

JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION (JAC) MEETING

9 April 2020

Minutes of Board Meeting

Present	
Commissioners	Staff
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 Simon Wessely	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 Head of Corporate Services Senior Selection Policy Advisor

1. Apologies and matters arising

1.1 The minutes of the 12 March 2020 meeting were agreed.

1.2 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 two-year programme agreed with MoJ and HMCTS and the work conducted to date;
- updated Commissioners that work on the People Plan and People Survey has been impacted by COVID-19 but this would be taken forward with a slight delay;
- reported that the risk register will be reviewed at April Audit and Risk Committee meeting, which will focus on business continuity plans;
- reported that the JAC website has been updated with information on the JAC's response to COVID-19; 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.

Digital Board

3.2 Sue Hoyle (SH) reported back from the last Digital Board held on 26 March 2020.

3.3 SH reported that the Digital Board reviewed the planned work up to May 2020 and confirmed that the digital strategy and work on the new digital platform are on track and can continue as planned.

3.4 The Digital Board agreed a way forward on retiring the old digital platform, extracting the existing data and storing on a database within a secure hosting platform.

3.5 The Digital Board received a report on error reports in QT tests, which remain within an acceptable level.

4. Chairman's Report

4.1 The Chairman reported that he was observing all candidate interviews for the High Court exercise, which were being conducted remotely; and that the JAC's high standards of assessment and service to candidates are being upheld during these unprecedented times.

4.2 The Chairman will continue to oversee the JAC's response to this crisis and to assist JAC staff where needed and remains in daily contact with senior JAC staff.

4.3 The Chairman has attended regular staff updates and will continue to attend where he can.

4.4 The Chairman remains in close contact with external senior stakeholders.

4.5 The Chairman updated Commissioners on the reappointment process and selection for current Commission vacancies. He also updated Commissioners that the process to appoint the next Vice-Chairman and Senior Tribunal Judge Commissioner had begun.

5. Business Continuity Business Plan 2020-21

5.1 The Chief Executive presented the emergency JAC business plan, covering the first quarter of 2020-21 (April – June), in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

5.2 The emergency business plan will be adjusted and/or extended as necessary, and brought back to the Commission for review at each monthly meeting.

5.3 Following discussion, the Board endorsed the proposed emergency JAC business plan.

6. Evaluation of the process for non-legal exercises

6.1 The Senior Selection Policy Advisor presented an evaluation of our streamlined and standardised selection process for non-legal tribunal member roles, as implemented following approval by the Board in February 2019.

6.2 The Board were asked to note the positive findings of the evaluation, and the plan to consider minor improvements to the process for the future.

6.3 Following discussion, the Board noted the positive evaluation of the process for non-legal exercises, and endorsed the proposed next steps.

7. Annual review of Complaints/Candidate Feedback

7.1 The Head of Corporate Services presented a short information paper on the number and nature of formal complaints received by the JAC during 2019-20.

7.2 The number and ratio of complaints have decreased in comparison with the previous year. The teams continue to take the substance of complaints into account as part of the evaluation of each selection exercise, ensuring any lessons are learned.

7.3 The Chairman noted his thanks to Simon Wessely for acting as lead Commissioner in liaising with the Judicial Appointments and Conduct Ombudsman and also recorded his thanks to the complaints team.

7.4 The Commission noted the contents of the paper.

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 14 May 2020.

8.2 This concluded the business of the Board.