



**The Supreme Court of the United  
Kingdom and the Judicial Committee  
of the Privy Council**

**Administration Business Plan**

**1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021**

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**Foreword by Mark Ormerod, Chief Executive**



As I write this foreword, we are going through an intensely difficult period, dominated by the impact of and reaction to COVID 19. As with every other organisation and individual personally, this is placing an unprecedented strain on our lives and we are having to adapt quickly to a fast-moving situation. But our sense of purpose remains resolute and we have to plan for a future beyond the current circumstances. This Business Plan may need further adaptation as events unfold but as a mark of organisational pride, we have always ensured that we issue it at the start of the financial year and we see no reason not to do so this year as well.

As before, the plan sets out a series of activities to support our strategic plan. Given that a new President took over at the start of this year and a new Chief Executive will take over in the summer, together with the next Spending Round which is planned to begin in the summer, we have decided to roll forward our previous strategic plan by one year and launch a new strategic plan and business plan next spring.

I am particularly pleased that work on the transformation of the way we work, enabling more electronic working via a revised website, has made progress this year and we are in a position to approach the Treasury with a formal business case. Somewhat ironically, the pressure to keep business moving during the Covid19 crisis has pushed us further and faster down this route than we might have thought possible. It has certainly confirmed to us that the changes are both necessary and desirable.

The Management Board will maintain oversight of all the activities detailed in this Plan and the Annual Report and Accounts for 2019-20 will give an account of how well we achieved our ambitions in the past year.

### **Our Role – who we are and what we do**

The Supreme Court of the United Kingdom (UKSC) was established by the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 (CRA) and came into being on 1 October 2009. Its creation enabled the separation of the United Kingdom's highest court from both the executive and the legislature. It was designed both to increase the transparency of the judicial process and to clarify the relationship between the Judiciary, the Executive and Parliament.

The role of the Court and the Justices 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 & 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, Parliament and Assemblies. This jurisdiction transferred to the UKSC on 1 October 2009 from the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (JCPC.)

The JCPC is a separate court from the UKSC but its permanent Judges are the Justices of the Supreme Court. The JCPC is the court of final 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 Republics, to the Judicial Committee.

### **Our aim**

The aim of the administration is to provide an environment which enables the Justices to carry out their duties in an effective, visible and accessible way, and which best develops the rule of law and the administration of justice, both in the UK and in the countries, which use the JCPC.

### **Our Strategic Priorities and Objectives**

To achieve our aim, the administration has in place key strategic priorities and objectives. The priorities and objectives in place for 2016-2020 have been carried over for this single year Spending Review Period and will take us through to 2021.

#### **Our Strategic Priorities:**

- Continuing to secure the Justices' constitutional and financial independence.
- Promoting the importance of the Rule of Law and its role in securing democratic freedom.
- Providing an efficient and effective administration.
- Maintaining effective relationships with all jurisdictions in the UK.
- Maintaining effective international relationships.
- Ensuring the effective delivery of all UKSC corporate responsibilities.
- Promoting the visibility and helping to maintain the reputation of the Supreme Court and the JCPC.

To deliver these priorities, our Key Objectives form the golden thread for staff to fully understand and contribute to the overall aims of the UKSC and JCPC.

**Our Key Objectives:**

- We will create an environment, which effectively maintains the independence of the Justices, in which they can carry out their work protected from external pressures and which empowers them to develop the Rule of Law.
- We will maintain and increase confidence in the administration of justice throughout the UK by promoting transparency in, accessibility to and knowledge of the ways in which justice should be rightly administered. We will thereby promote knowledge of the importance of the Rule of Law, not least as a guarantee of democratic freedom.
- We will run an efficient and effective administration, which enables both the UKSC and the JCPC to secure the effective determination of justice, while demonstrating the best possible value for the resources with which we have been provided. We will operate case management systems which provide appropriate measurable monitoring of the throughput of applications and cases, thereby enabling the most effective support of the Justices in their work.
- We will promote good relations with all the individual jurisdictions, legislatures and governments in the different parts of the UK.
- We will similarly develop appropriate relationships with courts in Europe, throughout the Commonwealth and in other countries, especially those which share a common law heritage.
- We will demonstrate appropriate corporate social responsibility. We will promote diversity amongst our staff, ensuring they are also representative of all the jurisdictions of the UK. We will also both source our supplies and consume our resources in ways which contribute as much as possible to sustainable development and the conservation of natural resources.
- As the statutory custodian of the Court's own records, we will provide the most appropriate environment we can for the organisation, preservation and future inspection of those records.
- As the occupants of the former Middlesex Guildhall, we will promote knowledge of, and interest in, this historic building, the works of art the building houses, especially the Middlesex Art Collection, and more generally the history of the County of Middlesex.

