JUDICIAL APPOINTMENTS BOARD FOR SCOTLAND

Minutes of the Board Meeting
Wednesday 11 March 2026 (rearranged from February 2026)
9:15am to 11:45am
Held via Microsoft Teams

Present:
Mr Lindsay Montgomery CBE, Chairing Member (CM)
Mr Jonathan Barne, KC
Mrs Liz Burnley, CBE
Mr Paul Cackette, CBE
Mrs Wilma Canning
President May Dunsmuir
Mr Paul Gray
The Hon. Lady Shona Haldane, KC
Ms Denise Loney
Ms Emma Marriott
Dr Fiona McLean
Mr Peter Murray
The Hon. Lord Robert Weir, KC

Attendees:
Mrs Laura McGeary, Chief Executive (CE)
Mr Billy Love, Head of Operations (HoO)
Mr François Marfaing, Finance Officer (agenda item 8 only)
Mrs Julie Tarbet, Appointments Manager

Apologies:
Sheriff Principal Kate Dowdalls, KC
Sheriff Jane Farquharson, KC
Mr Gareth Morgan, QPM

1. Welcome and Apologies / Declarations of interest

1.1 The CM welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1.2 The CM sought declarations of interest from members, setting out that for agenda item 6 concerned Travel Time, however the CM did not consider discussion of this a conflict for Board members as it was a matter of general policy.

1.3 There were no declarations of interest raised by Board members.

2. Business from previous meeting

2.1 Minutes of the 15 December 2025 meeting

2.1.1 The Board approved the minutes of the previous meeting.

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2.2 Action Tracker

2.2.1 The Chief Executive (CE) provided an update on the reviewed Action Tracker and Dashboard. She confirmed that Actions 2 and 3 from the December Board meeting were complete and advised that updates on Actions 1 and 4 will be brought to the Board at the April meeting.

The Board noted the update.

3. Parole Board for Scotland – Recommendation

3.1 The CM introduced the paper outlining the outcome of the recruitment process for the Chairperson of the Parole Board for Scotland. The Board discussed the paper and approved the recommendation of the selection Panel for the Chairperson of the Parole Board for Scotland.

4. Chairing Member Oral Update

4.1 The Chairing Member (CM) reflected that it had been a busy period for JABS and expressed his gratitude for the commitment and work of the Board and BMU. In addition, he noted that he had found the Strategy Day very helpful and confirmed that a note will shortly be shared with the Board. He then reported on changes to Board membership, progress of the Senior Salary Review Body review of judicial salaries, and his and the CE recent meeting with the Lord President and Riley Power, Executive Director of JO. The CM updated the Board on the work underway to plan panels for forthcoming competitions for the remainder of the year, confirming that it was anticipated this would be confirmed end of March. The CM thanked all Board members for providing their availability to support this planning.
The CM also updated that an update on PfC would be provided at the April Board meeting.

Action point 1: CE to share the note from the Strategy Day with the Board once finalised.

5. Chief Executive Update

5.1 The CE highlighted key developments since December 2025, including progress on the new website and upcoming priorities to finalise the Corporate and Business Plans. In addition, she brought to the Board's attention the feedback received at the JI Induction from recent Judicial appointees about their positive JABS recruitment experience.

The Board noted the update and was content.

5.2 Assurance of Governance

The CE spoke to the paper for Q4 of 2025/2026 (January–March) and outlined the ongoing review with the Scottish Government for the Framework Agreement, progress on the Corporate Plan for 2026–29 and that no complaints or data protection requests had been received. She reported that four FOI requests were responded to within timescales and confirmed that further updates on the risk register and policy review programme will be tabled at the April Board meeting.

The Board discussed their experience of increasing FOI requests elsewhere and agreed the importance of responding to these effectively and timeously.

Action point 2: CE to share the link to the FOI requests with the Board.

The Board noted the update and approved the Assurance of Governance Report.

6. Corporate Policy

6.1 Travel Time for Board Members – Review and Next Steps

6.1.1 The CE presented the paper outlining the current approach to travel time for Board members and the background to recent discussions with the Scottish Government relating to this, as well as the approaches taken by other Scottish public bodies. The CM highlighted considerations of fairness, value for money, and operational needs.

6.1.2 The Board agreed the importance of ensuring that members of the Board where able to fully discharge their function, particularly in relation to competitions, so that those members who live in more remote areas of Scotland were not disadvantaged.

Action point 3: CE to engage with the Scottish Government to obtain agreement in principle on JABS' approach to travel time and thereafter refine the policy.

7. Competition Update and Planning

7.1 The HoO gave a brief overview of the paper and details on current and potential upcoming rounds. The Board noted the paper.

8. Finance

8.1 The HoO spoke to the paper and provided an update on JABS financial position as at the end of February 2026, including expenditure across the financial year, with particular focus on competition delivery, which continues to be closely monitored. He also advised that a new claim form and guidance note were being developed.

The Board noted the update.

9. AOCB

9.1 The date of the next Board meeting is 20 April 2026.