



**The Supreme Court
of the United
Kingdom and
Judicial Committee
of the Privy Council
Business Plan
2021-22**

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Foreword

By the Chief Executive, Vicky Fox



This business plan sets out how in 2021- 22 we will achieve our strategic priorities and begin to deliver our vision. Our four strategic priorities are:

Recovery

As for every organisation, the past year has been dominated by the uncertainties and challenges brought about by the coronavirus pandemic. That uncertainty, whilst diminishing, will continue for some time to come. That is why one of the Court's strategic priorities for 2021-22 is recovery. We will learn lessons from the way we have responded to the pandemic which will enable us to improve our processes and ways that we work. We will continue to prioritise the safety and wellbeing of justices and staff and provide a safe working environment ready for our return to the Court building and in person hearings.

Diversity and inclusion

Building on our existing commitment to diversity and inclusion, we will begin delivery of our new diversity, inclusion and belonging strategy. This strategy will help us realise our vision to be a true reflection of the society we live in and it demonstrates our collective commitment to ensuring the Court is a workplace in which every member of staff can bring their best self to work and flourish. Diversity brings richness to the judiciary and helps us understand and better serve the public. We will start delivery of the Court's judicial diversity and inclusion strategy 2021-25. The aims of this strategy are to support the progress of underrepresented groups into judicial roles and further build an inclusive and respectful working environment for Justices where differences are valued.

World class

We will provide an efficient and effective service to court users, Justices and visitors. As we emerge from the pandemic, we will apply the lessons we have learnt and undertake a review of all of our processes so that we continue to be a modern well-run organisation. We will provide the right tools and training to support our staff to excel.

Serving the public

We serve the public through the administration of justice, upholding the rule of law and maintaining the Court's independence. Transparency and accessibility are at the heart of the way we work. We will broaden and extend our education and outreach, making this more accessible. We will work with Parliament, government and other courts in order to play our role and contribute to the UK's economic recovery post-Covid, and its new international role after leaving the European Union.

Throughout 2020-21 our staff not only delivered the business plan but went above and beyond, changing the way they worked and connected with court users and one another. This success demonstrated the importance of resilience and adaptability. In planning for 2021-22 we have learnt from this and considered not only what we do, but how we do it. We have reviewed and refreshed our vision and values and, despite the continuing uncertainties, I am confident that we can deliver this business plan and move closer to achieving our vision.

My thanks go to staff and Justices who make the court a place where people support each other and are united in delivering its purpose of upholding the rule of law and deciding legal questions of public importance.

Our Role

The role of the Court is to act as the final court of appeal for arguable points of law of general public importance arising from civil cases throughout the UK and from criminal cases in England and Wales, Northern Ireland and, in a limited number of cases from Scotland.

The Court also hears cases to determine issues relating to the legal competence of the devolved administrations, Parliaments and Assemblies and jurisdictions transferred from the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (JCPC).

The JCPC is a separate court from the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom (UKSC) and is the final court of appeal for the UK Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies, Commonwealth Countries that have retained the appeal to Her Majesty in Council, or in the case of the Republics, to the Judicial Committee.

The role of the administration is to provide an environment which enables the justices to carry out their duties in an effective, visible and accessible way.

Our Purpose

The Court upholds the rule of law in the UK and the countries that use the JCPC, by deciding legal questions of public importance brought to it from around the world and by ensuring that the law enacted by Parliament is correctly interpreted and applied.

The independence of the Court and the quality of its work maintains public trust in, and contributes to, the UK as a democratic country founded on the rule of law.



Our Vision

We will be a world leading court.



This means we will

- deliver the highest quality judgments
- deliver an excellent, efficient service to our users and Justices, through our highly skilled staff who live our values and are equipped with high-quality tools and training.
- serve the public by ensuring that our work is visible and accessible and that our role in applying the law is understood as an essential part of a healthy democracy.
- ensure our culture and building are fully inclusive, respecting and valuing the diversity of our court users, visitors, Justices and staff.
- build strong relationships with Parliament, the Government, the devolved institutions and the courts in all the jurisdictions in the UK.
- enhance the international reputation of the UK as a global legal centre.

Our Priorities and what we will deliver in 2021-22

The financial year 2020-21 was dominated by the uncertainties and challenges brought about by the coronavirus pandemic, but throughout we have been committed to providing an environment which enables the Justices to carry out their duties in an effective, visible and accessible way, whilst safeguarding the health and wellbeing of everyone who works at or visits the Court. Through the use of technology and the dedication of our staff, we have been able to continue to ensure access to justice, openly and transparently.

The Court responded swiftly last year, and longstanding systems and processes were changed at speed to allow a hybrid and remote way of working. The pandemic had an impact on the Court's international and educational aspirations but we quickly found meaningful ways to engage the public, schools and students in the online world. We have continued to build strong relationships with courts around the world. This has included virtual meetings and exchanges.

In 2021-22 we will focus on the following key three areas which will enable us to emerge stronger than before and contribute to the UK's economic recovery post-Covid, and its new international role after leaving the European Union:

- **Recovery:** emerging from the pandemic and learning lessons.
- **Readiness:** continuing our journey of improvement by reviewing our strategies and processes to prepare for change.
- **Responsiveness:** upholding the rule of law. Building strong relationships with parliament, government, other courts in the UK and overseas and playing a role in the UK's economic recovery from the pandemic.



