

# **The Supreme Court of the United Kingdom**

## **Management Board**

### **Minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2016**

Attending: William Arnold (Chair)

Louise di Mambro

Chris Maile

Olufemi Oguntunde

Ben Wilson

Stephen Barrett (Non-Executive Director)

Kenneth Ludlam (Non-Executive Director)

Paul Brigland (Secretary)

Paul Sandles

#### **1. Apologies for absence and introduction**

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Mark Ormerod and Martin Thompson.
- 1.2 WA introduced PS and explained that PS would take on the role of Secretary to the Board with effect from September, replacing PB. PS would shadow PB until then.

#### **2. Approval of the minutes of the meeting of 23 May 2016**

- 2.1 The minutes were approved, subject to one minor amendment.

#### **3. Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda**

- 3.1 PB reported that a test of the Business Continuity Plan would take place at 1 Millbank on 27 September 2016. A Memorandum of Understanding with the House of Lords Facilities Department was ready for final sign-off.
- 3.2 Further testing of the wi-fi connectivity in the newer parts of the Royal Courts of Justice would be necessary before it could be designated as a second relocation site.

#### **4. Declaration of conflicts of interests**

4.1 No declarations of conflicts of interest were made.

#### **5. Management Information Dashboard**

5.1 The Board noted the contents of paper MB16/27, and in particular the following points –

- Data for the number of sitting days in each term, as well as the figures for the cumulative total of applications received in the reporting year, were not recorded correctly on the Dashboard. This was due to an outstanding query regarding the data for Easter Term. This would be rectified and the updated information presented to the next Board meeting in September.
- Further work regarding the presentation of statistics would be required to make it easier to identify where any backlogs in the processing of cases were developing. The possibility of using colour-coded, ‘traffic light’ warnings, as well as the inclusion of a figure for the total of the permission to appeal applications, was discussed.
- LdiM provided justification as to why 3 applications for permission to appeal had not been determined within the 12 weeks’ target period.

**Action point: PB in consultation with LdiM to update the registry statistics at the September MB meeting.**

#### **6. Risk Register**

6.1 The Board noted paper MB16/28, and in particular the following points –

Risk 2 (*Loss of / decline in infrastructure performance*) – The Board noted the requirement for a new telephone system.

Risk 3 (*Damage to Reputation*) – The Board noted the concerns regarding the noisy floorboard in the second floor lobby. An estimate of 2 weeks had been provided for remedial work, with the Christmas vacation period being the best time to carry out the work, provided Listed Building Consent was obtained in time for this. The issues surrounding any ‘Brexit’ related hearings were noted.

6.2 SB asked whether it would be possible to change the formatting of the Register so that only amended text appeared in coloured font.

## **7. Finance and fees**

7.1 The Board considered paper MB16/29 and noted the following points -

- Figures for June had been in line with budget estimates. There had been a small under spend of £60k, or 2% of the profiled budget.
- All contributions due had been received from the jurisdictions for the first quarter.
- WMI had generated £40k of income in June, with the majority coming from sitting fees for Lord Clarke’s time in Hong Kong.

## **8. Press and communications**

8.1 The Board noted the contents of paper MB16/30, and the following points –

- There had been significant coverage of the hearing in *Paulley v First Group*. Building accessibility issues for wheelchair users were handled well on the day and received mostly positive comments.
- There had been an article in *The Times* written by Daniel Finkelstein that discussed the merits of Parliamentary confirmation hearings for judicial appointments to the Supreme Court.

- WMI income was down as other priorities, principally arranging a number of international judicial visits, had prevented the Events Co-ordinator from devoting as much time to marketing and following-up sales leads as normal.
- The Board noted the statistics for physical visits to the Court as well as digital engagement (websites, YouTube, Twitter).

## 9. Human Resources

9.1 The Board noted the contents of paper MB16/31, and in particular the following points –

- Seven new Judicial Assistants had all accepted offers and signed contracts to start on 12 September 2016.
- Permanent appointments to the Assistant Librarian and Finance Manager posts had been made and interviews for the new Contract Manager position had taken place.
- One member of the Judicial Support Unit would be transferring to another Government Department in late August. A review of working arrangements in the Judicial Support team was being carried out by PB. Action on how best to replace the departing member of staff would depend on the outcome of this review.
- The Court was in the process of applying for accreditation for the Healthy Workplace Charter via Westminster City Council. An accreditation day in September would determine the success of the application.

**Action point: CM to send further information regarding the Healthy Workplace Charter to SB.**

## 10. Parliamentary Questions and Freedom of Information

10.1 The Board noted that 6 FOI requests had been received in May and 7 in June – this was up on previous months and also on the same time last year.

10.2 One request had asked for information on expenses for Justices sitting on the Supplementary Panel.

10.3 No PQs had been received.

## **11. Case update**

11.1 Constitutions for the Michaelmas Term 2016 had been distributed to Justices in the final week of the Trinity Term.

11.2 The 'Brexit' case about the triggering of Article 50 of the EU Treaty was expected to have a hearing date before Christmas.

## **12. Accommodation report**

12.1 The Board noted the contents of paper MB16/32 and a supplementary budget paper presented by OO.

12.2 SB recommended that a paper be presented at a future meeting to explain how quotes for building works were obtained and assessed. This paper should also include an explanation of the way the building contract operated.

**Action point: PB to prepare a paper regarding the building contract and the use of quotations with the new Contracts Manager once appointed.**

## **13. Equality and Diversity Report**

13.1 The Board noted the contents of paper MB16/33.

## **14. Report from the Strategic Advisory Board Meeting on 20 June 2016**

14.1 KL reported that the Board's second meeting had taken place. The topics discussed were the strategic direction for all people working in the Court as well as horizon scanning of issues likely to affect the Court's business and administration. KL commented that the Justices on the Board were in favour of considering such issues at an early stage.

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