



**Judicial  
Office**

# Judicial Office Business Plan 2022–23



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# Foreword

by the Lord Chief Justice  
and the Senior President  
of Tribunals



Over the last financial year, judges, magistrates and tribunal members worked tirelessly to keep the justice system running efficiently and effectively, adapting ways of working as public health restrictions to tackle the Covid pandemic evolved. The support provided by the Judicial Office to leadership judges has been invaluable throughout a difficult year.

Now that restrictions have been lifted, the courts and tribunals are able to operate at full capacity. Judges and magistrates are focussed on the task of tackling the backlogs that unavoidably increased over the last two years. That will require leadership judges throughout the courts and tribunals to continue to apply their ingenuity to get through cases in as timely a way as possible.

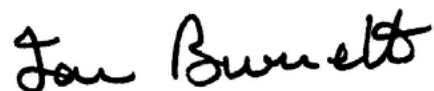
The courts and tribunals modernisation programme will play an important part in increasing efficiency as the digitisation projects bed down. The next year is critical for the implementation of the programme as new services are rolled out across the country. Judges, magistrates, tribunal members and staff will need to adopt new ways of working at the same time as handling demanding workloads.

The judiciary is meeting these challenges after two very demanding years working through the pandemic. They have shown, and continue to demonstrate remarkable resilience, but are not immune from the impacts of sustained pressure. Providing the right welfare support when necessary will be vital. So too will the continued work to implement the Diversity and Inclusion strategy, ensuring the working environment in the courts and tribunals is one in which all members of the judiciary can thrive, irrespective of their personal or professional background.

In some areas, the workload pressures will only be reduced through the recruitment of more judges and magistrates, for which selection exercises are already underway. Timely training and induction support will be important to enable new office holders to make a full contribution to the work of the courts and tribunals.

At a time of conflict in Ukraine, the role of the rule of law in a stable and prosperous society is as vital as ever. The independence of the judiciary is central to public confidence in the justice system, and thus in the rule of law, and must continue to be fostered.

The Judicial Office will play a valuable part in supporting the judiciary in all these regards. We are immensely grateful for the commitment demonstrated by staff throughout the organisation, and for the excellent support they provide.



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



Sir Keith Lindblom, Senior President of Tribunals

## Foreword

by the Chief Executive,  
Andrew Key



As for so many organisations, our work last year was heavily influenced by the Covid pandemic as we supported the Lord Chief Justice and Senior President of Tribunals in their leadership of the judiciary through another difficult year.

We adapted as public health guidance evolved, for example with a gradual return to training courses being held together in person, widely welcomed after a period of over 12 months during which all training had needed to be delivered digitally.

Alongside the response to and recovery from Covid, we made good progress on our business plan priorities. Human resources support for the judiciary was expanded, including to provide increased advice for leadership judges. The first steps were taken in implementing a new health and wellbeing strategy to improve the welfare support available, informed by our first survey of the judiciary on this topic.

Our teams were closely involved in the continued implementation of the courts and tribunals modernisation programme, supporting judicial engagement in pilots of new, digitised services. We were also at the forefront of the work to establish a new system for publication of judgments, hosted by The National Archive. The JCIO moved forward with the project to update the rules and processes for the discipline system with a public consultation on proposed changes.

It is a tribute to the commitment of Judicial Office staff that so much progress was made in these and many other areas against the backdrop of the pandemic and the changing restrictions needed to reduce the risk of infection.

The coming year will be just as demanding in many ways, as the judiciary tackles the increase in outstanding cases that arose over the pandemic and continues the implementation of reform. As well as supporting judicial efforts to increase the throughput of cases in the courts and tribunals, we will work with others to ensure there are enough judges, tribunal members and magistrates, well supported and equipped for future as well as current needs.

For the Judicial Office, this will mean increased demand for the support we provide. We are also due to take on more direct responsibility for functions that are clearly within the judiciary's remit, for example related to human resources advice and support and training magistrates. We must do so in a way that enhances quality and integrates the work smoothly with our other responsibilities.

Judicial Office staff have proved remarkably adaptable through the changing working patterns needed over the course of the pandemic. It is now time to establish and embed ways of working that will serve us for the longer term, enable us to deliver high quality support for the judiciary and to thrive as individuals and as an organisation.

I am immensely grateful, as ever, for the commitment Judicial Office staff show to their work, and the support they provide to colleagues as well as to the judiciary.

**Andrew Key**  
**Chief Executive**

## Our purpose

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



## Our role

The Judicial Office is a unique branch of the civil service, independent from the machinery which supports the Government, and dedicated to supporting the judiciary as the third arm of the state. We promote and safeguard judicial independence to maintain confidence in the rule of law.

