



JUDICIAL OFFICE

Judicial Office Business Plan

2019-20



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Foreword

By the Lord Chief Justice and Senior President of Tribunals

We are grateful to the Judicial Office for the support provided last year to the judiciary, enabling us to make good progress in many areas. This year we need to build further on this.



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

Recruitment remains a high priority, with record numbers of judges appointed last year. While responsibility for selection lies with the Judicial Appointments Commission, the Judicial Office plays an important part in planning recruitment, handling appointments following recommendations from the JAC, and then training newly appointed judges through the Judicial College. Even larger numbers of appointments are expected this year as we continue to redress the impact of a period of under-recruitment.

The judiciary is working hard to attract candidates from the widest possible range of backgrounds: drawing on a wider pool of applicants ensures the very best lawyers can be recruited to the judiciary. Our schemes to support diversity will continue to expand this year, and we will work with other members of the Judicial Diversity Forum to implement the newly launched scheme for Pre Application Judicial Education.

We introduced new steps to support judges last year, including through the introduction of career conversations with leadership judges, which have been widely welcomed. Improved welfare support has been provided, together with training in resilience. This year we are introducing improved leadership training. We will also look more comprehensively at how human resources management systems support the judiciary, alongside implementation of the government's expected response to last year's review by the Senior Salaries Review Body.

Over the course of last year we sought views from all members of the judiciary on the courts and tribunals reform programme. The valuable input we received has helped to shape the next steps in the programme. As the programme evolves further, it will remain vital that the judiciary helps to shape the design to ensure it benefits the administration of justice. Continued communication with members of the judiciary will be important both to obtain judicial input and to ensure judges understand and are ready for the changes that are taking place.

Public confidence in the judiciary depends on a good understanding of the role we play in upholding the rule of law. We have made considerable efforts to broaden that understanding, especially through renewed efforts by judges across the country to visit schools. These visits, and invitations to schools to come into courts and tribunals, can also serve to inspire an interest in the justice system among students who might not otherwise have seen it as a possible career.

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The aims set out in this year's business plan represent an ambitious programme of work for already hard-pressed teams. We are extremely grateful for all that Judicial Office staff do to support an independent judiciary, and for their commitment to supporting the rule of law.



The Rt. Hon. The Lord, Burnett of Maldon
Lord Chief Justice



Sir Ernest Ryder,
Senior President of Tribunals



Foreword

By the Chief Executive

Last year was one of significant achievement. We supported an extensive programme of work to seek the views of the judiciary on courts and tribunals reform. This attracted input on behalf of over 10,000 judges, panel members and magistrates, and has helped shape the next steps in the reform programme.

We took steps forward in working digitally, in particular with the implementation of a new digital case management system for the Judicial Conduct Investigations Office. We also made improvements to the Judicial College's online learning management system and to the way we purchase legal information services.

We launched improved welfare support for the judiciary, and supported the development and launch of career conversations. We also developed an enhanced programme of outreach by judges to schools, with a new website providing materials to support schools wanting to build an understanding of the judiciary into lessons.

As well as seeking views from judges, panel members and magistrates on reform, we started new work to develop the training that will be needed to support the judiciary as reform leads to new ways of working. Other new areas of work included the development of training related to the implications for the



courts and tribunals of UK's withdrawal from the EU, as well as contingency planning in the event of withdrawal without a deal.

Much of our work depends on effective dialogue with government and parliament, respecting the constitutional boundaries. Throughout the year we have supported the judiciary in maintaining constructive dialogue on a wide range of issues, including technical discussions on the impact of our withdrawal from the EU on the courts and tribunals.

We will continue to build on this progress over the year to come. We expect it to be a year of implementation in the new areas developed last year, including relating to reform, EU exit and digital training for the judiciary. We will support the senior judiciary in putting in place the strengthened leadership committed to, in appraisal, career discussions and welfare support. And we will do more to help explain the role of the judiciary and the rule of law. We will aim to make even more use of digital technology where this is effective and efficient.

I know that Judicial Office staff are inspired by the opportunity to support the judiciary and contribute to the justice system, and enjoy the collegiate atmosphere that comes with a smaller organisation. We are very fortunate to have such dedicated people, and owe it to them to support their wellbeing. This year we will renew our efforts to ensure we are working together as collaboratively as possible, focusing on delivering the best outcomes, and to build an ever more inclusive and supportive working environment.

