

Judicial Appointments Board for Scotland
Meeting: Monday 19 November 2018, Thistle House, Edinburgh

MINUTES

Present

Mrs Nicola Gordon, Chairing Member
Mrs Alison Mitchell
Mrs Deirdre Fulton
Mrs Neelam Bakshi
Professor Stephen Tierney
Mrs Liz Burnley, CBE

Mr Alistair Morris
Sheriff Principal Derek Pyle
Mr James McNeill, QC
The Honourable Lady Wise
The Honourable Lord Minginish, QC
Sheriff Michael O'Grady, QC

In Attendance

Mrs Erica Clarkson, Chief Executive (until 20 November 2018)
Mr John Craig, Chief Executive (as of 21 November 2018)
Miss Ashleigh Meikle, Board Secretary and Court Appointments Manager
Miss Katy Mitchell, Appointments Administrator

1. Board Pre-Meet

1.1 Board Members held a Board-Only 15 minute pre-meet. Notes of the discussion were taken by the Chairing Member.

2. Welcome and Apologies

2.1 The Chairing Member welcomed attendees to the meeting and confirmed that no apologies were received. A special welcome was given to Mr John Craig, who joins the Board as the newly appointed Chief Executive of the Judicial Appointments Board for Scotland.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting and Action Tracker Update

3.1 Matters Arising

3.1.1 It was agreed that it should be made more evident in minutes when a Board-Only discussion takes place. This was agreed by the Board.

3.1.2 Subject to amendments, the minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

3.2 Action Tracker Update

3.2.1 The Board agreed that moving forward, the purpose of the action point is to be captured negating the need to look back at previous Board papers.

3.3 The action tracker was approved.

4. Oral Updates

4.1 Chairing Member General Update

4.1.1 The Chairing Member updated the Board on the recent meetings she had attended, as follows:

- Meeting with Humza Yousaf, Cabinet Secretary for Justice and Ash Denham, Minister for Community Safety.
- Meeting with the Lord President and Lord Justice Clerk.
 - The Chairing Member informed the Board that the Lord President is content with running annual parallel competitions for the offices of Sheriff and Summary Sheriff. It was agreed that Judicial Office would deliver differentiated job descriptions by the end of November. Qualities for the roles will be as determined by JABS. The Lord President indicated that in future he will expect a Summary Sheriff to have completed a minimum of three years in office, before applying for the office of Sheriff.
- Scottish Ethnic Minorities Lawyers' Association First Anniversary Celebration
- Law Society Annual Conference

4.1.2 The Chairing Member updated the Board on the progress of the two Legal Board Member vacancies.

4.1.3 Lady Wise updated the Board on the Senator Information Event.

Action Point (1): Chairing Member to discuss timings of the upcoming Senator appointment round with the Lord President.

4.2 Chief Executive General Update

4.2.1 This update was provided by Mrs Clarkson.

4.2.2 The Chief Executive updated the Board on the recent meetings she had attended, as follows:

- Meeting with Angela Graham QC, Vice Dean of the Faculty of Advocates and Sheriff Janys Scott QC, Vice President of the Part-Time Sheriff's Association.
- Meeting with Neil Rennick, Director for Justice, Scottish Government to discuss 2019-20 budget and forecasted overspend for this year 2018-19.

4.2.3 The Chief Executive updated the Board on the progress of the Summary Sheriff recruitment round.

4.2.4 The Chief Executive updated the Board on the BMU's recent meeting with the Parole team. It was confirmed that there would be no immediate need for any recruitment.

4.2.5 The Chief Executive updated the Board on the upcoming round for a Chamber President of the General Regulatory Chamber.

4.2.6 The Chief Executive congratulated Miss Mitchell on completing her SVQ and Miss Craig on successfully gaining promotion. Miss Craig will move to her new role on 10th December 2018.

4.2.7 Miss Meikle updated the Board on the meeting she and Mr Wallace attended with Mrs Irene Henery (Senior Solicitor, Equality and Human Rights Commission Scotland). The Board suggested it could be beneficial to invite Mrs Henery to a future DSG meeting.

Action Point (2): BMU to suggest inviting Mrs Henery to a future DSG meeting.

5. Monthly Financial Update (JABS 2018 40)

5.1 It was agreed that some focus should be put on increasing the efficiency and transparency of the financial update form.

Action Point (3): Chairing Member and Chief Executive (John Craig) to work on increasing the efficiency and transparency of the monthly financial update document.

6. Updated Fees and Travelling Time Policy (JABS 2018 41)

6.1 After discussion, it was agreed by the Board that members would make comments and suggested amendments to the updated policy on Huddle.

Action Point (4): Members to provide comments on the Fees and Travelling Time Policy on Huddle.

7. Tribunal Recruitment – General Regulatory Chamber (JABS 2018 42)

7.1 The Chairing Member updated the Board on the progress of the General Regulatory Chamber President round. Mrs Mitchell has agreed to take the lead and will be joined by Lord Minginish and possibly another lay person. Lady Smith has nominated herself to the panel.

7.2 The Board noted that the job description provided by Lady Smith and the Tribunals Policy Team requires some further attention before the round can progress.

8. Proposal to launch Skills and Qualities (JABS 2018 43)

8.1 The Board agreed to amend the letter and news release for the launch of the updated skills and qualities before it could be released.

8.2 Subject to changes, the proposal to launch Skills and Qualities was approved.

Action Point (5): Lord Minginish to liaise with Lady Wise and Miss Meikle to fine tune the legal skills part of the matrix before launch.

9. Applicant and Stakeholder Research – Key Themes to Publish (JABS 2018 44)

9.1 The Board reviewed the document and agreed a short summary of the findings would be prepared for publication.

Action Point (6): Chairing Member to finalise wording of the Key Themes to Publish.

10. Parallel Competitions (JABS 2018 45)

10.1 The Board discussed the recommendations made by the Quality Assurance Group in relation to the upcoming parallel Sheriff and Summary Sheriff recruitment rounds. The Board accepted the recommendations and agreed to pilot the pre-sift at the beginning of 2019. The Board decided to start communicating about the upcoming changes as soon as possible.

Action Point (7): BMU to draft communication plan and material.

11. Forward Look/AOB

11.1 The Chairing Member closed the meeting by thanking Sheriff Principal Pyle and Mrs Clarkson for their time and input to the work of the Board. Both parties will be leaving the Board imminently to take on new challenges.

Meeting Closed: 11:30