

# **The Supreme Court of the United Kingdom**

## **Management Board**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2014**

Attending: Jenny Rowe (Chair)

William Arnold  
Chris Maile  
Louise di Mambro  
Olufemi Oguntunde  
Martin Thompson  
Ben Wilson  
Alex Jablonowski (Non-Executive Director)  
Philip Robinson (Non-Executive Director)

Paul Brigland (Secretary)

#### **1. Apologies for absence**

1.1 No apologies were received.

#### **2. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 18 December 2013.**

2.1 The minutes were approved, subject to some minor textual amendments.

#### **3. Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda**

10.2 The second Welsh referral would now be heard in May or June as March was not acceptable to the parties.

13.1 The installation took place successfully.

#### **4. Declaration of conflicts of interests**

4.1 No declarations of conflicts of interest were made.

## **5. Monthly dashboard**

5.1 The Board noted the contents of paper MB14/01, and in particular the following points –

- The average number of sick leave days was down in December.
- There had not been a great deal of training activity in December.

5.2 PR reiterated that the statistics as recorded in the new Dashboard format were helpful.

## **6. Risk Register**

6.1 The Board noted the contents of paper MB14/02, in particular the new entry at risk 15 relating to litigants in person.

## **7. Finance and fees**

7.1 The Board noted paper MB14/03, and in particular the following points –

- Spend at the end of December was £9.27m, against a projected spend of £9.41m.
- The contributions from the jurisdictions had all been received.
- Invoices for the contributions for the final quarter had been raised.
- JCPC fee income was £714k, which was higher than expected.

7.2 The MB discussed the income generated from the Wider Market Initiative. It was noted that this figure included contributions from jurisdictions outside the UK who had used our Justices, principally Hong Kong.

7.3 The Board discussed running another exercise to promote room hire for events. The possibility of the new caterers generating room hire business from their contacts was considered.

**Action point: JR/WA/AO to consider this point.**

7.4 AJ asked if we were satisfied with the stock level of gift shop items. JR and OO pointed out that this was decreasing and that a review was being undertaken to identify those items that could be written down.

7.5 The Board discussed the expenditure needed to refit the café, ahead of the new caterers starting on Monday 31<sup>st</sup> March. This would now need to be brought forward into this financial year.

7.6 OO reported that the Auditors from the NAO had almost finished the nine month audit and were ahead of schedule.

## **8. Press and communications**

8.1 The Board noted paper MB14/04, and the following points -

- Coverage in December had been dominated by the judgments in the Scientology case; the hearing of the Right to Die cases had also generated widespread coverage and more was anticipated when judgment was handed down.
- The debate in the media over human rights and Europe had continued. The Board noted that the LC had identified a case to take to the Court of Appeal on the EU Charter of Human Rights which would almost certainly end up at the UKSC.
- A press notice had been issued at the end of December informing the public of the new UKSC and JCPC domain names. This had generated coverage in a couple of places, including the Guardian on-line.
- The number of visitors for December was average for the month compared to previous years.

- 8.2 The numbers of on-line visitors to the websites was up and noticeably higher on the days of the Scientology judgment and the assisted suicide cases.
- 8.3 The proportion of one-time visitors to the websites (over the course of the month) had increased to account for almost 60% of traffic. It remained to be seen if the change of domain names had any impact.
- 8.4 Visitors using mobile devices now accounted for 20% of the total number of visitors to the websites. BW was now giving consideration to how the websites could be properly optimised to facilitate mobile devices