**Our Values**

Our values, supported by our Statement of Expectations (page 16) form the basis of everything we do and for 2020-21 they will continue to be:

- **Impartiality** - We will respect judicial independence and deal with all casework fairly and objectively.
- **Clarity and openness** - We will undertake our work without prejudice in an open and transparent manner.
- **Professionalism** - We will seek to understand other people's pressures and give support to each other.

We will treat our colleagues, court users and visitors with respect, and work professionally and co-operatively with outside organisations.

- **Accountability** - We will be responsible for delivering a high-quality service to Justices, Court users and to the public.
- **Efficiency** - We will use our time, finances and resources effectively and efficiently. We will invite and listen to feedback and continuously look to improve our processes and the services we provide.
- **Accessibility** - We will provide a service that meets the reasonable needs and expectations of users. We will positively promote awareness and understanding of the UKSC and interest in the history of the building and the works of art.
- **Influence** - We will be ambassadors for the Court, and we will maintain good relations, and share our knowledge and experience, with individual jurisdictions and governments in the UK, and with other courts around.

### **Our Plan for 2020-21**

The 2019-20 Business Plan took the UKSC to the end of March 2020 and allowed the Court to embed key systems, processes and approaches. The single year Plan for 2020-21 will enable the UKSC to continue to deliver those key services, which include supporting the justices, undertaking casework, meeting all the required corporate responsibilities, such as security and safety management and delivering our education and outreach programmes.

This single year will also enable the administration to consider and develop the priorities for the next stage in our journey and plan effectively for the next, more extensive comprehensive spending round due in 2020. We will develop an approach which supports the delivery of the priorities of Lord Reed, the President of the Supreme Court as outlined at the Constitution Committee on 4 March 2020 (<https://parliamentlive.tv/Event/Index/e0bdb9ad-cd56-441c-b5e3-2f979225ea51>). Additionally, throughout the year we will develop a strategy which will improve the experience of those using the court by embracing more digital ways of working and embedding the skills, capability and culture required to secure continuous improvement in all we do.

The following section of this Plan sets out what we will undertake to deliver these objectives in 2020-21. However, it is important to highlight that this is against the backdrop of the emerging situation with COVID 19, so whilst every effort will be made to deliver these activities, some may be impacted.

Strategic Priority:

- Continuing to secure the Justices’ constitutional and financial independence

We will do this by:

Key Objective 1: We will create an environment, which effectively maintains the independence of the Justices, in which they can carry out their work protected from external pressures and which empowers them to develop the Rule of Law.

<b>Business Area</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Due</b>
Building Services & IT	Maintain the building and IT systems to a level which provides the justices with an appropriate working environment.	Ongoing
CEO	Take responsibility for administrative matters the (mis)handling of which might compromise judicial independence – finance, security, contracting, staff management etc.	Ongoing
Communications	Support the justices in delivering key messages through the strategic use of media opportunities and strategic engagement with parliamentarians.	Q1-4
Finance	Establish devolved budgets throughout the operational parts of the court to ensure the best use of the SR19 settlement.	Q1 and ongoing
Finance	Develop the UKSC’s bid for the Spending Review 2020 and ensure the bid is accurate and safeguards the financial independence of the justices, including options on the review of fees.	Q2
HR	Promote the annual opportunity for lawyers to work as a Judicial Assistant and influence the reputation of the Court across the UK and secure outstanding appointments	Q2 for 2020 and Q4 for 2021
Library & Records	Refine and enhance access to speeches, lectures, and other non-commercially published materials, that relate to the rule of law, particularly those with an international element.	Q1 and ongoing

Strategic Priority:

- Promoting the importance of the Rule of Law and its role in securing democratic freedom
- Promoting the visibility and helping to maintain the reputation of the Supreme Court and JCPC

We will achieve this by:

Key Objective 2: We will maintain and increase confidence in the administration of justice throughout the UK by promoting transparency in, accessibility to and knowledge of the ways in which justice should be rightly administered. We will thereby promote knowledge of the importance of the Rule of Law, not least as a guarantee of democratic freedom.

