



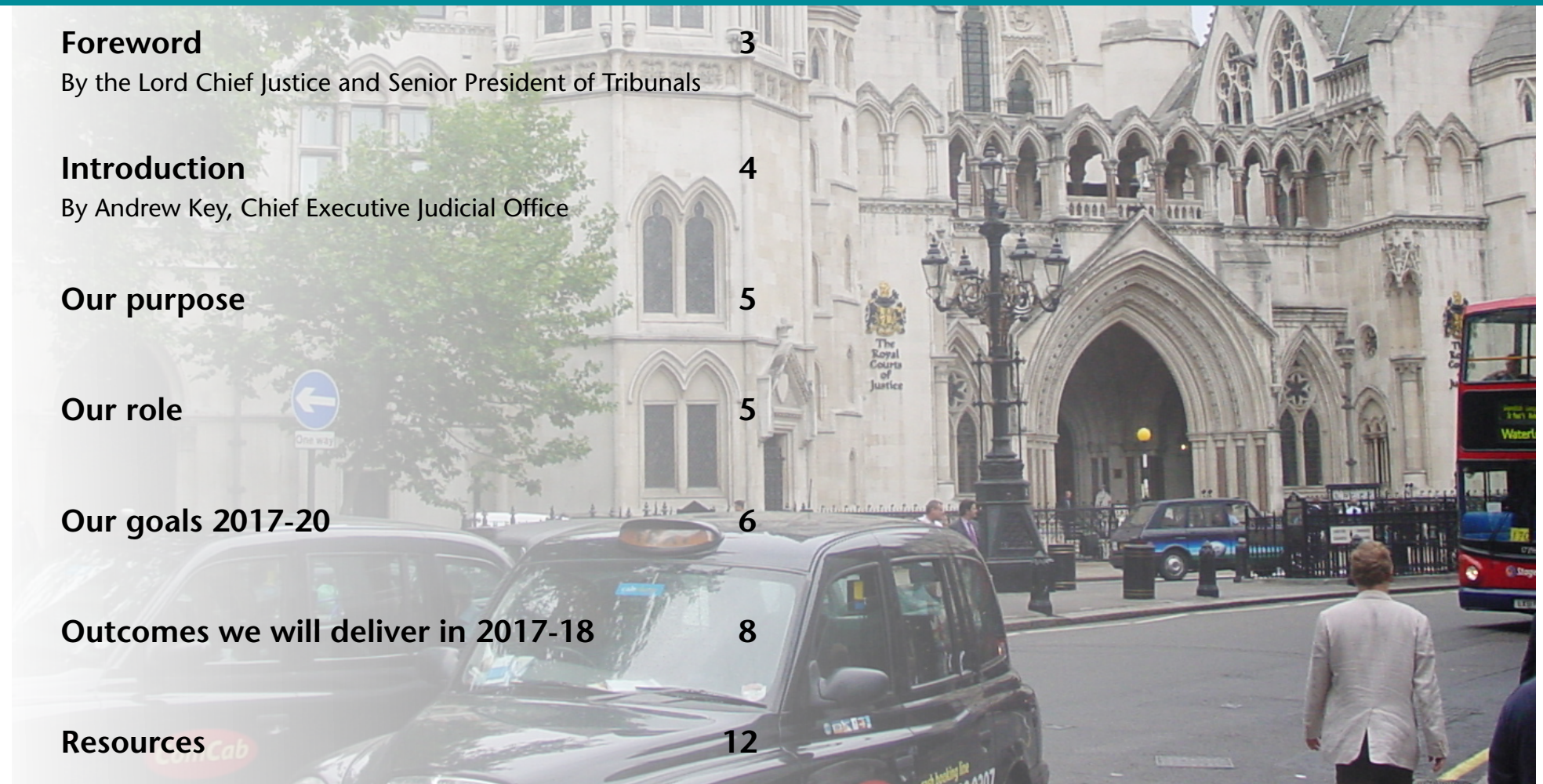
JUDICIAL OFFICE

Judicial Office Business Plan

2017-18



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Foreword

By the Lord Chief Justice and Senior President of Tribunals

This business plan covers a year that will see significant change. In that context, the role of the Judicial Office in supporting and advising the judiciary becomes ever more important.



