

JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS COMMISSION (JAC) MEETING
11 March 2015
Minutes of Meeting

Present	
Commissioners	Staff
Christopher Stephens (Chairman) Julia Macur (Vice Chairman) Usha Karu Noel Lloyd Alexandra Marks Katharine Rainsford Andrew Ridgway Christopher Simmonds Valerie Strachan Phillip Sycamore Debra van Gene	Chief Executive Head of Operations Head of Policy and Change Board Secretary

1. Apologies and matters arising

1.1 Apologies were received from Martin Forde, Emily Jackson, Lucy Scott-Moncrieff and Alan Wilkie.

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

1.3 The minutes of the 12 February meeting were agreed, subject to minor amendment, and the Board Action Register noted.

1.4 The Commission noted a record of the 15 January Selection Process Review meeting, setting out the decisions reached in respect of the selection process to be followed in the forthcoming Recorder exercise.

2. Chairman's Report

2.1 The Chairman provided an update on his activities since his last report at the February meeting. He reported that he had met with the Lord Chief Justice and with the Lord Chancellor. He had also met with Rehman Chishti MP, Member of the Justice Select Committee, during a visit from Mr Chishti to the JAC.

2.2 The Chairman also spoke of his involvement in the planning of the Senior President of Tribunals selection exercise and reported that he had chaired a meeting of the Diversity Forum. He also provided the Commission with an update on the Chairman of the Law Commission exercise and reported on his attendance at the Global Law Summit.

2.3 The Chairman then invited Commissioners to comment on relevant activities of particular interest with which they had been involved. Alexandra Marks reported on her attendance at an event for those returning to the legal profession. She informed Commissioners, also, that she would be giving a presentation at an event hosted by the Lawyers with Disabilities Division of the Law Society.

2.4 Christopher Simmonds reported on his recent appearance in an article published in the *CILEx Journal*. Andrew Ridgway spoke of his experience as Chair of a panel to recommend an individual to be a judge of the General Court of the European Union. Katharine Rainsford reported on her experience sitting on a panel to recommend candidates to the offices of Surveillance Commissioner and Assistant Surveillance Commissioner.

3. Chief Executive's Report

3.1 The Chief Executive provided an oral update on current activity at the JAC. He reported on the JAC's financial position, confirming that the JAC's budget for 2015/16 had been indicated as £4.1m. He then reported on staffing levels and made reference to the Voluntary Early Departure Scheme which was due to be completed at the end of the month.

3.2 The Chief Executive then reported on work to the physical environment of the 102 Petty France building, which had started in mid-February 2015. He informed the Commission that steps were being taken to ensure any disruption to candidates attending the building would be kept to a minimum, and that as a result, candidates had not been adversely affected.

3.3 The Chief Executive further reported that the JAC is on course to contribute to a progress report to the Cabinet Office in summer 2015, on its work to meet the recommendations of the recent Triennial Review of the JAC. He then provided a summary of the work already underway to meet these recommendations.

3.4 Last, the Chief Executive provided a summary of other activities, including research which had been commissioned into the progression of BAME candidates through JAC selection processes. The Chief Executive also reported that some candidates had experienced technical issues affecting the JAC's new online application system. He further reported on work to seek Welsh-speaking individuals to sit on the JAC's selection panels.

4. Revised Commission Board Meeting Terms of Reference

4.1 The Secretary to the Board presented a paper seeking the Commission's agreement to adopt revised Terms of Reference for Commission Board Meetings (the Terms).

4.2 The Commission welcomed the work that had been done to clarify and codify the practices that had been developed. It was recognised that urgent matters can arise after one meeting has concluded which may need to be settled ahead of the next meeting. It was noted that the revised Terms would allow the Commission the ability to handle such matters flexibly, as required.

4.3 The Commission agreed that a sub-group of Commissioners could meet separately to make specific decisions on the Commission's behalf, only with the Commission's prior agreement. A revised draft of the Terms would be brought back to the Commission for final approval, making such points more explicit.

5. Management Information Pack

5.1 The Commission considered the monthly Management Information Pack. The Pack provided an overview of JAC activity up to the end of February 2015.

6. Report Back from Working Groups

6.1 The Head of Operations provided the Commission with an update on the Advisory Group's meeting of 4 March. At its meeting, the Group discussed the qualifying test for the District Judge (Civil) and Recorder selection exercises, and the situational scenario and technical questions for the Deputy Regional Valuer and Circuit Judge exercises. It was also reported that the Group had further discussed its review of the Group's work and function.

Date of next meeting

The Chairman confirmed that the next Board meeting would be held on **Thursday 14 May**.