We are answerable to the Lord Chief Justice of England & Wales and the Senior President of Tribunals as we help them to fulfil their responsibilities to the judiciary. Through our specialist teams we support some 22,000 judicial office holders in an ever-evolving justice system.

We are proud that our work serves to reinforce the pre-eminence of the judiciary of England and Wales and maintain the UK's position as a leader in legal services, a position which allows the UK to thrive and benefits, albeit sometimes invisibly, every part of society.

**Our role includes:**

- 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 other channels, and internally within the judiciary
- Facilitating judicial leadership of modernisation
- Providing human resources services for the judiciary
- Developing and delivering training
- Providing legal information and library services
- Promoting the courts and tribunals and supporting the rule of law internationally

Delivery of this business plan is only possible through the people who work in the Judicial Office. Our leadership team is committed to ensuring the Judicial Office provides a stimulating and supportive, innovative and inclusive workplace, where everyone understands how they contribute to a shared purpose.

As a leadership team, we work to attract and retain talented people from a wide range of backgrounds; support them in developing the skills and expertise to succeed in their roles and careers; provide a positive working place where people are treated fairly; and ensure leaders and managers are equipped to guide teams in delivering effectively and to support their wellbeing.



## Medium-term goals

This business plan sets out in more detail the outcomes the Judicial Office aims to deliver this financial year under six goals:

1. Building a thriving organisation
2. Promoting the role of the judiciary in upholding the rule of law and supporting judicial independence
3. Managing the response to and recovery from Covid in the courts and tribunals
4. Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the administration of justice
5. Ensuring the right numbers of judges are in place, with the right skills, resources and support
6. Strengthening effective leadership in a modern judiciary at all levels

## Outcomes for 2022–23 financial year

### 1. Building a thriving organisation

To support the delivery of all outcomes, we will strengthen the Judicial Office in the following ways, incorporating action in response to feedback from the 2021 People Survey. Coming out of the pandemic, we are also determined to make a success of hybrid working.

- **Capability:** we will further strengthen leadership and management skills, including for effective performance management, staff and team development, change leadership and inclusion.
- **Collaboration:** we will foster positive, effective and collaborative relationships between JO teams and with other organisations. We will foster an environment where challenge and innovation are welcomed, ensuring individuals have the confidence to contribute, challenge and influence constructively.



- Focus and attraction: a clear focus on the unique role and purpose of the JO will promote a broader understanding of our work and ensure we continue to attract and retain high quality people from diverse backgrounds.
- Inclusion: we will promote an inclusive working environment where all staff are treated fairly and are empowered to say if they experience unfair behaviour. Leaders will involve staff at an early stage in the issues and decisions that affect them.
- Wellbeing: we will raise awareness and understanding of wellbeing issues, enabling staff to access support services and increasing resilience. Support will be promoted through re-designed and enriched intranet content, and enhanced with more mental health allies and increased help for anxiety and musculoskeletal issues.

## 2. Promoting the role of the judiciary in upholding the rule of law and supporting judicial independence

### **The communications team will work to foster continued public confidence in the judiciary:**

- Judicial work, independence and the rule of law are promoted via a range of channels to reach diverse audiences
- Incorrect media reporting is challenged, to ensure fair and balanced reporting
- Digital platforms are utilised to disseminate innovative content that enhances awareness of the judiciary and meets user needs
- Relationships are developed with key stakeholder groups including legal associations, legal correspondents and other agencies
- Communication channels and content are continually evaluated, tailored and improved

**Private offices will work to increase understanding in parliament and government of the role of the judiciary, supporting its independence:**

- Support parliamentary liaison judges to increase understanding amongst parliamentarians.
- Advise JEB members giving evidence at parliamentary committees.
- Support JEB members in increasing engagement with Ministers.
- Strengthen relationships with officials from MoJ and other Departments to help support judicial independence.



**The international team and Judicial College will support judges in promoting the judiciary's values and interests internationally:**

- Actively working in partnership with international judiciaries and courts to support and safeguard the Rule of Law in line with the Strategy for International Engagement 2021-2025.
- Developing training partnerships that develop capacity by sharing expertise, for example on judgecraft, new technologies and in building specialist skills.
- Maintaining the judiciary's role and standing in multilateral organisations and training bodies to build coalitions of interest around shared values and international law, including hosting the annual UKIJSC meeting.