▲ Sir Ernest Ryder, Senior President of Tribunals and Lord Thomas, Lord Chief Justice

HMCTS reform is well underway, with the detailed business plan approved by HM Treasury. The first, tangible steps of reform are being put in place in both the IT and estates elements of the programme. In the first months of 2017, the Judicial Office ran a series of masterclasses to support the judicial leadership of reform. Over the course of this financial year we will need to ensure continued judicial leadership of the programme and widen and deepen judicial engagement in reform.

We are now in the midst of a series of recruitment exercises that are seeking to appoint an unprecedented number of judges at all levels. We need to support the Judicial Appointments Commission in completing these exercises, and then train and deploy the new judges who are appointed. Looking ahead, we must put the recruitment timetable back on a stable footing, ensure the processes are fit for purpose and provide a genuinely level playing field for all applicants.

To retain our current judges and to attract the brightest and the best lawyers to the judiciary, it will be vital to tackle issues that have adversely affected judicial morale. Pay, pensions and judicial working conditions are the priority. Other important issues affecting judges and magistrates, including estates and IT problems, are being addressed through HMCTS reform. We must also work with the Government to address areas of excessive workload and a lack of administrative support. In addition, both the Government and the public must better understand the enormous contribution judges and magistrates make every day and the difficult work they undertake.

The judiciary has a central role to play in maintaining the pre-eminence of English law internationally and of England and Wales as a centre for international dispute resolution. This is particularly so given the UK's withdrawal from the EU. We will also need to understand the implications for the judiciary, the courts and tribunals, so that justice continues to be administered effectively.

The work of the Judicial Office is hugely important as we take forward this agenda together, modernising the justice system and strengthening the judiciary. At the same time, the delivery of justice must continue and the independence of the judiciary be protected. We express our sincere thanks, on behalf of the wider judiciary, to all Judicial Office staff.

The Rt. Hon. The Lord Thomas of Cwmgiedd, Lord Chief Justice

Sir Ernest Ryder, Senior President of Tribunals

Introduction

By Andrew Key, Chief Executive Judicial Office

The 2016-17 financial year was a very full year for the Judicial Office, with new priorities arising in the course of the year. I am delighted to say that we were able to meet our business plan objectives in full as well as launching work in new areas. I am very grateful to all of our teams for the commitment they have shown over the course of the year to do so.



Highlights from last year included:

- Consistent engagement of the judiciary in developing the HMCTS reform programme
- Support for the Briggs Review of Civil Justice
- Completion of a review of the governance of the judiciary
- Design and implementation of a new series of leadership masterclasses for leadership judges
- Introduction of succession planning in the senior judiciary
- Implementation of the judiciary's Diversity Action Plan, including a support programme for applicants to the High Court
- Increased communication with the public to explain the work of the judiciary, support the reform programme and promote diversity initiatives
- Integration of J LIS into the Judicial Office while continuing to provide high quality legal and information services for the judiciary

The Lord Chief Justice and Senior President of Tribunals describe in their foreword the context for our work over the next year. With this changing context in mind, we have reviewed our purpose, role and priorities to ensure we provide the best possible support for the judiciary, set out in the business plan below. Most of what we do requires close collaboration with partners in the justice system. We hope the clarity provided as a result of this review will also help us to work effectively with them to promote the rule of law and strengthen the administration of justice.

The agenda for the year ahead is an exciting one. As the HMCTS reform programme progresses, so our role in supporting the leadership of the programme by the judiciary and the involvement of all judges and magistrates grows. The reform programme and other changes bring new training needs. Human resources support for the judiciary, from welfare support to talent management, is becoming increasingly vital against the backdrop of workload pressures, low morale and recruitment pressures. International issues have also risen up the list of priorities following the decision to withdraw from the EU. This plan sets out our priorities for these areas as well as the core tasks that continue, including support for judicial communications, provision of legal information services and the handling of complaints.

As we seek to deliver this challenging set of priorities, I am determined to ensure our staff have the clarity, guidance, support, training and tools they need to work at their best. We have set out – and indeed started to implement – an agenda for the development of the Judicial Office for the year ahead that aims to provide that, informed by staff themselves. I am very grateful for their support as we take this forward together.