<b>Business Area</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Due</b>
Building Services & IT	Continuously improve our live streaming capability with a focus on enhancing sound quality and accessibility to support access to justice.	Q1 – Q3
Communications	Implement the first phase of our visitor access strategy to enhance access to the court building for those with access needs.	Q1 – Q4
Communications	Develop and test new forms of access and engagement for schools, universities and other educational establishments, with an emphasis on reaching hard-to-reach or disadvantaged groups.	Q1 and Q2
Communications	Continuously improve our visitor experience and the seek to broaden and diversify our visiting audiences whilst enhancing the experience for our priority target audiences (young people, families, local communities).	Q1 -Q4
Communications	Implement the findings of the social media review to incrementally enhance social media services.	Q1 - Q2
Library & Records	Introduce enhanced methods of publicising relevant academic comment from overseas jurisdictions.	Q3



Strategic Priority:

- Providing an efficient and effective administration

We will achieve this by:

Key Objective 3: We will run an efficient and effective administration, which enables both the UKSC and the JCPC to secure the effective determination of justice, while demonstrating the best possible value for the resources with which we have been provided. We will operate case management systems which provide appropriate measurable monitoring of the throughput of applications and cases, thereby enabling the most effective support of the Justices in their work.

Business Area	Activity	Due
Building Services & IT	Maximise commercial benefits through a combination of increased engagement with suppliers, effective governance and ensuring value for money is secured in all contracts, including the review of the security services contract.	Q1-3
Cross Cutting	Define the vision, design and plan for the UKSC's Transformation Project which , creating a sustainable delivery strategy which supports business case development for consideration by HM Treasury.	Q1 – Q2
Cross Cutting	Define the cultural change required to deliver the transformation and establish a clear and engaging route to secure that change.	Q1 – Q4
Cross Cutting	Identify and plan for the migration of legacy systems, develop temporary solutions to meet the short-term business needs and map out scalable digital services to support access to the Court.	Q1- Q4
Cross Cutting with Registry leading	Implement user focused ways of operating through smarter processes and continuous improvement.	Q1 – Q4
Cross cutting with HR leading	Identify and invest in the new skills needed to lead, support and adapt to change, e.g. emotional intelligence, agile project management and Lean methodology basics.	Q1 – Q4
Cross Cutting with IT leading	Continue to develop the IT infrastructure so as to become an exemplar to others of the most effective and efficient use of IT to support the administration of the court	Q1 – Q4
Cross Cutting with Finance leading	Effective governance to be in place through compliant 2019-20 Annual Report and Accounts, maintaining the overall “moderate” Audit assessment while continuing to improve.	Q1 and ongoing
Finance	Achieve robust financial management through meeting FReM and UK accounting standards ensuring a non-qualified opinion	Ongoing

Strategic Priority:

- Maintaining effective relationships with all jurisdictions in the UK; and
- Maintaining effective international relationships

We will achieve this by:

Key Objective 4: We will promote good relations with all the individual jurisdictions, legislatures and governments in the different parts of the UK.

Key Objective 5: We will similarly develop appropriate relationships with courts in Europe, throughout the Commonwealth and in other countries, especially those which share a common law heritage..

