

**The Supreme Court of the United Kingdom
Management Board
Minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2009**

Attending: Jenny Rowe (Chair)

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

Ann Achow (Secretary)

1. Apologies for absence

1.1 Apologies were received from Martin Thompson.

2. Approval of the minutes of the MB meeting held on 29 September 2009

2.1 The minutes were approved with a correction to the spelling of OO's first name.

3. Matters arising not covered elsewhere in the minutes

3.1 Updates on action points from the last meeting were as follows:

- Contractors had confirmed that all their staff were entitled to work in the UK and had been CTC security cleared.
- Lords Phillips and Hope had approved the Mission and Strategic Objectives which would be circulated to staff and put on the website.
- The 2009/10 Business Plan was ready for distribution via the intranet and website. A covering note to staff from JR was being prepared. An 'all staff' meeting would be held to discuss the plan, preferably on a Friday in the café before the building was open to the public. This led to a discussion on team building and internal engagement as well as the frequency of 'all staff' meetings and whether the Justices would wish to be involved, rotating attendance so that a different Justice attended each meeting. No firm conclusion was reached. JR was due to attend an 'All Justices' meeting on Monday 26 October and would raise this then. It was agreed that further thought would be given to this matter.
- JR was drafting an e mail to SCIP seeking clarification of the thinking behind the benefits listed in the Benefits Realisation Plan.
- The risk register was due to be circulated for allocated risk owners to complete their sections. Drafting of the Business Continuity Plan was ongoing and the draft would be circulated to members in due course.

- Most MB meeting dates had been set for 2010 with a further e mail due out shortly. As a general rule MB meetings would not take place in August.

4. Review of the first two weeks of operation.

4.1 The Swearing in ceremony on 1 October, the first sitting on 5 October and the Royal opening on 16 October had all gone well.

4.2 The acoustics in Court Room 1, coupled with the ease with which the microphones could be accidentally turned off, were causing audibility problems. The volume of the loudspeakers had recently been increased and possible solutions such as an alternative microphone design were being investigated. JR reported positive feedback from lawyers using the courts.

4.3 The number of members of the public visiting was steady at about 100 a day. We were continuing to receive many requests for group visits. Pending the production of the visitor policy it was thought that the front of house customer service staff might be able to cope with escorting visits of up to 15 people.

4.4 Mugs had been selling well from the souvenir collection. JR and Lord Phillips were considering a suitable gift to be presented to visiting dignitaries pending the publication of the Supreme Court book which should be available next spring.

4.5 The transmission of court broadcasts to the internal TVs was still not in place. Graham MacKenzie was to be asked for a progress report.

4.6 JR was in contact with MoJ about IT issues relating to the transmission of Justices' emails. PR asked for clarification of the systems in place to prevent virus contamination of our IT systems from the receipt of electronic submissions from parties. JR explained that there were sufficient safeguards in place to ensure adequate protection of our systems.

Action: WA to contact Graham MacKenzie about court broadcasts to internal TVs.

5. Scorecard report

5.1 The Board discussed the possible headings to be included in the scorecard with reference to the suggestions put forward previously by AJ. The four main headings could be Customers, Staff, Finance and Operations/Productivity. A full scorecard could be developed alongside the objectives we set for the next three to five years.

5.2 JR highlighted an issue around productivity and throughput of cases, should there be more cases heard with a greater number of Justices sitting. It would be difficult to have throughput as a measurable target, should a trend towards more Justices hearing each case develop.

5.3 WA would draft a scorecard with help from OO on finance, LdiM on cases, CS on staff and SL for media and visitors.

5.4 The Board discussed whether a monthly summary of media coverage, not press cuttings, would be useful. Deciding what was required would feed into the media strategy. The development of a media strategy was identified as a task which needed to be undertaken but it was accepted there were issues which currently prevented this work from starting.

Actions:

(1) WA to develop a scorecard for discussion at November's MB meeting.

(2) SL to draft a media strategy in due course.