Our purpose

Strengthening the rule of law and improving the administration of justice by supporting the leadership and governance of the judiciary



Our role

- Facilitating judicial leadership of reform
- Providing legal, policy and handling advice on issues arising from the statutory functions of the senior judiciary
- Supporting judicial governance structures
- Advising on relationships and communication with the Government, Parliament and other UK legal jurisdictions
- Supporting communication with the public including through the media, and internally within the judiciary
- Providing human resources services for the judiciary
- Developing and delivering training
- Investigating disciplinary matters
- Providing legal information and library services
- Promoting the courts and tribunals and supporting the rule of law internationally

Our goals 2017-2020

Over this spending review period we will contribute to the delivery of the following outcomes:

Reform

- Increased awareness of and strong support for reform throughout the judiciary, and strong relationships with court and tribunal staff
- New ways of working in place, led by the judiciary as appropriate and aligned with the HMCTS reform programme
- Optimal use of digital services by the judiciary

Jurisdictional Leadership

- Clear governance structures to support the changes in senior leadership over the coming years, with decisions taken at the right level
- Effective and appropriate oversight of performance across all jurisdictions
- Developments in the administration of justice informed by the judiciary where appropriate



Talent

- The judiciary attracts the best talent from the widest and most diverse pool possible
- The judiciary continues to develop skills and experience, ensuring it has both the expertise and flexibility to meet evolving demand
- Talent within the judiciary is identified and developed, including through deployment of judges, mentoring and appraisal (where available) to maximise potential





Morale

- High quality welfare support is provided to the judiciary where needed
- Pay and benefits support the recruitment, retention and motivation of judges
- Practical support for judges including in their workplace to free them for judicial tasks

External Relationships

- The implications for the judiciary of withdrawing from the EU are understood and taken into account as the executive develops its approach

- Judicial work, independence and the rule of law are reported fairly and accurately, understood and respected by the public
- Government and Parliament understand and respect the constitutional role of the judiciary and take account of the judiciary’s views where this is appropriate
- The reputation of the judiciary and courts and tribunals continues to bring international legal business to the UK

High quality services, delivered digitally wherever possible

- World class training delivered to the judiciary within budget and adapting to changing priorities
- Judges have access to the legal information they need, when and where they need it
- Complaints are handled efficiently and with public credibility, while ensuring judges facing complaints are well supported

A Brilliant Judicial Office

- Working together across teams, with a clear purpose and priorities, combined with excellence in our policy and legal advice, services and administrative support, leading to improved outcomes
- Better and more consistent leadership across the Judicial Office inspires staff to do their best and leads to increased staff engagement

- Staff have the development opportunities needed to give them the capability and confidence to do their jobs well, and to develop their careers
- All staff received improved IT during the course of 2017, making it easier to work flexibly; priority improvements to the physical workplace are implemented
- Continual improvements in our budget forecasting, together with robust contract negotiation and management ensure the delivery of savings
- The Judicial Office is respected by the judiciary and has a reputation among Whitehall partners for being inclusive, supportive of staff development and delivering high quality support to the judiciary, helping attract the best staff to work for us



Outcomes we will deliver in 2017-18

Reform

- Engagement with and support for reform among the judiciary is enhanced through the delivery of training for leadership judges and implementation of a communications and engagement plan
- Governance structures to support judicial leadership of 'judicial ways of working' agenda established and setting direction on key reform issues
- Leadership groups at each level are actively engaged in decision making on reform and judicial office holders are providing input into service design and plans for delivery

Jurisdictional Leadership

- Fixed recoverable costs review completed on time and recommendations welcomed (ends July 2017)
- Stanton Marris governance recommendations implemented
- Successful transition to new leadership judges, including the Lord Chief Justice, whilst maintaining standards during a time of change

- Effective judicial engagement in work to combat the growth in public law cases coming into the courts
- The UK Government and Scottish Government persuaded to develop and implement devolution proposals in a way that takes account of the interests of affected tribunals judicial office holders and service users
- Launch of the Business and Property Courts (July 2017)

Talent

- Judges at all levels have conversations with their leadership judges about capability and aspirations in the course of the year, giving leadership judges a picture of potential across the judiciary



- Judges with potential and ambition to progress will have greater opportunities to gain the experience needed to compete for more senior positions
- Diversity support programmes, outreach including by Diversity and Community Relations Judges, mentoring and work-shadowing delivered regularly throughout the year to help diverse talent through the Judicial Appointments Commission appointments processes, resulting in more diversity at later stages of the recruitment process
- Working in close liaison with the Judicial Appointments Commission, appointments are processed in a timely and efficient manner, and the process is continuously improved
- Sensitive welfare and litigation cases are handled effectively

