

JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION (JAC) MEETING

09 December 2010

MINUTES OF MEETING

PRESENT

Commissioners:

Roger Toulson (Vice-Chairman)

David Bean

Jill Black

Frances Kirkham

Ed Nally

Sara Nathan

Charles Newman

David Pearl

Francis Plowden

Harriet Spicer

Staff:

Interim Chief Executive

Director, Courts Appointments

Director, Tribunals Appointments and Operational Policy

Director, Operational Services

Senior Manager, Operational Policy (for item 3)

Assistant Director, Strategy (for item 4)

Assistant Director, Equality and Fair Treatment (for item 5)

Assistant Director, Outreach (for item 6)

Assistant Director, Complaints and Business Services (for item 7)

Deputy Director Operational Services (for item 9)

Private Secretary to the Vice-Chairman

1. Apologies and matters arising

1.1 Apologies were received from Lorna Boreland-Kelly, Hazel Genn, Geoffrey Inkin and Jonathan Sumption.

1.2 All Commissioners confirmed they had no personal interest in any matters to be discussed on this agenda.

1.3 The minutes of the November meeting were approved.

2. People, Processes and Performance (PPP) Project (JAC/10/76)

2.1 The Commission was updated on the PPP Project, which seeks to review the appointments process, ensuring the JAC's contribution is as efficient and effective as possible.

2.2 Commissioners noted the progress achieved, the changes planned for early implementation and the communication plan (which included involving Key Interested Parties in the New Year).

2.3 Commissioners acknowledged the volume of work on this project and the high level of staff engagement.

2.4 It was agreed that a workshop would be held on 13 January to allow Commissioners to contribute their ideas to the project and that a suggested agenda would be circulated in advance for consideration.

2.5 It was agreed that the Vice-Chairman would ask to see any departmental report on the end to end review in order to be able to share such comments as may be appropriate.

3. Changes to the Reference Process (JAC/10/77)

3.1 The Commission considered changes to the reference process, which were being addressed as part of the wider PPP Project. It was noted that the JAC had written to judicial representatives regarding the suggested changes and that no adverse comments had been received.

3.2 It was agreed that option 3 would be piloted, whereby candidates would be responsible for obtaining references from their chose referees, but that the JAC would remain responsible for obtaining references from JAC nominated referees.

4. Business Plan (JAC/10/78)

4.1 The Commission agreed the suggested approach to business planning for 2011-12 and the structure of the outline business plan, subject to the inclusion of minor amendments.

5. Advice on additional diversity questions on the Application Monitoring Form (JAC/10/79)

5.1 The Commission discussed expanding the Application Monitoring Form to include the new protected characteristics contained in the Equality Act.

5.2 It was agreed that the decision would be deferred until appropriate guidance had been provided by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. The matter should then be brought back to the Commission. A media line was discussed and guidance provided for final composition by staff.

6. Update from the Outreach Team

6.1 The Outreach team provided a short update on their objectives, current areas of work and future plans.

6.2 The Vice-Chairman thanked the team for their informative presentation and reinforced the importance of their work.

6.3 It was agreed that the Outreach team would arrange a media plan for use by the new Chairman.

7. Information Assurance Presentation

7.1 The Commission received a presentation on Information Assurance, as part of their annual awareness training.

7.2 In discussion, it was agreed that the handling of papers by Panel Members would be considered as part of the PPP project and that the use of CJSM secure email for Commissioners would be investigated.

8. Reports from working groups

8.1 The Outreach Working Group had met earlier that day and had received an update on the reasonable adjustment policy, web site and diversity statistics. Neuberger recommendations relating to the JAC's qualities and abilities were also considered. It was agreed by the board that proposed revisions to the fairness quality would be circulated out of committee and that, subject to responses, the issue would be discussed at the February board meeting.

8.2 The Advisory Group met on 18 November and discussed qualifying tests and role plays for forthcoming exercises. It was noted that the qualifying tests for DJ Civil was available, should Commissioners wish to have sight of it.

9. Directors' Reports (JAC/10/80)

9.1 The Director of Operational Services updated the Commission on the Staff Survey response rate to date, the voluntary early departure scheme and IT systems. The programme for 2011/12 dated 30 November was presented as having been agreed with MoJ. It was affordable and deliverable, but had to be caveated with future resource uncertainty. However, exercises would be allocated to Commissioners on the basis of this programme. He also highlighted the difficulty of long term programming, particularly with respect to Tribunals exercises. Commissioners were content and the Vice-Chairman noted the significant progress that had been made with programming.

9.2 The Director of Operational Services informed Commissioners of forthcoming changes to their accommodation; an e-mail would be sent once dates were clear. He also reminded them of the 23 December deadline for contributions to the conflicts of interest log.

9.3 The Director of Courts Appointments presented a paper on the **closure of s.94 list for the Salaried Member of MHRT 2008 (JAC/10/81)**, which was agreed. The forthcoming DJ Civil

exercise was also discussed. It was agreed that if a new exercise launched soon, those on the existing s.94 would be 'passported' through to selection day. It was agreed that the Director of Courts Appointments would write to those remaining s.94 candidates informing them of the situation.

9.4 The Director of Tribunal Appointments and Operational Policy provided an update on relevant selection exercises.

10. Interim Chief Executive's report (JAC/10/82)

10.1 The Interim Chief Executive thanked Commissioners for the support they were providing to staff at a time of considerable change.

10.2 He provided an update on the Public Bodies Bill, staff event on 29 November and the appointment process for the new Chairman.

10.3 He presented the quarter 2 performance report and risk register and Commissioners agreed that these be forwarded to the Ministry of Justice.

11. Vice-Chairman's report

11.1 The Vice-Chairman informed Commissioners of his recent meetings with the Senior President of Tribunals and the Judicial Appointments Complaints Ombudsman (JACO) noting that he had received very positive feedback regarding the work that the JAC staff was doing with partner organisations.

Date of next meeting

The next meeting would take place on 10 February 2011.