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 courts and tribunals 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 judicial 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 judicial office holders
- Practical support for judicial office holders to free them for judicial tasks and action to reduce workload pressures.

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
- A proactive and responsive professional HR function that provides timely support and advice to the senior judiciary
- 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.

The 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 receive 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
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- The image shows the exterior of The Rolls Building, part of the Royal Courts of Justice. A sign on the building reads 'The Rolls Building', 'Royal Courts of Justice', and 'The Business and Property Courts of England & Wales'. In the foreground, there is a black metal gate with two ornate black and red lanterns on either side. The building is a modern, multi-story structure with large windows.
- 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 2019-20

Reform of the Courts and Tribunals

- All parts of the judiciary are informed about, and engaged with, the design and development of the Reform Programme
- Channels used to communicate with the judiciary are continually evaluated, tailored and improved
- Leadership judges further shape ways of working after reform based on the agreed Judicial Ways of Working principles
- Regional Leadership judges are supported to lead change. Judges are informed about, and prepared for, changes implemented in the course of the year.

Jurisdictional Leadership

The Judicial Private Offices will facilitate the collective leadership and governance of the judiciary, particularly through the Judicial Executive Board and the Tribunals Judicial Executive Board, supporting judges as they lead continual improvement in each jurisdiction. This will include:

- Further improvements to the trial process in the Business and Property Courts, enhancing their reputation domestically and overseas;
- Coordinated judicial efforts, in liaison with MoJ and HMCTS, to prepare for and manage the impact of EU Exit on the Courts and Tribunals;



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- Preparation for the CMJA 2020 Conference in Cardiff, through collaboration with the Welsh Government;
- The judiciary's views represented to Parliament, including on the reform programme, through oral evidence to the Constitution Committee and the Justice Select Committee;
- Successful transition to new leadership judges, including the new PQBD and SPJ;
- Increased transparency in civil justice by embedding livestreaming in the Court of Appeal;
- Judicial input informs, where appropriate, the Service Justice Review and the implementation of its recommendations;
- The structure and leadership of the First-tier Tribunal and Employment Tribunals is reviewed and recommendations implemented;
- The judiciary and Judicial Office staff make progress towards full compliance with data protection laws.



Development Opportunities and Diversity

- Salaried judges at all levels are offered conversations with their leadership judges about capability, aspirations and broadening their experience
- Judges with potential and ambition to progress have greater opportunities to gain the experience needed to compete for more senior positions, including through more flexible deployment
- Judges are clear about standards expected and feel supported for future development through the use of appraisals for all fee-paid judges, extended this year to cover Section 9(4) deputy High Court judges

- Targeted diversity support programmes and outreach, including the new Pre-Application Judicial Education programme, result in more high-quality applications and greater diversity at later stages of the JAC recruitment process
- Judicial appointments and magistrates' recruitment are processed in a timely and efficient manner. The recruitment processes are continually evaluated and improved, including identifying more opportunities for part-time and flexible working
- Judges are able to access clear and accurate advice and policy support on HR issues.

Morale

- Leadership judges understand how to access Judicial HR services, including a range of welfare support packages, and resilience training
- Senior leadership judges are supported in visits to meet as many judges as possible, showing that they are listening to concerns raised
- Sensitive welfare, security and litigation cases are handled effectively
- Strengthening the support and development provided to leadership judges through implementation of leadership allowances, a review of job descriptions, improved training and an enhanced induction pack

- Introduction of centralised gathering of exit data to help understand retention issues for the magistracy regionally and nationally.

Communications for the judiciary

- The approach to judicial communications is improved by establishing clear evidence of what drives awareness of and trust in the judiciary, and insights about the best way to communicate with the judiciary
- Targeted information for judicial office holders is disseminated effectively through varied channels. Feedback is used to improve the quality and impact of communications, leading to increased engagement
- Incorrect media reporting is challenged where appropriate and factual reporting is promoted, helping to foster confidence in the judiciary by the public.

