

**The Supreme Court of the United Kingdom
Management Board
Minutes of the meeting held on 23 March 2010**

Attending: Jenny Rowe (Chair)

William Arnold
Sian Lewis
Louise di Mambro
Olufemi Oguntunde
Philip Robinson (Non-Executive Director)
Caroline Smith
Martin Thompson
Alex Jablonowski (Non-Executive Director attended by telephone)

Ann Achow (Secretary)

1. Apologies for absence

1.1 Apologies were received from Sue McKenzie for item 6.

2. Approval of the minutes of the MB meeting held on 23 February 2010

2.1 The minutes were approved.

3. Matters arising not covered elsewhere in the minutes

3.1 JR had received a reply from John Pennells of the Middlesex Art Collection Trust who had provided a copy of their insurance policy. The auditors were content.

3.2 The Lord Chancellor had replied to the President's letter regarding aspects of the Civil Service Code and the Constitutional Reform and Governance Bill. He had confirmed that the independence of the Supreme Court meant that civil servants working at the UKSC reported to the Chief Executive who in turn worked under the direction of the President and did not report to the Government of the day..

3.3 The quarterly report to the jurisdictions had been completed and distributed. Comments had been received from Wales. The Non Executive Directors would be sent a copy of the report.

3.4 The desktop test of the Business Continuity plan had been arranged for 23 April. The hospitality and gifts policy had been revised to exclude the corporate events function.

3.5 Clarification had been received regarding the rules on the flying of flags on UK countries' national days. The Welsh and Union flags had both been flown on St David's Day. JR hoped to agree the policy on flag flying with the Justices at their meeting on 13 April.

3.6 Baroness Neuberger's report on diversity in the judiciary contained one recommendation about the Supreme Court. JR was due to attend a meeting with MoJ officials that afternoon.

4. Scorecard report

4.1 The Board considered paper MB 10/15 which contained scorecard figures up to and including February 2010. PR raised a question about the volume of permissions waiting for listing and it was agreed that the formal review the following month would be an appropriate time to iron out any anomalous figures and review whether the figures were providing the type of information which was needed.

4.2 The high level of building defects/helpdesk calls was likely to be due to the need to identify and report all building issues before the defects expiry date on 17 March. The two security incidents related to a false fire alarm activation and an escorted visitor not wearing their visitor pass on the private side of the building. Staff had been reminded that visitors should wear a pass at all times in the private part of the building even though they were being escorted.

5. Shared services

5.1 JR had e mailed Board members about her meeting in February with Tony Burn. The Board agreed that it would be beneficial for him to spend two or three days looking at the vfm aspects of shared services.

6. Corporate events update

6.1 SMcK had prepared update paper MB10/16 for the Board's information. JR invited members to send any comments to SMcK.

7. Finance and fees

7.1 OO presented paper MB 10/17 which contained a full financial information pack.

7.2 The key points for the Board to note on the accounts were as follows:

- The 2009/10 end year budget profile showed a forecast under-spend of between £100k to £200k.
- The position regarding the revaluation of the building had been clarified. Confirmation had been received that a formal revaluation was not required at this stage as it would be sufficient to use the normal indices. This would change the following year owing to the new arrangements for heritage assets, so it was felt that an early meeting with NAO about this would be beneficial.
- Income from the shop was falling and work was underway to consider new ranges and a more prominent sales area. This was linked to work on improving the visitor experience generally by developing the exhibition area, but any plans would be subject to the availability of funds.

Action: PR and OO to arrange to meet NAO to discuss the valuation of the building as a heritage asset.

8. Budget and Business plan 2010/11

8.1 JR provided the background to the notification from MoJ of the budget allocation of £12.8m which had been received earlier in the week. This represented a reduction of £1m against the amount in the UKSC's bid. She was preparing a letter for the President to send to the Lord Chancellor.

8.2 OO circulated an options paper which proposed areas where savings could be made to cope with the reduction. The Board noted this and it was agreed that JR would meet with the management team to look at the options in more detail. The UKSC were committed to carrying out a review of staffing after its first year of operation and it was felt that carrying this out before a full year's operating figures on cases and visitors, for example, was available would be premature.

8.3 MT drew the Board's attention to the maintenance costs associated with the lightwells which would need to be accessed by scaffold every 4 years to carry out redecoration works. There was the potential that failed equipment such as smoke detectors could mean that scaffolding would be required before the fourth year. It was considered that given the recent refurbishment of the building it would be reasonable to assume that this would not arise in 2010/11. Other issues to consider were the forthcoming meeting which WA was to have with MoJ officials concerning the JCPC and future rent increases which would have an impact from 2011/12. Members were asked to consider the proposed options and to identify any other areas where savings could be made.

Action: JR to meet management team members to discuss options for savings.

8.5 The latest draft of the 2010/11 Business Plan had been circulated to the jurisdictions. Comments had been received from MoJ and a very minor one from the Scottish Court Service. JR was due to meet Scottish Government officials later in the week. WA would circulate the comments received from MoJ and asked management team members to review their contributions in the light of those comments received. It was noted that formal approval of the Business Plan from MoJ was not required.

Action: WA to circulate MoJ's comments to Board members for consideration and amendments to the plan, as necessary.

8.6 Staff would be told that the business plan and budget were still under discussion and that the final version of the Business Plan would be circulated to them and be included on the agenda for the next quarterly staff meeting.

Risk

9.1 The Board postponed the formal review of the risk register contained in paper MB10/18 until the April meeting so that they could give the topic the time it deserved.

Action: Formal review of the risk register to be included on the April MB agenda.

10 Health and safety

10.1 MT presented the Health and Safety Policy (paper MB10/19). It had been discussed by the Health and Safety Committee and now required MB approval. Training on health and safety was cascaded to new starters by MT and was also included in the induction pack for staff. The Board approved the policy and asked that the signed statement from the Chief Executive which was at the front of the policy be put on notice boards and sent to all staff.

Action: MT to arrange distribution of the signed Chief Executive's statement.

11. Human resources

10.1 CS presented the draft Equality and Diversity Strategy (paper MB10/20). After discussion JR asked members to let CS have comments by 31 March. It was agreed that equality and diversity would be included on the MB agenda every quarter.

Action:

(1) Members to send comments to CS by 31 March.

(2) Diversity and equality to be included on the MB agenda at quarterly intervals.

11. Press and communications

11.1 SL's communications update (paper MB 10/21) highlighted case coverage and commentary in the media.

11.2 The number of visitors to the court had risen significantly with the highest one day figure of 347 in March. There was less demand from ad hoc groups but a steady increase in organised school and student groups. We now had our own analytical tool for the website which showed activity peaks coinciding with the delivery of judgments. There was also a wide range of overseas visitors to the website.

Action: SL to circulate the 'international hits' website analysis figures to members.

12. Parliamentary Questions monthly report

12.1 There had been no new PQs received since the last meeting. The flow of FOI enquiries was steady. All had been answered within the 20 day deadline.

13. Case statistics

13.1 LdiM reported a steady stream of applications. The latest batch of PTAs were coming back from the Justices and the next two terms' lists were filling up. (Note: both term's lists are now reported as full as at 29 March)

14. Any other business

14.1 It was agreed that the Board should see the gifts and hospitality register at the end of the financial year for discussion at the April meeting.

Action: CS to circulate the gifts and hospitality register for discussion at the April MB meeting

The Management Board approved these minutes on 27 April 2010.

UKSC
April 2010