

The Supreme Court of the United Kingdom

Management Board

Minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2015

Attending: Jenny Rowe (Chair)

William Arnold

Chris Maile

Olufemi Oguntunde

Ben Wilson

Alex Jablonowski (Non-Executive Director)

Kenneth Ludlam (Non-Executive Director)

Paul Brigland (Secretary)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Louise di Mambro and Martin Thompson.

2. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 26 January 2015.

2.1 The minutes were approved.

3. Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda

3.1 There were no matters arising.

4. Declaration of conflicts of interests

4.1 No declarations of conflicts of interest were made.

5. Monthly Information Dashboard

5.1 The Board noted the contents of paper MB15/05.

5.2 OO noted that some figures were missing from the finance section.

Action point: PB to re-circulate dashboard with complete finance figures.

5.3 The Board noted that the grievance raised by a member of staff had been withdrawn but an investigation had been carried out in any event.

5.4 CM pointed out that the figure for sick absence was low. The Board noted that the figure for training days would rise by the end of the reporting year as training was scheduled for March.

5.5 The Board also noted the contents of the note from Louise which detailed some cases that had exceeded the 12 working week target.

6 Risk Register

6.1 The Board noted paper MB15/06, and in particular the following points –

Risk 1 – Details of the parties’ final manifestos were still awaited and then this risk would be reviewed.

Risk 3 - further information on the proposed next steps in Welsh devolution were expected from the Wales Office by the end of the week.

Risk 4 - The security guidance for Justices and staff had been re-issued and a quick link to the guidance had been added to the front page on the intranet.

Risk 8 – The BCP test had been arranged for Monday 23 March 2015.

Risk 9 – The Board noted the amended description for this risk.

Risk 12 – The judgment had been handed down for the Welsh reference case.

7. Finance and fees

7.1 The Board noted paper MB15/07 and the attached spreadsheet. The Board noted the following points -

- The supplementary estimates had been finalised and £100k had been carried forward to the 2015/16 financial year.
- Income from the Wider Market Initiative was increasing following the appointment of the Events & International Visits Manager.
- Fee income continued to be higher than expected.

8. Press and communications

8.1 The Board noted the contents of paper MB15/08, and the following points –

- Coverage in January had been dominated by Michael v Chief Constable of South Wales Police.
- The Communications Team was receiving a high number of daily calls relating to Evans v HM Attorney General (Prince of Wales letters)
- Judgment was expected the following week in the Pora case and was expected to attract a lot of interest from the New Zealand media.

8.2 Visitor numbers were up by 16% on the same time last year. The increase in educational tours was particularly noticeable. The majority of groups were coming from within England. BW was exploring with the Parliamentary Education Unit the possibility of linking with them on visits by some school and college groups. The Board discussed the Outreach programme and considered how contact was made with educational establishments to encourage visits. The Board noted that funding visits was often a problem for some state schools with limited resources. The Board discussed possible options to assist groups from state schools who wanted to visit.

Action point: WA and BW to consider further and report to MB later in the year.

8.3 The Events Manager had made a successful start and produced a plan to hire out meeting rooms that were not being used by parties to cases.

9. Human Resources

9.1 The Board noted the following points –

- The 2015 JA recruitment campaign had commenced. BW had been helping run a Blog by the current JAs. Advertisements would appear in the press before the end of March 2015 and fliers would be sent to the Inns of Court.
- The review of the structure of the Judicial Support unit was ongoing. 2 members of staff were expected to take up the VEDS offer.
- A decision by the President was expected on the recruitment campaign for the Chief Executive post.
- A new Non-Executive Director, Stephen Barrett, would be taking over when Alex Jablonowski stood down at the end of July. A handover period was being agreed. Stephen would be invited to the MB meeting and the MB workshop to be held in July.
- The new policy covering Shared Parental Leave would be published on the intranet.
- ACAS would be running an Employment Law training session for managers in March.
- A benchmarking meeting had been arranged for March in advance of annual appraisals being completed.

10. Parliamentary Questions and Freedom of Information

10.1 The Board noted that 4 FOI requests had been received in February and no PQs had been tabled.

11. Case update

11.1 The Board noted that applications for some urgent cases continued to be received (e.g. Lumsden), but that the list for next term was otherwise full.

12. Health & Safety Report.

12.1 The Board noted the contents of paper MB15/09.

12.2 The Board noted and endorsed the revised UKSC/JCPC H&S Policy.

13. Internal Audit on the ICT system.

13.1 The Board noted the contents of paper MB15/10.

13.2 PB reported that the recommendation contained in the IA report had now been actioned and that the report had given the IT system a clean bill of health.

14. Action points from the Management Board Workshop held on 11 July 2014.

14.1 The Board noted the action points listed in paper MB15/11.

14.2 JR reported that all of the action points had now been taken forward and none remained outstanding.

15. Report back from the Audit Committee.

15.1 AJ reported that the external auditors had not raised any issues. No real concerns had been raised by the internal auditors and it was expected that we would have a clean report.

15.2 Our R&R policy had been considered by the Audit Committee, especially by the members representing Scotland and Northern Ireland.

15. AOB

15.1 The Board noted that the Global Law Summit was being held in the QEII Conference Centre and that a number of visits were expected over the next few days from overseas delegates who were attending the summit.

15.2 Plans were underway for the summer exhibition, which would mark the 800th anniversary of the sealing of Magna Carta. It was likely that we would have on loan the copy dating from 1300 that was owned by Westminster Abbey.

UKSC
March 2014