6. Finance and fees

6.1 OO gave an oral update on the position since the last meeting. Fees income since August amounted to £115,000. Provided that this level was maintained, UKSC was on target to achieve the budget income figure of £300,000 by the end of the financial year.

6.2 OO had attended meetings with MoJ officials about the opening balances and was considering the issue of capitalisation.

6.3 The running costs budget to year end stood at £7,190,000 of which £400,000 was ring-fenced from the Consolidated Fund. OO's assessment at present was that this level of funding should just meet our needs.

6.4 The first meeting of the Audit Committee was due to take place in early November. A nomination for this committee had been received from Northern Ireland, but not yet from Scotland. The MoJ Internal Audit team who had been contracted to provide an internal audit service had submitted a draft programme for consideration.

6.5 OO reported that the first Finance Circulars had been circulated to staff and were also available on the intranet.

Actions: WA to raise with Lachlan Stewart the issue of an Audit Committee nominee from Scotland, when he visited the following week.

7. Risk

7.1 Matters relating to risk had been discussed under item 3 of the agenda.

8. Health and safety

8.1 The Board noted the contents of paper MB09/14 which gave an update on health and safety matters including the fire alarm building evacuation on 8 October which was caused by a toaster in the café kitchen activating a smoke detector.

8.2 The paper also included information on the introduction of a health and safety induction booklet for contractors. A representative of each contractor had to sign and confirm that they had read the rules and procedures in the booklet. The first meeting of the Health and Safety Committee was expected to take place towards the end of October.

9. Human resources

Policy on requests for work experience

9.1 CS presented paper MB (09)13. The Board's decisions were as follows:

- a) Requests for work experience from young people under the age of 18 years should be declined. They should be invited to use the UKSC's outreach facilities instead. This did not affect the attendance of staff's children on 'bring your daughter/son to work' initiatives as these were not work experience opportunities and the child would be in the care of their parent throughout the day.
- b) Requests for summer work experience for law students should also be declined as the summer would be a slack period in terms of the quantity of work which they could undertake. Again, requests could be referred to UKSC outreach work.
- c) Requests had already been received by Justices from 'marshalling volunteers' wishing to shadow them. It was felt that this would be too time consuming for Justices although they might wish to respond positively to requests for a meeting from, for example, someone writing a paper. It was thought that such requests should be refused, again by referring them to the UKSC's outreach work but this decision should be reviewed in a year's time. JR would raise this with the Justices.

Action: JR to discuss the issue of dealing with marshalling requests with the Justices.

Policy on privilege days

9.2 The Board discussed the setting of the Christmas privilege day. The options were for the building either to be closed on one of the days either side of Christmas Day i.e. 24 or 29 December or to remain open on both days and allow staff to add the privilege day to their annual leave allowance. Business need was of primary importance and although the courts would be closed from 21 December if the building were open it would have to be staffed to allow the public to visit. As no consensus was reached JR said that she would take the decision in consultation with WA.

Action: JR and WA to determine when the building would be open over the Christmas period. [Note – it was decided to remain open on both 24 Dec till 2.00pm and 29 Dec. Staff would therefore add the Christmas Privilege Day to their annual leave allowance and take it under normal annual leave arrangements.]

10. Press and communications

10.1 SL reported a steady throughput of visitors and some very positive feedback. The intranet had gone live on 1 October.

10.2 The Board recognised the need for a communications strategy for both internal and external communications, but that there were issues preventing this work going ahead at present. The need should nevertheless be recorded for the future.

Action: SL to draft a communications strategy.

11. Case statistics

11.1 LdiM presented paper MB (09)15 which gave a snapshot at 1 October 2009 of the number of cases inherited by UKSC from the House of Lords. The figures came with some caveats because they did not show that a number of Permissions to Appeal had been dealt with over the summer recess. The Justices, sitting in panels of three, were due to consider the first batch of applications that day. LdiM thought that we could cope with the volume of applications being received and permissions granted, given that we were not under pressure to list cases within a prescribed timescale.

Action: LdiM to prepare statistics for the next and future MB meetings.

12. Any other business

12.1. There were no items raised.

UK Supreme Court

6 November 2009