

**JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION (JAC) MEETING**  
**13 MARCH 2014**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING**

<b>PRESENT Commissioners</b>	<b>Staff</b>
Christopher Stephens (Chairman) David Bean Emily Jackson Noel Lloyd Katharine Rainsford Andrew Ridgway Lucy Scott-Moncrieff Christopher Simmonds Valerie Strachan Debra van Gene Alan Wilkie	Chief Executive Director of Operations Assistant Director, Change Programme (for item 4) Assistant Director, Finance (for item 5) Private Secretary to the Chairman Board Secretary

**1. Apologies and matters arising**

1.1 Apologies were received from Julia Macur, Alexandra Marks and Martin Forde.

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

1.3 The minutes of the 13 February meeting were agreed and the Board Action Register noted.

**2. Chairman's Report**

2.1 The Chairman provided an update on his activities since his last report at the February meeting. He had provided oral evidence to the Justice Select Committee together with David Bean and Valerie Strachan. He had also met Lord Neuberger, President of the Supreme Court, and Jenny Rowe, Chief Executive; and had also met Shailesh Vara MP, Minister for Courts and Legal Aid.

2.2 In addition, he had addressed a meeting of the Tribunal Judges' Executive Board, and was pleased to report that there was a general invitation to Commissioners to visit Tribunals and sit in hearings as observers where appropriate.

2.3 The Chairman informed the Commission that he would be chairing a meeting of the Diversity Forum that evening, which David Johnston, a Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commissioner, would be addressing. He would also be conducting interviews with the shortlisted candidates for the Circuit Judge Commissioner post.

2.4 The Chairman invited Commissioners to comment on activities of particular interest with which they were involved. Commissioners Debra van Gene and Christopher Simmonds reported on their attendance at the Panel Members' Training Day held on 4 March and provided positive feedback on the event.

2.5 Noel Lloyd confirmed that the Commission on Devolution in Wales had submitted its final report to the Secretary of State for Wales, containing 61 recommendations.

### **3. Chief Executive's Report**

3.1 The Chief Executive provided an oral update outlining that the 2014/15 budget bid of £4.550m had been accepted by the Ministry of Justice. On the 2014/15 Selection Exercise programme, he informed Commissioners of the expected number of recommendations identified for the first two quarters.

3.2 He next informed the Commission of staff numbers in post and reported also on the imminent recruitment of the Occupational Psychologist and Policy Officer. He also reported that the Law Gazette had covered the Chairman's appearance before the Justice Committee and the publication of both the trends document and the section 9(1) policy.

3.3 The Chief Executive confirmed that the Equal Merit provision would apply to quarter 2 exercises, and also that staff were continuing to work with the senior judiciary to update the guidance for statutory consultees. On the 'End to End' project, all partners were on track to meet the target of 20 weeks for 2014/15. He reported that the annual review of security and information asset management had been completed and that no issues had been identified.

3.4 Finally, the Chief Executive was pleased to inform the Commission that the JAC had been selected as a winner in the 2013 'Candidate Experience Awards', organised by not-for-profit organisation the Talent Board. The award had been designed to help organisations benchmark their candidate experience against other organisations' best practice.

#### **4. Application of the Equal Merit Provision**

4.1 The Assistant Director, Change Programme, presented a paper on the final policy for the application of the Equal Merit Provision and its accompanying documents for publication. The policy at this stage had received support from both the Lord Chancellor and the Lord Chief Justice.

4.2 The Commission discussed the policy further and decided to make one minor amendment. It also suggested that the policy might include a further sentence, for the purposes of clarity, on the application of the policy to the characteristic of race or ethnicity.

4.3 The Assistant Director agreed to seek legal advice in order to confirm whether such clarification would be desirable. If necessary, a further draft would then be circulated out of committee for agreement, prior to publication on 1 April.

#### **5. Management Information Pack**

5.1 The Assistant Director, Finance presented to the Commission the monthly Management Information Pack for information.

5.2 The pack provided an overview of JAC activity up to the end of February. It was provided to the Ministry of Justice and used to inform formal 6 monthly performance reviews.

5.3 Commissioners noted the contents and provided some comments. The Assistant Director asked that any further comments be provided out of committee.

#### **Date of next meeting**

The Chairman confirmed that the next Board meeting would be held on **Thursday 8 May**.