Our Priorities and Deliverables

Recovery and Resilience

We will emerge from the pandemic stronger, having learned lessons, improved our processes and identified areas of ongoing improvement.

We will continue to prioritise the safety and wellbeing of the justices and staff and provide a COVID-secure environment when we can safely return to the Court building and resume in person hearings.

We will contribute to the economic recovery as the flagship of the UK legal sector and develop our international strategy to maintain the UK's position as a global centre for court-based dispute resolution and international arbitration.

This will be achieved by:

- Carefully planning for the return to occupancy of the Court building and resumption of physical hearings with the necessary safeguards in place.
- Developing a visitor recovery plan so we can safely welcome schools, universities, others from the legal profession, visitors and, when permitted, tourists to the UKSC Building on Parliament Square.
- Supporting staff to return to the building and to strive for continuous improvement through lessons learned from the pandemic, living our values and high-quality training.

- Reviewing business continuity arrangements, including staff resilience and availability.
- Working to maintain and strengthen the UK's reputation as an international centre of legal excellence and as a global champion of the rule of law. We will work with other courts in the UK to play our role in the UK's economic recovery post-Covid and its new international role after leaving the European Union.
- We will continue to build strong relationships with Courts and international judicial organisations around the world to promote the rule of law internationally, share good practice and enhance the reputation of the UK judiciaries.



Diversity

Our commitment to diversity and inclusion is deeply rooted in our values and will be exemplified in the way that we work together and will be championed by all justices and staff. We will live our values to be inclusive and respectful, celebrating the diversity of our staff, and supporting equal opportunity for everyone.

We will be ambitious. We want every single member of staff to feel a sense of belonging at the Court, to know that everyone can contribute their views and that these will be valued. We know that the more diverse organisations are, the more productive they are. Such organisations make better decisions, have a higher sense of wellbeing and are more reflective of the society we are all part of. That is what we are striving for.

This will be achieved by:

- Introducing and delivering the Action Plan which supports the UKSC Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy.
- Introducing the Judicial Diversity and Inclusion Strategy 2021 – 2025.
- Through these policies we will:
 - ✓ Support and build an inclusive and respectful culture and working environment.
 - ✓ Support the progression of underrepresented groups into judicial roles and encourage a wide range of applications for every role at the Court.

- ✓ Support an increase in the number of well qualified applicants from underrepresented groups for the role of justice.
 - ✓ Proactively advertise the Court's support for diversity and inclusion to the legal profession and the public and promote the Court to others.
 - ✓ Fulfill our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED).
- Implementing the next phase of the Court's Visitor Access Strategy which includes:
 - ✓ Setting up a Disabled Access User Group with whom we can work to shape our programmes of visits.
 - ✓ Increasing our offer to disabled users by devising a new programme of tours which will include BSL interpreted tours and tactile/touch tours.
 - ✓ Considering further measures and improvements through participation with the Business Disability Forum's 'Disability Standard'.
 - Aiming to meet the requirements of the Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations 2018 through making sure the Court:
 - ✓ Takes steps to enable websites and applications to be perceivable, operable, understandable and robust.
 - ✓ Publishes an accessibility statement.

Aspiring to be World Class

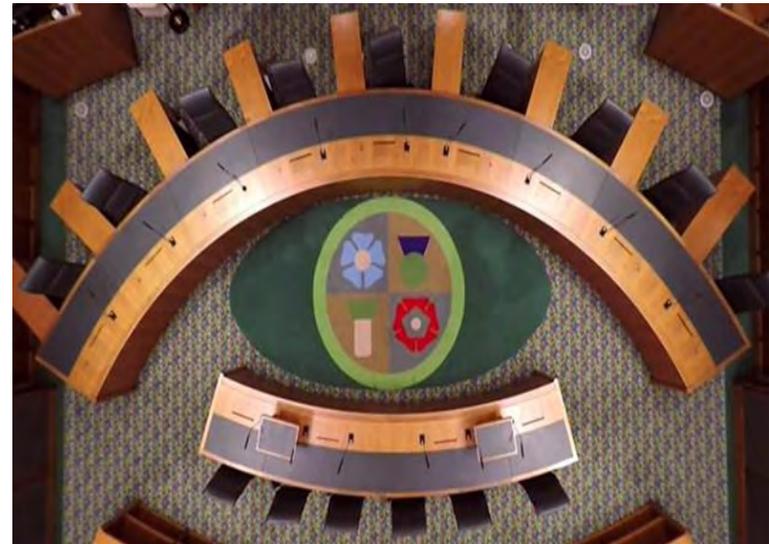
We will strive for continuous improvement and learn lessons to ensure we provide an excellent service to all our Court users and visitors.

We will support the justices and the Court to be as efficient and effective as possible, ensuring value for money in all activities. We will review our governance, our processes and our systems to support the development of an organisation wide Change Programme and through that we will also equip our staff to perform at their best.