Morale

- Judges feel appropriately supported and know when and how to access welfare support
- Recruitment and retention issues closely monitored to inform targeted pay and benefits recommendations to the Senior Salaries Review Body (SSRB) and Quinquennial Review
- Plans to address the themes in the Judicial Attitudes Survey are implemented, with surveys showing improved morale and confidence in judicial leadership

- Review of HR support for the magistracy conducted and any agreed actions implemented
- Consideration of support for the Chief Coroner undertaken with recommendations made and any agreed actions implemented

External Relationships

- Development and implementation of a communications strategy for the judiciary
- Expert communications advice to existing and retired judiciary, as well as bodies led by the judiciary, which attracts positive feedback from the media and judges, including the Judicial Executive Board
- Improved digital communications for the judiciary and public, evaluated through increased levels of intranet and website use, numbers of repeat visitors and on-line surveys
- First conference of the International Standing Forum on Commercial Law organised successfully, with positive feedback from lead UK judges and other participants
- High quality services, delivered digitally wherever possible
- The Brexit Law Committee is able to provide a coherent view to the Government on key legal issues arising in the context of the UK's withdrawal from the EU, taking into account the implications for the judiciary

Judicial College

- High quality training programmes, including new induction programmes for flexible deployment, delivered within 1% of expected outturn and with course aims and usefulness being at least 90% fully or substantially achieved, help ensure the judiciary have the skills and knowledge to judge effectively
- Improvements to the Learning Management System, introduction of webinars, and further development of e-learning to the satisfaction of the judiciary help ensure the judiciary are competent in use of modern technology during hearings and training
- Training programmes and materials suitable for international use developed and deployed on a cost neutral basis and aligned with other international priorities



Judicial Library and Information Services

- Judiciary and legal advisers receive timely and current legal information to support them in their day to day work, measured by agreed KPIs
- Commercial strategy developed to underlie the delivery of library services to judges, informed by an up to date assessment of the needs of users
- Ongoing contracts managed in a robust and productive way, maintaining quality of service with demonstrable savings
- Users make increased use of digital resources following the development and enhancement of digital services, underpinned by effective training

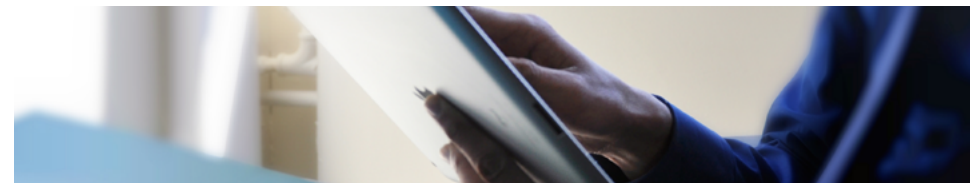
Judicial Conduct Investigations Office

- New end to end JCIO KPIs developed and met consistently throughout the year, leading to improved service
- Increased understanding of the JCIO's role, purpose and processes via a further rollout of the outreach programme in courts and tribunals, particularly to include magistrates' advisory committees, all tribunals, and training for court staff in regional hubs
- Cases managed in a timely, efficient and sensitive way, with judicial office holders receiving appropriate support

and outcomes communicated in a way consistent with a professional, independent complaints process and an independent judiciary

A Brilliant Judicial Office

- A clear purpose and priorities, aligned with resources
- Better and more consistent leadership and management
- All staff have access to learning and development that helps them do their jobs well and develop their careers, and take responsibility for undertaking development activities
- Staff have the IT they need to do the job
- Improvements made to the working environment
- A stronger reputation for the Judicial Office among judges and with key partners; staff confident in explaining the role of the Judicial Office and their team to external contacts
- Brilliant Judicial Office/People Survey action plan implemented with greater staff involvement than in previous years, leading to increased staff engagement in 2017



Resources

Staff headcount 2017-18

FTEs	
Chief Executive	1.0
Judicial College	58
Business Support	8
International	5
Jurisdictional Support	49
Judicial HR	46.6
Judicial Conduct Investigations Office	15
Press & Communications	8
Judicial Library & Publications	15
Total	207.6 ¹

Budget 2016-17

£	
Core Judicial Office baseline Budget	29.36m
Ring Fenced Induction Training	0
Total	29.36m

¹ Two posts are unassigned and will be used to help offset headcount pressures anticipated as a result of meeting new judicial priorities

