. It was agreed that an update on KPI 4 regarding candidate satisfaction would be provided at the December board meeting.

Chief Executive's report (JAC/10/63)

21. The Chief Executive noted this would be her last board meeting and thanked Commissioners for their work and support throughout her time in post.

Vice-Chairman's report

22. The Vice-Chairman informed Commissioners of his priorities and working arrangements during the period until a new Chairman was appointed. He updated Commissioners on proposals for future accommodation arrangements at Steel House. He advised Commissioners that he had invited staff to provide short verbal briefings at future board and committee meetings on the basis that papers would have been read in advance of meetings.

Any Other Business

23. The Vice Chairman and Commissioners thanked the Chief Executive for all her work and highlighted her achievements and commitment to JAC staff.

Date of next meeting

The next meeting would take place on 11 November 2010.