

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

## **Minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2011**

Attending: Jenny Rowe (Chair)

William Arnold  
Sian Lewis  
Larin Esan  
Martin Thompson  
Chris Maile  
Philip Robinson (Non-Executive Director)  
Alex Jablonowski (Non-Executive Director)

Paul Brigland (Secretary)

### **1. Apologies for absence**

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Louise di Mambro (LDiM) and Olufemi Oguntunde (OO).

### **2. Approval of minutes of the Management Board Meeting of 29 September 2011**

2.1 The minutes were approved.

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

3.1 JR reported that she had spoken to the relevant official in MoJ who hoped to be able to write by the end of October about funding – this was subject to clearance by MoJ Finance.

3.2 JR reported that discussions had taken place between OO and the NAO and a revised timetable for publication of the financial accounts and annual report for 2011/12 had been agreed. JR expressed concern that it was still a tight timetable. PR asked to see a copy of the timetable.

3.3 PR reported that he had spoken to OO about arrangements to cover his post while he was on detached duty. As planned, LE was providing cover. PR requested that any finance queries over the next 3 months be escalated quickly to WA or JR in view of the timetable for publishing the annual report and accounts for 2011/12

3.4 SL reported that she had discussed with the Communications Team the proposed survey into the demographics of UKSC visitors, suggested at the last Management Board meeting. The Communications Team, while recognising the usefulness of the information, agreed that experience had shown that getting visitors to complete surveys was not always successful. The summer survey had

WA reminded the board that consideration had been given to conducting the summer survey on a bi-annual basis. Any survey next summer would be potentially skewed in light of the Olympics. CM said that he would consider some non-resource intensive alternatives for next year survey.

- 3.5 PB confirmed that a replacement date had been found for the March 2012 Management Board meeting. It was now scheduled for 27 March 2012.

**Action point:** CM to consider alternative arrangements for gathering visitor diversity data

#### **4. Scorecard report**

- 4.1 LE reported that the Financial Performance figures on last month's scorecard were inaccurate. These had now been adjusted following a test of the new financial reporting system and accurate figures had been produced. LE circulated the amended figures. The percentage of bills paid within 10 days was now shown as 100%, with the average time being processed in 3.1 days. PR asked if it was causing any undue effort to meet the UKSC target of 3.5 day, and reminded the board that the target for central government was 10 day. LE said the 3.5 day target was not currently generating any extra effort and was being met comfortably.
- 4.2 JR reported that case figures were what we expected them to be. A batch of new PTAs had been sent to the Justices and decisions were expected shortly. Two cases had settled early and as a consequence the court had been less busy than anticipated.
- 4.3 CM reported that the sickness figure had risen and that this was a result of two members of staff having long term injuries. However, this figure had still been within target and was expected to come down.

#### **5. Risk Paper**

- 5.1 The board considered paper MB11/44. JR said she had made no changes to the items risk register, for which she was responsible, as the board was due to look at this in depth on 4 November 2011.
- 5.2 MT reported that he had lowered the score on risk 2 as a result of discussions at the September Management Board meeting.
- 5.3 JR reported that there would be no change to risk 4 until she had heard from the MoJ
- 5.4 PB reported that the new JAs had all completed their on-line IA training. All other staff were due to do the annual IA refresher training in March 2012. AJ warned that the NSG would close on 31 March 2012, so the training would have to be completed by then.

- 5.5 No change to risk 6 at present.
- 5.6 No change to risk 7. MT reported that he had provided a report to the Audit Committee on the recent BCP exercise and would be having a de-briefing meeting with Needhams.
- 5.7 PB reported that there was no significant change to risk 8. Two new IT account managers had been appointed by MoJ and he had had an initial meeting with them. There was an ongoing review of UKSC ICT provision by independent consultants. Their initial report was expected by end of October.
- 5.8 PR emphasised that an indepth look at the risk register was needed and welcomed the workshop on 4<sup>th</sup> March, with each area of UKSC feeding in views, JR confirmed she would be preparing a context paper to be circulated in advance to board members.

## **6. Finance and fees**

- 6.1 LE presented paper MB11/45. He reported that expenditure remained stable and within expected limits.
- 6.2 LE reported that we had been required to surrender £49k to HMT, due to extra receipts from the last financial year.
- 6.3 WA reported that MT had identified some potential projects from the following year that could be brought forward if funds allowed, thus relieving pressure on next years reduced budgets. There was also the possibility of bringing forward preparations for the 2012 summer exhibition. In addition there was the purchase of extra archiving space for digital records (estimated at £38k).
- 6.4 JR said that the recruitment exercise to find a replacement for Lord Phillips would now take place next year, and there would be costs associated with this.
- 6.5 JR also said that the current review of UKSC ICT provision could result in additional expenditure, and asked that potential options be considered.
- 6.6 PR reminded board members that vfm was an important consideration and any spending plans should take this into consideration.