This will be achieved by:

- Undertaking and implementing the agreed findings of an internal governance review to ensure effective support and decision making is in place.
- Assessing and defining the future HR operating model to support business as usual and to support the changes to come.
- Identifying what IT systems, processes and platforms the Court needs to operate now and improve in the future.
- Assessing and defining a forward-looking finance model focusing on systems, processes and capabilities.
- Ensuring every member of staff has a supported development path.

- Defining the Court's data strategy to enhance understanding of all court processes and increase transparency.
- Ensuring the justices and staff have access to the best tools available to enable them to undertake their role.



Serving the Public

We will support the Justices to uphold the rule of law and maintain the Court's independence.

We will promote transparency and accessibility to enhance the public's understanding and engagement in the work we do.

We will work with other courts, government and Parliament to maintain and build good relationships and to increase understanding and awareness of the Court's work.

This will be achieved by:

- Providing skeleton arguments online to increase transparency and support accessibility.
- Increasing accessibility of information by providing The National Archive with all appropriate records and recordings.
- Implementing the Court's stakeholder engagement approach.
- Exploring the option of the Court sitting outside London, subject to pandemic restrictions, to increase visibility and engagement with the four nations of the UKSC.
- Continuing to enhance the partnership with Royal Holloway (outreach and education) and through that develop UKSC Studies module (year 1) and MOOC (year 1).

- Running a series of events including webinars, seminars and visits for Members of Parliament and House of Commons staff to increase understanding of the two institutions.
- Continuing with remote and in person international bilaterals meetings including those with the Cour de Cassation, Conseil d'Etat and the Court of Justice of the European Union.



Our Values

Our values were reviewed at the end of 2020-21. Having set our new vision collectively, staff told us what values we need in order to work together to deliver our vision.

Our new values will be embedded in 2021-22 and will drive and support everything we do and how we deliver the Court's strategic priorities.



Accountable – when we say we will do something, we will get it done by each of us taking personal responsibility and ownership for our decisions, actions, results and behaviours. We will hold ourselves accountable to the Court, its users, and the public, and always work openly and transparently.

Dedicated – we are proud to work for the Court and dedicated to its purpose. We are dedicated to excellent customer service, in welcoming everyone that visits our building and in supporting the role of the Court and the Justices.

Aspiring – we want to achieve our vision of being world class and will be ambitious in setting goals that will challenge ourselves to improve so that that we continue to develop our organisation for the future.

Collaborative - the way we work together really matters to us. We will work supportively, respecting and valuing the contributions from others. We value diversity and know that we achieve more when we work together.

Evaluating Performance and Our Resources

Monitoring our delivery against this plan and evaluating our performance, is a vital part of our governance and assurance framework and enables effective and appropriate delivery and assurance to be given to our Management Board and Chief Executive in her role as Accounting Officer.



Each quarter, updates on progress made against milestones listed in this Business Plan will be presented to the Management Board and viewed holistically, considering delivery of our purpose, vision, priorities and values. Beneath this plan sits team delivery plans which provide further detail on how each of our priorities will be delivered. Heads of teams will be held to account by the Chief Executive, Director of Corporate Services and Registrar, as appropriate, for delivery.

We will also measure performance through key performance indicators (KPIs). These are split across the business areas of the Court and reflect the service provided, delivered and required by statutory requirements.

Our performance measures are monitored against the following areas of the business:

- **Casework, Operations and Costs** – we will continue to monitor timeliness of casework and in particular Permissions to Appeal (PTA) applications through the Court, how cases progress, the timeliness of hearings and the preliminary assessment of costs following a hearing.
- **Financial Stewardship** – we will monitor our expenditure, identifying savings and ensuring good stewardship of taxpayers' Money.
- **People** – we have targets to improve the time taken to hire new staff, monitor staff turnover and working days lost through sickness.
- **User Experience** – we use measures including monitoring complaints and positive feedback.

Our Resources

Budget

The UKSC and the JCPC budget settlement for 2021-2 is summarised below:

Main budget categories	£000s
Judicial Pay & Expenses	3,159
Depreciation	1,450
Other Costs	10,085
Total Gross Costs	14,694
Contributions from Jurisdictions	6,632
Fees & wider Market Initiatives	1,142*
Net Resource DEL	6,920
Capital DEL	500

*Forecast and subject to in year change

Our staff

Our staff will contribute to ensuring the Court offers a brilliant employee experience for all, in line with the Civil Service Values, we will provide efficient and trusted services for all our users. We will be inclusive, flexible, modern and connected and we will encourage openness, challenge, innovation and excellence in everything we do.

All staff will actively contribute to delivery of this business plan through their team delivery plans and they will also contribute by undertaking the following:

- Embedding and engaging with the Court's values.
- Maintaining positive, effective and collaborative relationships across all areas of the Court, as well as collaborative and effective relationships with other departments and organisations to support delivery of the Court's priorities.
- Maintaining and continuing to build a culture of respect for diversity, inclusion and belonging across the whole Court.
- Making good use of the performance management framework, enabling a collaborative working relationship whereby constructive feedback can be given, development encouraged and well received, and all staff are motivated to improve and deliver.