## **9. Human Resources**

- 9.1 The Board noted the following points –
- The campaign to recruit the next round of JAs had been launched in January. Postcards giving details and inviting applications had been left in various locations and this was proving to be more effective than a formal advertising campaign. There would also be advertisements placed on the websites.
  - There was a vacancy in the Communications Team. A temporary appointment had been made to cover the post until a permanent post holder could be recruited. The board noted this was the first recruitment exercise that would not be handled by MoJ Shared Services on behalf of the UKSC, but directly by UKSC HR.
- 9.2 The Board noted that discussions had taken place with Civil Service Resourcing and it had been agreed that we would be able to advertise on the Civil Service Jobs website. CM would handle recruitment campaigns in-house for the moment.
- 9.3 The part time HR Officer was due to start the following week. This was to ensure that we were adequately resourced to handle recruitment campaigns. How resource intensive recruitment campaigns were depended on the nature of the vacancy. For example front of house vacancies tended to generate a much higher number of applicants than some other posts.
- 9.4 The Board noted that having a direct contract with Civil Service Resources could cost £3k just to have the contract. PR asked if we

should have a ‘beauty parade’, even as a desktop exercise, to see if CSR were the best option.

- 9.5 The Octopus HR system was now up and running and was being used by staff. The key test this month would be that all staff were paid correctly and on time.
- 9.6 The Board noted that the search for an Occupational Health service provider was ongoing.
- 9.7 My CivilServicePension had now registered the UKSC as a separate organisation from the MoJ. CM reminded the Board that a new pension scheme would be commencing in 2015 and this would have to be managed.

## **10. Parliamentary Questions and Freedom of Information**

- 10.1 PB reported that 6 FOI requests had been received in December. The only one of interest had requested a copy of the winning tender from the recent exercise to provide cleaning services. The Board noted that this had gone over the deadline, partly because advice had been sought from TSol and the cleaning contractor had been asked if they had any comments on what was due to be released. No PQs had been received.

## **11. Case update**

- 11.1 The Board noted that there had been a slight increase in the grant rate.
- 11.2 The Registry was now listing cases for the next term.

## **12. Health and Safety report.**

- 12.1 The Board noted the contents of paper MB14/05.
- 12.2 The Board discussed the outcome of the evacuation practice, which had produced a good result.

## **13. Independent Health and Safety audit report**

- 13.1 The Board noted the contents of paper MB14/05, and in particular the 16 recommendations that the report had made.
- 13.2 In reiterating the paramount importance placed on ensuring the health and safety of everyone at the Court, the Board noted the contents of paper MB14/05, and in particular the evidence giving credence to the validity of the favourable main findings of the recent independent H&S audit.
- 13.3 MT added that the report had also endorsed the H&S systems relevant to the Court of the four facilities management contractors.
- 13.4 In terms of how to respond to such a report, MT assured the Board that it had been stressed to all those having a defined role in H&S at the Court, whether staff or contractors, that there could be no complacency with regard to maintaining the standards being achieved going forward.
- 13.5 MT advised that the 16 recommendations were all sensible and proportionate, and had been accepted in full, with progress on their implementation being reported to the H&S Committee.
- 13.6 The Board considered the IoD / HSE publication titled, “Leading H&S at Work”, and discussed the Court’s adherence to the booklet’s bullet points on Good Practice – and concluded that there was complete compliance. The Auditor had commented that the Management Information Dashboard ensures that the Board is made aware for every meeting of any pertinent H&S issues at the Court.

#### **14. Accommodation report**

- 14.1 MT updated the Board. In particular the Board noted that -
  - The secondary glazing in Court Room 3 had been successfully completed.
  - The tender exercise for the catering contract was ongoing and running to timetable. Seven initial bidders had responded to the PQQ and four had put in final bids, of which three had been selected for interview.

**15. ICT Project and Domain Name**

- 15.1 PB updated the Board on the work undertaken between Christmas and New Year to install the new IT system. The Board noted that this had been done to timetable and the system was now up and running.
- 15.2 The Board recorded its thanks to the in-house IT team for all of the hard work that had been put into meeting the very tight deadline and delivering the new system.

**16. Any other business**

- 16.1 BW reminded Board members that the annual photo would be taken in advance of the next meeting.

UKSC  
18 February 2014