**Action point:** All managers to identify any worthwhile projects that could be brought forward and submit a list within the next two weeks.

## **7. Press and communications update**

- 7.1 SL presented her report MB 11/46. She reported that the number of visitors to the website and the level of press coverage in September had been high considering that it was vacation time.
- 7.2 Visitor numbers had been what was expected for September. There had also been two open days and the UKSC had taken part in the Open House London

campaign, with pre-booked tours on offer. SL mentioned that this had led to a consideration of weekend tours. This would allow for people who work during the week to visit at weekends, but would be labour intensive. Further advice would be provided.

7.3 SL reported that the use of cameras in courtrooms was being considered by HM Courts and Tribunals Service, and that UKSC was seen as an exemplar in this area and was being cited as an example of good practice.

7.4 SL reported that the Guardian was running articles, and putting some filmed interviews on its website, to mark the second anniversary of the Court. This included interviews with five of the Justices and a tour of the building with the Chief Executive. The issue of the reduction in the Legal Aid budget had been raised in some of the interviews and some of the responses might be included in a feature on Legal Aid that the Guardian plan to run. JR and SL confirmed that the MoJ had been alerted. SL reported that overall the feature was expected to be positive.

## **8. Parliamentary Questions and FOI**

8.1 PB reported that there had been no PQ's received in September. The number of FOI requests had also dropped, with only one new request being received in September. This related to the appointment of retiring Justices to the supplementary panel.

## **9. Case update**

9.1 JR reported that, in LdM's absence there was little to add to what had already been said.

9.2 WA mentioned the Atomic Veterans case. JR reported that other judgments of particular note that were coming up included Gaines-Cooper

## **10. Human resources**

10.1 CM gave an oral update. He reported that work had been done in-house on implementing the RNIB recommendations. However, further changes to the website were needed and these were being done by Logica. On 31<sup>st</sup> August RNIB had run a one day Visual Awareness training course for staff, to help them support visually impaired visitors. Staff had reported they found the course useful.

10.2 AJ said that RNIB seemed to have invested a lot of time and effort in the UKSC, but as result we are now seen as an exemplar. WA suggested that this should be mentioned in the next Annual Report.

10.3 CM reported that the UKSC continued to be compliant with relevant legislation regarding diversity and that the annual staff survey was underway.

- 10.4 CM reported that a new PA for Lady Hale had been appointed. Discussion were taking place with the RCJ on the possibility of linking into their next judges clerks recruitment campaign in 2012 as a way of identifying a pool of potential PA's.
- 10.5 CM said that individual staff training plans would be drawn up following the staff survey.

## **11. Building defects**

- 11.1 MT presented his paper MC11/47, which was in two parts. The first part highlighted ongoing defects that have to be worked around. WA said that the report highlighted that some problems may not be evident in the short term and would only be come apparent after a number of years, for example the slate roof tiles.
- 11.2 MT said that the second part of the report looked at expenditure and highlighted some potential energy saving initiatives. Whilst we were currently covered by the MoJ Facilities Management contracts, MoJ are considering moving all facilities management to MITIE. WA said that th UKSC may wish to have our own facilities management contract. This would involve a tendering exercise and we would need advice from TSol.

## **12. Health and safety**

- 12.1 MT presented paper MB 11/48. The report mentioned that there had been three accidents over the last quarter.
- 12.2 CM reported that a new staff training matrix was being drawn up which would cover health and saftey training for all staff.

## **13. Any Other Business**

- 13.1 JR reported that the image of HM The Queen in the bronze bas-relief in the reception area was the image that was being used on the £5 coin being minted to mark the Diamond Jubilee in 2012.
- 13.2 JR said that both Lord Phillips and Lord Judge appeared before the Constitution Committee on 19 October and this had resulted in some coverage. Lady Hale was due to appear befor the Committee on 2 November
- 13.3 JR said that Lord Phillips and Lord Hope had had an introductory meeting with Sir Leigh Lewis, who was the Chair of the Government's Commission on a UK Bill of Rights. The Commission was considering the UK position in relation to the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Court of Human Rights.
- 13.4 PR reported that the Audit Committee had met and had received a report on the implementation of the new UKSC Finance system. The Committee also considered the internal audit exercise and possible action on the 17 recommendations that had come out of this. The Committee had considered the National Audit Office guidelines for Audit Committee and were satisfied that the

13.5 The board noted the date of the next meeting was 28 November 2012.

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

UKSC  
October 2011