The Judicial HR Diversity and Inclusion Team will support Diversity Community Relations Judges and Magistrates to reach out to communities, schools and universities to increase understanding of the role of the judge and the justice system.

### 3. Supporting recovery from Covid in the courts and tribunals

All teams in the Judicial Office will support the Judicial leadership of Covid recovery, to ensure:

- Judicial training remains flexible to new and emerging needs, including from changes to magistrates sentencing powers and to the retirement age.
- Judicial views are reflected in the system-wide approach to recovery, through effective communication between the judiciary and all relevant justice organisations.
- Judicial decisions are informed by data that is as timely, accurate and meaningful as possible on the recovery position in all courts and tribunals.
- Effective day-to-day operation of courts is supported by collaborative working across the justice system, especially with HMCTS and the MoJ.
- Judicial capacity is maximised in support of recovery, including deploying and training DJ(MC)s to sit in the Crown Court.

### 4. Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the administration of justice

The Private Offices are responsible for strategy, policy, legal and handling advice and management of relations with key stakeholders. This year they will work with others across the Judicial Office to support:

- Engagement with government to ensure it understands the implications for the administration of justice of changes to policy and legislation.
- Identification and implementation of efficiencies in the County and Family Courts through the new JEB sub-committee.
- Identification and implementation of improvements to Crown Court processes and ways of working through the Crown Court Improvement Group.
- Implementation of PFD's private and public law WGs' recommendations including working with the MoJ to reduce private law demand.

- Work with the MoJ to set up the Online Procedural Rules Committee and support development of a ‘proof of concept’ online system to access dispute resolution services.
- Implementation of measures to increase efficiency in the tribunals, including changes in the IAC to the sitting to writing ratio and delivering a consultation on panel composition.
- Development and implementation of changes to the leadership and governance of the magistracy to increase alignment with judicial structures.
- Policy development and stakeholder engagement on the ‘One Judiciary’ project, including statutory reform of the SPT role.



**The new Data team will strengthen Judicial Office’s handling of data and information, including:**

- Strengthening governance to ensure data and information are protected and handled responsibly and respecting the independence of the judiciary.
- Providing clear direction on policy decisions relating to data and information internally and ensuring the Judicial Office is represented in external discussions and decisions.
- Establishing a focal point for analysis within the Judicial Office.

**The Reform Team will support the judiciary’s continued contribution to the successful implementation of the courts and tribunals reform programme, so that:**

- Leadership Judges are fully engaged with design issues and implementation plans, enabling them to guide judges through new ways of working effectively.
- The judiciary receive communications in a timely and regular manner to ensure they are aware of impending changes and how they will be affected.

- Judges embrace new ways of working arising from new products and services, through a transition, implementation and communications process aligned with HMCTS plans.
- Change load in courts and tribunals is closely monitored and pressures are investigated in a timely manner.
- Change support is successfully transitioned from the JO Reform Team to business as usual.

The Judicial College will provide training resources for judges on all reform products before they are rolled out, and will embed training in core programmes before the end of 2022/23. The Judicial College will also provide new training to leadership judges on leading innovation and managing change.

Judicial Digital Services will continue to plan, design, build, deliver and manage joined up and secure digital products which use a single set of accurate real time data.

## 5. Ensuring the right numbers of judges are in place, with the right skills, knowledge, resources and support

### **A strengthened Judicial HR team will deliver more support for judges, including:**

- Improved access to professional HR advice through an enhanced network of regional advisers.
- Provision of expert HR advice and support on long-term sickness absence cases, so they are dealt with effectively, sympathetically, and in line with policy.
- Provision and promotion of enhanced welfare support, implementing the objectives in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the activities in the 2022 wellbeing plan.
- Implementation of the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy, including action to support greater diversity in the pool of applicants for judicial roles and an inclusive working environment in which judges from all backgrounds can thrive.
- With MoJ, review and revision of HR policies to achieve the desired future shape of the judiciary, supported by clear and consistent policies and terms and conditions.

- Improved forecasting and planning to inform decisions on recruitment and deployment, through better collaboration with HMCTS, JAC and MoJ officials.
- Implementation of the flexible deployment policy, helping to meet business needs across courts and tribunals and provide more opportunities for development, working with the strategy team.
- Greater efficiency and timeliness of appointments through a series of regular reviews of operational processes.



