

**JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION (JAC) MEETING  
9 November 2017  
Minutes of Meeting**

<b>Present</b>	
<b>Commissioners</b>	<b>Staff</b>
Ajay Kakkar (Chairman) Philippa Whipple (Vice Chairman) Usha Karu Noel Lloyd Alexandra Marks Valerie Strachan Phillip Sycamore Martin Forde Fiona Monk Andrew Kennon Mathangi Asokan Emir Feisal Simon Wessely	Chief Executive Head of Strategy and Policy Head of Operations Head of Secretariat Head of Judicial Statistics Head of Senior and International Appointments Senior Selection Exercise Managers

**1. Apologies and matters arising**

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Jane Furniss.
- 1.2 The minutes of the 12 October meeting were agreed.

**2. Chief Executive's Report and Management Information Pack**

2.1 The Chief Executive reported on:

- JAC finances;
- the progress of current exercises and recommendations accepted by the Lord Chief Justice; and
- current staffing levels at the JAC.

**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.

3.2 Noel Lloyd reported back from the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting held on 26 October. The Committee discussed the number and nature of complaints received to date during the current reporting year; four candidates took their complaint to the Judicial

Appointments and Conduct Ombudsman, none have been upheld. He also reported that the Committee reviewed current sickness level data. Finally, Noel reported that Fiona Monk has agreed to become the third Commissioner member of the Audit and Risk Committee.

3.3 Noel Lloyd reported back from the Welsh Matters Committee Meeting held on 26 October. He reported that the Committee had commenced a review of the current agreement with the Welsh Government on the provision of JAC assistance. The Committee noted its thanks for the contribution of former Selection Exercise Team Manager Kate Williams to exercises and outreach in Wales, following her retirement from the JAC.

3.4 Noel Lloyd reported back from the JARS Programme Board Meeting held on 25 October. Andrew Kennon had also now joined the Programme Board. The updated Terms of Reference were agreed, and there was agreement to implement a Service Level Agreement with Convivio, starting from January 2018. Furthermore, it was agreed that the process for a new procurement exercise should be commenced, with a high level plan presented to the next Programme Board.

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

4.1 The Chairman reported on his activities since his last report at the October meeting. He had met with the Lord Chief Justice, and also with Nicola Gordon, Lay Chairing Member of the Judicial Appointments Board for Scotland. He attended a planning meeting for the High Court competition. Finally, he attended the Bar Council 'One Bar' conference, where he gave the keynote address on the opportunities and challenges facing judicial appointment.

4.2 The Chairman also reported on the Ministry of Justice competition to recruit three new Commissioners.

4.3 The Chairman then asked Commissioners to report on activities they have been involved in since the last Board meeting. Alexandra Marks met with Lady Justice Hallett and Sir Geoffrey Vos. Valerie Strachan spoke at an outreach event for the forthcoming High Court exercise. Philip Sycamore reported that he had received positive feedback from the Senior President of Tribunals following the recent First Tier Tribunal exercise. Philippa Whipple spoke at an outreach event at the Law Society.

## **5. Publication of JAC data**

5.1 The Head of Strategy and Policy and Head of Judicial Statistics presented a paper outlining current arrangements for publishing exercise information with an assessment of the risks pertaining to each category of data.

5.2 Following discussion, the Board agreed that recommendation numbers would be published after each exercise from April 2018.

## **6. Guest: Lord Chief Justice**

6.1 The Lord Chief Justice addressed the Board and outlined his priorities, which included working with the Ministry of Justice to improve working conditions for judges. He highlighted his concerns about judicial recruitment, and indicated that he wished to encourage closer working between the judiciary, Judicial Office, professions, JAC and MoJ to provide better support to potential candidates planning their judicial careers.

6.2 Following further discussion with the Board, the Chairman thanked the Lord Chief Justice for joining the meeting.

## **7. Fee-Paid Judges of the First-tier Tribunal (2018 exercise)**

7.1 The Senior Selection Exercise Team Manager presented a paper outlining plans for the forthcoming exercise to select Fee Paid Judges of the First Tier Tribunal.

7.2 The Board noted that the exercise would be the first exercise since Recorder 2017 to test a large number of candidates using an online qualifying test, and that all necessary assurances and contingency arrangements were in place, resulting in a longer timeline. The very high number of applications anticipated also limits the range of shortlisting tools that are able to be used, and officials were in the process of examining ways in which the tools used can capture a wide range of evidence.

7.3 Commissioners noted the high number of anticipated applications and selection days, and discussed any further steps that could be taken in respect of both aspects. Subject to consideration of these by the team, and further discussion in due course, the Board agreed the high level process planned for the exercise.

## **8. Fee-Paid Disability Members First-tier Tribunal, Social Entitlement Chamber**

8.1 The Senior Selection Exercise Team Manager presented a paper outlining plans for the Fee-Paid Disability Members First-tier Tribunal exercise.

8.2 The Board noted that the online Qualifying Test would be provided by an external contractor. The JAC team has worked closely with the contractor to develop the test and ensure arrangements are in place for the high level of reasonable adjustment requests which are anticipated, due to the nature of the role.

8.3 Following discussion, the Board agreed the high level process for the exercise.

## **9. S9(4) Deputy High Court Judge (2018 exercise)**

9.1 The Head of Senior and International Appointments presented a paper outlining proposed arrangements for the s9(4) Deputy High Court Exercise, which would seek to attract candidates likely to subsequently apply for salaried High Court posts within four years.

9.2 Following discussion, the Board agreed the high level process for this exercise.

## **10. Welsh Matters Committee Terms of Reference**

10.1 The Board reviewed and agreed the Terms of Reference for the Welsh Matters Committee.

## **11. AOB and Date of Next Meeting**

11.1 This concluded the business of the Board.

11.2 The Chairman confirmed that the next Board meeting would be held on Thursday 14 December 2017.