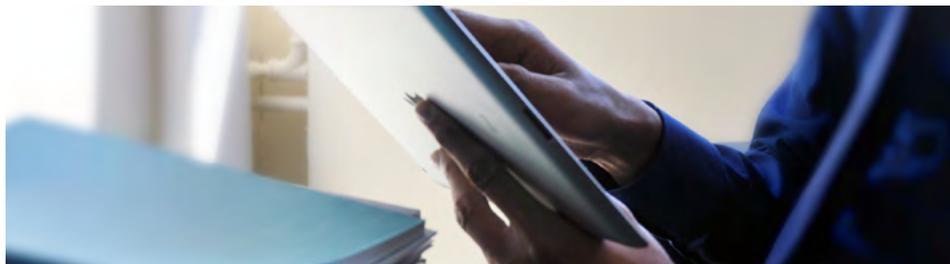
External influence

- Understanding of the independence of the judiciary is increased across Government, Parliament, in local government and the police, as well as among the public
- Judges are well supported in promoting the worldwide reputation of the judiciary and courts after EU exit, and in building influential international networks

- England and Wales judges continue to lead the Standing International Forum of Commercial Courts (SIFoCC), with actions from previous meetings implemented and the third full meeting in Singapore in March 2020 successfully prepared.

Judicial College

- High quality training programme, based on the 2018-20 strategy, delivered to schedule with course aims and usefulness evaluated at over 90% fully or substantially achieved, and managed within 2% of the allocated budget
- Training programmes incorporate needs arising from courts and tribunals reform and EU exit impacts, extended development at three levels for leadership judges, revised arrangements for continuation training, increased levels of recruitment of legal advisers in HMCTS and new induction programmes
- Implementation of improvements to the Learning Management System, supporting the use of webinars for training, hosting digital training guidance on-line and further development of e-learning, help the judiciary use digital technology more effectively.



Digital and Technology

- Judicial eLinks, a 'single sign on' service connecting judicial applications will go live in May, and the feasibility of further development investigated
- New applications will be developed to support succession planning and cross deployment
- Improvements will be made to the Judicial Intranet and Judicial website.

Judicial Library and Information Services

- Judges, legal advisers and case officers receive timely and current legal information to support them in their day to day work, measured by KPIs
- Front line services for judges are supported by robust internal processes and management of contracts, an effective training programme leading to increased use of digital resources, and improved communication to the judiciary
- A comprehensive commercial strategy, informed by an assessment of user needs, is used to inform contract negotiations and achieve a continuation of library and legal information services for judges.

Judicial Conduct Investigations Office (JCIO)

- Complaints about judicial misconduct are dealt with consistently, fairly and efficiently. Complainants and judges are kept informed of progress. Judges know how to access sources of support. Decisions are communicated in plain English
- The JCIO delivers further changes to support its work as a paperless office, including ensuring all complaints are logged online and improvements to the online complaints portal. JCIO working practices remain flexible, secure and efficient
- A review of the policy underlying the conduct system is undertaken, identifying key areas for change via consultation with internal and external stakeholders, with a view to improvement.



The Judicial Office

To continue the development of the Judicial Office, we will continue to develop leadership and communication skills, and to ensure staff have clear priorities and are rewarded for strong performance. In addition, this year we will have a particular focus on:

- Developing people's ability to manage pressures and peaks in workloads
- Making good use of technology to work together well, deliver results and manage information
- Further developing an inclusive and collaborative working environment that promotes staff wellbeing
- Enhancing the understanding of our role amongst the judiciary, and key officials outside the Judicial Office, attracting high quality staff to work here.

Resources

Staff headcount 2019-20

FTEs	
Chief Executive & Senior Staff	5.0
Judicial College	57.9
Business Support	12.8
International	5.0
Jurisdictional Support	51.0
Judicial HR	52.6
Judicial Conduct Investigations Office	15.0
Press & Communications	9.0
Judicial Library & Publications	14.0
Core Total	223.3

EU exit	8.0
Courts & Tribunal Reform Team including Senior Staff	12.0
Reform Communications	4.0
College Reform	11.8
New Reform	1.0
Total	36.8

Total	260.1
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Budget 2019-20

£	
Core Judicial Office baseline	29,941m
Ring fenced Induction Training	5.0m
EU exit	3.562m
HMCTS Reform ¹	–
Total	38.503m

¹ No budget held by the Judicial Office. Costs are claimed from HMCTS on an actuals basis.