**Against the Judicial College’s 2021-2025 strategy, the College will deliver high quality training to budget through a combination of face-to-face and digital learning (c.400 events), publications and on-line materials. It will:**

- Ensure newly appointed and authorised judges, magistrates and legal advisers receive induction training in good time.
- Ensure all judges and magistrates have access to the continuation training needed to understand and apply the implications of new legislation, caselaw and research and to support an appreciation of changing social context, resilience and wellbeing.
- From April 2022, introduce and deliver new training on domestic abuse for all family judges, magistrates, and legal advisers.
- Ensure training is in place for judges and magistrates to gain a deeper understanding of diversity and to promote inclusive behaviour and a culture of respect.
- Transform the way magistrates training is delivered, bringing it closer to the College, and making additional materials available through more varied channels.

- Make sure all publications and training materials are delivered in an accessible way, and make best use of external expertise to design and deliver training.
- From April 2022, introduce new evaluation mechanisms to help improve the overall quality of training and its delivery.

**Judicial Digital Services will provide:**

- Real time and accurate data flowing across applications which use judicial data, with single sign on for ease of access for the judiciary.
- A replacement for e-HR based on a thorough assessment of needs and IT options, by the end of 2022, working with Judicial HR.
- A new, modern, user-intuitive and accessible digital Judicial Training Platform, to be launched in summer 2022, working with the Judicial College.

**Judicial Communications will support activities to:**

- Provide judges with regular information via a range of communications channels and from the senior judiciary/Judicial Executive Board about developments affecting them.
- Improve and digitise the recruitment process into the magistracy and enhance its appeal to a diverse range of external audiences.

**The Judicial Library and Information Service provides high quality services to judges and legal advisers to ensure they can discharge their duties effectively.****They will ensure:**

- Information is provided in a timely manner and in line with agreed targets.
- Improved awareness of the services available through the development of an effective engagement and communications strategy.
- Greater use of digital resources through the implementation of an effective eLIS training strategy.
- Judges are given the support they need during the transition to, and implementation of, the new judgments database at The National Archives.

## 6. Strengthening effective leadership in a modern judiciary at all levels

Teams across the Judicial Office will support work on leadership involving all courts and tribunals jurisdictions, including to:

- Support the running of the Judicial Attitude Survey as a tool to enable leadership judges to understand the views and concerns of the judiciary.
- Promote greater cohesion between the courts and tribunals judiciaries.
- Develop more tools, including through the Leadership Hub, and strengthen communication to support leadership judges in carrying out their responsibilities.
- Provide materials and timely support to new leadership judges in readiness for their new roles.
- Further develop arrangements for judicial mentoring, appraisal and career discussions, supported by relevant resources and guidance.
- Support and provide guidance to leadership judges and magistrates in their responsibilities for diversity and inclusion.

- Provide enhanced training for leadership judges and magistrates, including in creating an inclusive culture and tackling bullying and harassment, and in leading change.





## Judicial Conduct and Complaints

The Judicial Conduct Investigations Office (JCIO) supports the Lord Chief Justice and Lord Chancellor in their joint responsibility for judicial discipline. It sits within the Judicial Office for administrative purposes but is operationally independent. It is jointly and equally responsible to the Lord Chief Justice and Lord Chancellor, and reports to Parliament annually on its performance.

### **The JCIO will deliver the following outcomes:**

- Meet published targets for dealing with complaints about judicial office-holders.
- Provide the public and the judiciary with clear and accurate information about the complaints process.
- Begin implementation of improvements to the disciplinary system, as identified by the 2020/21 review of the system.

## Civil Justice Council and Family Justice Council

The Judicial Office sponsors the Civil Justice Council and the Family Justice Council ensuring that they remain appropriately accountable to the judiciary, Ministers, and Parliament. The Judicial Office will provide the secretariat to those independent bodies to support them in delivering high quality advice as outlined in their respective business plans, organising conferences and debates, producing guidance and responding to consultations as appropriate. The secretariat will support the Civil Justice Council in the preparation and publication of reports on: Costs, Pre-Action Protocols, and Mental Capacity in the Courts.

Further information can be found at:

### **Advisory bodies | Courts and Tribunals Judiciary**

# Resources

## Staff headcount 2022-23

FTE	
Chief Executive & Senior Staff	5.0
Judicial College	111.9
Judicial HR	103.5
Business Support	14.0
Jurisdictional Support	71.8
International Relations	5.0
Judicial Conduct Investigations Office	19.0
Press & Communications	13.3
Judicial Library & Publications	16.0
<b>Core total</b>	<b>359.5</b>
Courts & Tribunal Reform Team (including senior staff)	12.0
Reform Communications	4.0
College Reform	11.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>27.8</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>387.3</b>

## Budget 2022-23

£	
Core Judicial Office baseline	£46.000m
HMCTS Reform*	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>£46.000m</b>

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