<b>Business Area</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Due</b>
CEO	Support the justices to deliver successful bi-lateral meetings with overseas jurisdictions.	Ongoing
CEO	Support the justices to enhance the Court’s relationship with the jurisdictions in the UK and with courts at all levels.	Ongoing
Communications, IT, Registry	Promote the work of the UKSC by delivering a successful sitting of the Court outside of London, engaging the public, media and local bodies.	Q1- Q2
Communications, IT, Registry	Promote the work of the JCPC by delivering a successful sitting of the Court overseas (Guernsey), engaging the public, media and local bodies.	Q2 – Q3
Communications	Support the justices in the delivery of their international engagement strategy through the promotion of events and speeches in foreign and domestic media.	Q1- Q4

Strategic Priority:

- Ensuring the effective delivery of all UKSC corporate responsibilities

We will achieve this by:

Key Objective 6: We will demonstrate appropriate corporate social responsibility. We will promote diversity amongst our staff, ensuring they are also representative of all the jurisdictions of the UK. We will also both source our supplies and consume our resources in ways which contribute as much as possible to sustainable development and the conservation of natural resources.

Key Objective 7: As the statutory custodian of the Court’s own records, we will provide the most appropriate environment we can for the organisation, preservation and future inspection of those records.

Key Objective 8: As the occupants of the former Middlesex Guildhall, we will promote knowledge of, and interest in, this historic building, the works of art the building houses, especially the Middlesex Art Collection, and more generally the history of the County of Middlesex.

Business Area	Activity	Due
Building Services & IT	Secure accreditation at Cyber Essentials Plus level.	Q3
Building Services & IT	Implement the first year of the UKSC’s sustainability agenda	Q1 – Q4
Building Services, IT & HR	Refine and amalgamate all flexible and smarter working policies in arrangements to meet, as far as reasonably practicable, the government’s Smarter Working approach.	Q1
CEO supported by all staff	Improve the level of staff engagement and scores in the 2020 People Survey. All staff to support these improvements through active participation in at least one of the groups identified to address areas of concern arising from the previous year’s survey. These groups are reviewing making recommendation on: management capabilities; leadership; pay, benefits and feeling valued and learning and development.	Q1 – Q4
Communications	Conduct an audit of all artwork displayed throughout the UKSC building, review texts and captions for all artworks, and promote through an ‘artwork trail’ for the public.	Q2 -Q4
HR	Review and refresh the UKSC’s approach to health and wellbeing,	Q3-Q4

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	learning lessons from the implementation of the 2020 Wellbeing Calendar and seeking sources of best practice from other sectors	
HR	Review and refresh the UKSC's Diversity and Inclusion Policy through staff engagement, reviewing best practice and ensure that upon completion staff awareness is increased	Q1 – Q2
Library & Records	Implement a transfer schedule to enable UKSC to continue to transfer paper case files to The National Archives	Ongoing
Library & Records	Continue to send surplus and superseded material for reuse by literacy-related charitable organizations.	Q1

**Our Resources and Measures.**

**Financial Aims for 2020-21**

In 2020-21 we will seek to stay within the agreed budget for the UKSC and JCPC.

The Finance team will continue to support the Chief Executive and the administration to enable effective corporate decision making, to assist in the shaping of the Court’s future direction. We will also ensure that its finance & procurement systems and processes meet the needs of the Court, the Justices and the Court’s staff, as well as those of all Court users and visitors.

This will be achieved by

- Having in place effective plans for the Spending Review 19 Settlement
- Ensure processes are in place to make timely and accurate financial payments
- Produce an unqualified set of 2019-20 Accounts and ensure they are laid before Parliament before the 2020 Parliamentary summer Recess in accordance with the National Audit timetable and guidance.
- Operating within the agreed budget control limits and ensuring value for money, propriety and regularity are demonstrated in all financial decisions.

Budget

The UKSC and the JCPC budget settlement for 2020-21 is summarised below:

<i>Main budget categories</i>	<b>£000s</b>
Judicial Pay & Expenses	4,609
Depreciation	1,450
Other Costs	8,675
<b>Total Gross Costs</b>	<b>14,734</b>
Contributions from Jurisdictions	6,633
Fees & wider Market Initiatives	1,111*
<b>Net Resource DEL</b>	<b>6,990</b>
<b>Capital DEL</b>	<b>500</b>

\*Forecast and subject to in year change

### **Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

Section 51 of the CRA places a duty on the Chief Executive of the UKSC to ‘ensure that the Court’s resources are used to provide an efficient and effective system to support the Court in carrying on its business.’ The UKSC Rules also provide statutory time limits for certain steps and processes. The UKSC Executive team is therefore committed to seeing that the administration of casework and other non-judicial activities is carried out as efficiently and effectively as possible, whilst fully respecting and upholding the independence of the judiciary. Its overarching aim is to ensure that the UKSC will continue to be publicly recognised as unequivocally independent of political influence and interference; and that it will remain visibly separate from both the executive and the legislature and be publicly acknowledged to be such.

