

**The Supreme Court of the United Kingdom  
Management Board**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2011**

Attending: Jenny Rowe (Chair)

William Arnold  
Alex Jablonowski (Non-Executive Director)  
Louise di Mambro (item 3 onwards)  
Philip Robinson (Non-Executive Director)  
Caroline Smith  
Martin Thompson

Ann Achow (Secretary)

**1. Apologies for absence**

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Sian Lewis and Olufemi Oguntunde.

**2. Approval of the minutes of the MB meeting held on 24 January 2011**

2.1 The minutes were approved.

**3. Matters arising not covered elsewhere in the minutes**

3.1 All four staff who had applied for the voluntary early departure scheme had had their applications accepted. Their departure dates were staggered and were subject to their acceptance of the awaited formal quotations from the pension administrator.

3.2 Lord Phillips' speech on judicial independence which he gave at the UCL Constitution Unit on 8 February received good coverage in the media.

3.3 It was agreed that the exhibition area should include a panel giving information on the role of the Court in relation to the Human Rights Act and Europe.

**Action: JR to speak to SL about including information about the Court and Europe in the exhibition.**

**4. Draft Business Plan 2011-2012**

4.1 WA introduced paper MB11/12 which contained the latest draft of the 2011/2012 Business Plan. This version had been sent to the jurisdictions for comment from them and their respective ministers by 11 March. Any comments would be considered for inclusion in the final version which was planned for website publication by 1 April.

4.2 There was a detailed discussion during which the following additions were suggested for inclusion in the plan:

- the financial detail to cover separate figures for pay, accommodation, fixed costs
- budget comparisons with the 2009/10 and 2010/11 financial years
- further detail of the administration of the JCPC
- more specific KPIs for the HR function e.g. completion rate for the staff survey and the staff engagement index result
- mention of the difficulty in setting carbon baselines.

4.3 There was a feeling that the draft was still too backward looking. However, this was considered to be useful for setting the forward plan in context, particularly as the Court had only been operational since October 2009. The text would be reviewed once the jurisdictions' comments had been received to ensure that it was sufficiently forward looking.

**Action: WA to produce a final draft on receipt of consultees' comments.**

## **5. Draft Strategic Plan 2011-2015**

5.1 WA introduced paper MB11/13 which contained the latest draft of the 2011/2015 Strategic Plan. The discussion focused on the communication strategy for the plan as well as the general structure. Members agreed that an explanation of the relationship between the Supreme Court's jurisdiction and the European Courts should be included as well as the chapter dealing with international relations.

5.2 WA would produce a revised draft for circulation to MB members with a view to publication at the end of the local elections purdah on 5 May.

**Action: WA to circulate a revised draft.**

## **6. Scorecard report**

6.1 The Board considered paper MB 11/06 which contained scorecard figures up to and including January 2011. There were no actions arising.

## **7. Risk**

7.1 The Board discussed paper MB11/07 which comprised the current risk register. This prompted a discussion on the MB's attitude to risk and whether it would be helpful to define the Court's risk appetite. It was felt that it was too early to move to that stage but that this would be considered further at the end of 2011/12.

## **8. Finance and fees**

8.1 In OO's absence WA presented paper MB 11/08 which contained a full financial information pack to the end of January.

6.2 The key points for the Board to note were as follows:

- year to date expenditure against budget was showing an underspend

- fee income was running above profile
- it was not clear whether the transfer of the administration of the JCPC would take place on 1 April 2011.

## **9. Human resources**

9.1 CS advised members that the recruitment campaign for the September intake of Judicial Assistants had been launched that morning. The closing date for applications was 25 March.

## **10. Press and communications**

10.1 WA presented SL's communications update (paper MB 11/09) which highlighted case coverage, commentary in the media, particularly on the BBC4 documentary *The Highest Court in the Land*, visitor and website visitor numbers.

10.2 The number of individual visitors to the Court (4,331) was slightly down on the December 2010 figure but considerably more than for January 2010. The number of school/student groups was 26, down from 29 in December, but twice as much as for January 2010. Sixteen tours were held for non-educational groups.

10.3 The number of website visitors increased to 26,165 from 21,990 the previous month.

## **11. Parliamentary Questions monthly report**

11.1 Two PQs had been received in January, both dealing with the recent selection commission for the filling of vacancies for Justices. All FOI requests had been answered within the statutory 20 day deadline.

## **12. Case update**

12.1 LdiM reported that the registry continued to be very busy. Sixty PTAs had been received for the Supreme Court since the beginning of the calendar year with a further twelve received for the JCPC. Listing for 2012 had already begun.

## **13. Building defects**

13.1. MT presented paper MB11/10 which comprised a quarterly update on building defects. The contractual periods for mechanical and electrical and building fabric defects had expired.

13.2 The paper gave updates on a number of current building works. These included the strengthening of the Justices' bookshelves, identification of the source of leaks in two areas due to heavy rain and works on the library and café lightwells to allow for the replacement of light bulbs and other 'at height' maintenance works.

## **14. Health and safety**

14.1 MT presented paper MB11/11 which comprised a quarterly update on health and safety. The paper included an update on the completion of actions from last year's Health and Safety Audit.

14.2 Key points to note from the paper were as follows:

- clearance certificates for asbestos removal had been located and there was an Asbestos Management Plan in place. This was required because it could not be guaranteed that there was no asbestos remaining in the building although all efforts had been made to identify and remove it
- DSE assessments were up to date
- a defibrillator had been purchased and training in its use had been given
- the PCS Union's safety representatives were carrying out quarterly safety inspections under the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations
- a matrix for health and safety training for staff was due to go before the next meeting of the Health and Safety Committee for approval.

14.3 The draft Health and Safety Corporate Plan for 2011/12 was discussed. Minor amendments concerning targets regarding the prevention of accidents, dealing with verbal abuse and the inclusion of the Court User Group as stakeholder consultees were agreed. Subject to the inclusion of those amendments the Board approved the plan which would be published on the intranet.

14.4 JR would include health and safety as an item on the agenda of the next Court User Group meeting.

### **Actions:**

**(1) MT to incorporate the amendments and publish the Health and Safety Corporate Plan on the intranet**

**(2) JR to include health and safety on the agenda for the next Court User Group meeting.**

## **15. Any other business**

15.1 JR said that guidance to staff on the new Bribery Act would be issued in due course.

These minutes were approved by the Management Board on 28 March 2011.