

**The Supreme Court of the United Kingdom  
Management Board  
Minutes of the meeting held on 27 April 2010**

Attending: Jenny Rowe (Chair)

William Arnold  
Sian Lewis  
Louise di Mambro (items 1-6)  
Olufemi Oguntunde  
Philip Robinson (Non-Executive Director)  
Caroline Smith  
Martin Thompson (items 4-14)  
Alex Jablonowski (Non-Executive Director)

Ann Achow (Secretary)

**1. Apologies for absence**

1.1 There were no apologies.

**2. Approval of the minutes of the MB meeting held on 23 March 2010**

2.1 The minutes were approved.

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

3.1. JR reported that, with regards to the Civil Service Code and the Constitutional Reform and Governance Bill, there had been a Ministerial Statement on the floor of the House which confirmed that staff at the Supreme Court did not report to the Government of the day.

3.2. Clarification was being sought from John Pennells of the Middlesex Art Collection Trust regarding the Trust's insurance policy which did not note the Court's interest in the collection.

3.3 The desk top test of the Business Continuity Plan had taken place on 23 April. The Plan had stood up well to the thorough and realistic scenario. A written report was expected from the contractor.

3.4 The flag flying policy had been put on the website.

3.5 JR had attended a meeting with MoJ officials about Baroness Neuberger's report on diversity in the judiciary. She had also written to the Baroness to ask for a meeting. The Lord Chancellor had informed the President that he intended to undertake a review of the process for making judicial appointments in England and Wales. JR was undertaking a separate review of the appointments process for the Supreme Court. The conclusions from that would be fed into the England and Wales review as appropriate.

3.6 CS thanked MB members for their comments on the Equality and Diversity Strategy and reminded members that equality and diversity was now a quarterly MB agenda item.

#### 4. Scorecard report

4.1 The Board considered paper MB 10/22 which contained scorecard figures up to and including March 2010. In addition they discussed the format and content of the scorecard after the first six months of the Court's operation. The following changes to targets were agreed:

- there should be only one target for the prompt payment of invoices and this should be for the % of invoices paid within 10 working days;
- the 10 working days prompt payment target should rise to 90% for 2010/11 from 75% for 2009/10;
- the target for actual/budget performance would be altered to <5% for the first 3 quarters of the financial year, changing to <2% in the final quarter; and
- no diversity target would be included, although diversity actions would be taken forward and would be discussed as a quarterly MB agenda item.

4.2 Other issues discussed included the speed with which the monthly finance report could be delivered to the MB, the quality of the IT service, capturing customer satisfaction and the need for more detail on visitor numbers including the impact that peaks of visitors had on other front desk services. Other topics considered were how best to measure and record customer satisfaction, training outcomes, the categorisation and targeting of health and safety incidents and security and building defects. LdiM and PR would meet to discuss case statistics for the scorecard.

#### **Actions:**

- (1) SL, MT, CS and LdiM to consider and report back at the next meeting.**
- (2) JR to consider whether a brain storming session would be useful.**

#### 5. Information Security Policy

5.1 AA presented paper MB10/23 which contained the draft Information Security Policy. The Board were content with the draft and agreed to send any comments to AA. PR suggested that the draft policy should be put to another government department's SIRO for comment. He would give AA the name of a contact in the Government Office for London. It was agreed that line managers and Information Asset Owners would have an information assurance objective in their Annual Staff Performance records for 2010/11 and beyond.

#### **Action:**

- (1) Members to send any comments on the draft to AA.**
- (2) AA to contact another department's SIRO for comments on the draft.**

#### 6. Business plan and budget 2010/11

6.1 JR reported on the latest budget position. Savings in the region of £600,000 had been identified, leaving a further £400,000 to find. A variety of cost saving and income generation measures were being considered. The Justices had discussed the financial position at their April meeting. JR was due to hold a further meeting with MoJ the

following day. It was important that cost savings were identified by the end of May to ensure that there was a plan to manage a balanced budget to year end.