The key performance indicators, which will be monitored by the Management Board, to ensure that the aims set out in the previous paragraph continue to be achieved. These include:

#### Casework

- The Court’s target is to enable all Permission to Appeal (PTA) decisions to be made by the Justices within 12 sitting weeks of the provision of all the documentation necessary to enable the PTA application to be determined.
- All hearing dates will be offered within 4 sitting weeks of the grant of permission for UKSC cases and within 8 sitting weeks of the grant of permission for JCPC cases.
- The Court’s target is that all appeals should be listed for hearing within 9 months of the grant of permission, unless, because the Court lists to the parties’ convenience, it is the parties that request a later date.
- All provisional costs assessments will be carried out within six weeks of the filing of all the necessary paperwork.

#### Finance

- The Court will ensure that at least 90% of all payments are made within 10 working days of the receipt of invoices.
- The Court will manage its business within the agreed total budgetary limits for the financial year set by HM Treasury through the main estimate and supplementary estimate if appropriate.

#### Human Resources

- We will achieve at least a 70% overall engagement score measured by the annual staff survey.
- We will ensure our sick absence levels remain below the Civil Service average of 7.2 days per year.

#### Data Protection & Freedom of Information Requests

- Freedom of Information (FOI) and Data Protection (DP) requests will be dealt with in accordance with the timings set out in the relevant legislation.

**Statement of Expectations**

Everyone	Managers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to communicate with others respectfully and professionally at all times</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to identify and discuss any training and development needs for team members</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to attend quarterly All Staff Meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to address any poor performance or concerns quickly and in a supportive manner.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to have realistic expectations of others when there are problems and to keep issues in perspective</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>positively to support a culture of team work across sections</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to respond to messages from others promptly and acknowledge requests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to recognise excellent performance and use the R&amp;R Scheme appropriately and consistently</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to take responsibility for our own health and safety and security, and to raise any concerns in an appropriate manner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to take a greater corporate responsibility to support the organisation and understand the balance between a duty of care for individuals and proportionate costs/value for money in all we do</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to support each other and recognise that we all have different pressures and priorities by trying to increase our understanding of different roles and responsibilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to take responsibility to read through and understand HR policies and the requirements of management positions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to escalate any issues or problems in a professional manner with a view to seeking positive improvements</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to hold regular 1:1 meetings with team members (at least one per quarter, ideally one per month or more frequently)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to have completed end of year performance meetings and returned/submitted performance forms by 30 April each year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to update the Performance Management System on a regular basis and provide feedback throughout the year</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to agree appraisal objectives with managers by 30 April each year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to hold regular monthly team meetings (or more frequently if required)</li> </ul>
Everyone	Managers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to telephone your line manager by 9.30am if unable to attend work because of illness explaining the reasons why you will not be in work and when you hope to return.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>to keep team members up to date on developments across the organisation</li> </ul>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• always to add an out of office message if away from the office for more than half a day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to ensure a keeping in touch arrangement is agreed with any team members on sick leave and that a Return to Work Meeting is completed (and documented) on the first day of returning to work and update the HR System accordingly.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to have any overtime pre-approved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• before approving any overtime to have considered if this is absolutely necessary, and; considered any alternatives to paid overtime such as time off in lieu. If justifiable and agreed, a full audit trail and reason for the overtime must be recorded.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to request in advance: annual leave, flexi working, working from home, etc., by using the UKSC HR System</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to use the Outlook Calendar as directed by your line manager</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to remember we are a small organisation and there is a need for everyone to be flexible when required</li> </ul>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• not to post or publish anything relating to the work of the Supreme Court on any social media sites without prior permission and to be aware of the court's social media policy and link to conduct</li> </ul>	