6.2 Work was continuing on the draft 2010/2011 Business Plan with a view to it being circulated to staff by the middle of the following week. It needed to be finalised by the end of May at the latest.

## **7. Finance and fees**

7.1 OO presented paper MB 10/24 which contained a full financial information pack.

7.2 The key points for the Board to note on the accounts were as follows:

- The forecast 2009/10 gross outturn was £6.7m with an under-spend against budget of £140k, comprising £70k in additional income and a resource under-spend of £70k.
- The estimated reduction in the value of the building was £265k. It was expected that this figure would be confirmed by the end of the week.
- The budget for 2010/11 was £12.85m with an additional £100k for capital items. Budgets would continue to be held and managed centrally without delegations.

7.3. OO invited members to consider any items which they would like to be added to the accounts or presented in a different way. SL requested that the costs of the broadcasting contract should be shown separately from IT costs.

7.4 OO reported that the Finance Manual was due to be considered by the Audit Committee at their meeting on 20 May. The intention was to then produce an additional, smaller aide memoire version for ease of reference.

7.5 NAO was due to attend for three weeks to audit the end of year accounts. It was intended that the accounts would be presented by the end of June in readiness for publication in the Annual Report.

## **8. Human resources**

8.1 CS presented paper MB10/25 which contained the gifts and hospitality register for 2009/10. It was agreed that where possible an estimate of the value of gifts received or given should be included on the register.

**Action: CS to obtain cost estimates whenever possible.**

## **9. Press and communications**

9.1 SL's communications update (paper MB 10/26) highlighted case coverage and commentary in the media.

9.2 The number of individual and group visitors to the court had risen sharply in March with the daily average of individual visitors rising to 200. There were 77 group visits with a large rise to 45 (from 19 in February) in organised school and student groups. The first in depth half day school event had taken place for sixth formers from East London. This

had consisted of talks from members of staff and one Justice as well as an exercise focusing on the constitutional aspects of the Court.

9.3 The number of separate visits to the website had risen to 23,381, an increase of over 5,000 from the February figure. Many of these visitors were from a wide range of overseas locations.

## **10. Parliamentary Questions monthly report**

10.1 There had been no new PQs received since the last meeting. The flow of FOI enquiries was steady. All had been answered within the 20 day deadline.

## **11. Case statistics**

11.1 LdiM reported a steady stream of applications.

## **12. Building defects quarterly report**

12.1 MT presented paper MB10/27 which was the second quarterly report on building defects, maintenance and alterations. Key points were:

- the need for MT to have access to the protectively marked documents concerning blast resistance
- a 'stop notice' had been served by the insurers to prevent use of the chandelier winch
- the O& M manuals needed to be corrected
- the draught from the cooling system in the audio visual room was still the subject of discussion. Installation of a shelf to deflect the air was a possible solution.
- the issue concerning the bookcase shelves was being pursued by MoJ who were taking it up with the architect.

### **Action:**

**(1) JR to obtain an update from MoJ about the bookcase shelves.**

**(2) OO to consider whether there was a contingent liability resulting from the upgraded blast measures**

## **13. Risk – formal quarterly review of risk register**

13.1 The Board discussed paper MB10/28 which comprised the current risk register. A number of amendments were agreed:

- the reputational risk arising from possible misunderstanding or criticism of the Justices' decisions would be split into 2 risks to allow for the possibility of the risk weightings being different
- the finance risk arising from poor budget management or unexpected expenditure would be split into 2 risks to allow for the possibility of the risk weightings being different
- the HR risks on lack of employee engagement, difficulties in recruiting staff and poor performance owing to high levels of sick leave would be removed.

## **14. Any other business**

14.1 JR was preparing a note of the 3 political parties' manifestos for the Justices.

14.2 AJ asked what actions would be taken to follow up the January Away-day discussions on the UKSC's longer term strategy. WA suggested that, once the 2010/11 Business Plan was settled, it might be possible to publish a Strategic Plan in July alongside the Annual Report.

The Management Board approved these minutes on 27 May 2010 .