

**Judicial Appointments Board for Scotland
Meeting: Monday 13 August 2018, Thistle House, Edinburgh**

MINUTES

Present

Mrs Nicola Gordon, Chairing Member
Mrs Alison Mitchell
Mr James McNeill, QC
Mrs Liz Burnley
Professor Stephen Tierney
Sheriff Michael O'Grady, QC
Sheriff Principal Derek Pyle
The Honourable Lady Wise
Mrs Neelam Bakshi
The Honourable Lord Minginish
Mrs Deirdre Fulton
Mr Alistair Morris

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from the Mrs Clarkson, JABS Chief Executive

In Attendance

Mr John Wallace, Tribunals and Governance Manager
Miss Ashleigh Meikle, Court Appointments Manager and Board Secretary
Miss Rachel Craig, Appointments Team Leader
Miss Katy Mitchell, Appointments Administrator

1. Welcome and Apologies

1.1 The Chairing Member welcomed the Board and confirmed that she had received apologies from Chief Executive, Mrs Clarkson

1.2 The Chairing Member was delighted to welcome to the Board Mrs Burnley, new Lay Member. Board Members congratulated Mrs Burnley on her appointment.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

2.1 The Board presented amendments to the June 2018 minutes for sections 2.1, 4.3.8, 6.1.5, agenda item 8 and agenda item 9. Subject to these changes being made, the minutes were agreed.

Action Point: BMU to make suggested amendments

2.2 Action Tracker Update

2.2.1 The Board suggested some amendments to the structure of the action tracker. These were agreed by the rest of the Board.

2.2.2 The Chairing Member talked of the importance of using the “Due By” date to its full capacity. It was agreed that she would work closely with the BMU to agree due dates for each action point. Where no due date was stated, it would be assumed that the action would be complete by the next Board meeting.

2.2.3 Any outstanding actions were updated to their level of progression. The Chairing Member informed the Board that actions 12 & 13 would be addressed in the agenda.

2.2.4 The Board discussed action 3a. Mrs Fulton provided an update to the Board of the conversation she had with the two lay assistants, David Robinson and John Cummings, surrounding their wishes to stay on for a second term. Mr Cummings confirmed that he would like to stay on for another term, and is keen to take part in any training that the Board participates in. Due to other pursuits, Mr Robinson informed Mrs Fulton that he will not be seeking to renew his term as a lay assistant to the Board. Mr Robinson’s term comes to an end on 31st December 2018.

3. Oral Updates

3.1 Chairing Member Update

3.1.1 The Chairing Member provided an update on the recruitment of a new Lay Board Member. She informed the Board that after a field of very strong applicants for the position, Mrs Burnley was successful and once again congratulated her on her appointment.

3.1.2 For the Advocate position, four applications were received, of which three were shortlisted for interview. One withdrew before interview leaving two applicants who were interviewed. One was offered the position. Unfortunately they were also offered a full time position in another post and chose to decline the Board Member role on this occasion. For this reason, the Advocate recruitment round will start afresh in September with hopes of filling the position before Christmas.

3.1.3 The Chairing Member informed the Board that the position for a Solicitor Member had not been filled after holding two interviews which were both unsuccessful. The recruitment will start afresh.

3.1.4 Mr Morris informed the Board that although the size of the solicitor field is large overall, around half are under the age of 35 and therefore unable to take up such a commitment alongside their work at this stage in their career.

3.2 Chief Executive Update

3.2.1 As the Chief Executive had tendered her apologies for the meeting this update was provided by the BMU.

Public Face

3.2.2 Miss Craig provided an update to the Board regarding the Public Face project.

3.2.3 Miss Craig first gave an update on the research carried out by Progressive. She informed the Board that the surveys were now complete and would be shared at the September Board meeting.

3.2.4 Miss Craig also provided an update on the new website. The Board was shown some pages from the new website which is due to go live week commencing 3rd September. This date has been slightly pushed back due to some delays in the development. Miss Craig informed the Board that we will begin using our new branding in line with the launch date of the new website.

3.2.5 Miss Meikle shared with the Board that Miss Craig has recently been accepted to do a Business Management degree at Heriot Watt University, and will be working on this one day per week going forward. The Board congratulated Miss Craig.

Board Member's Fee Claim Policy

3.2.6 Miss Meikle updated the Board on the Fee Policy, informing them that this is currently being discussed with Scottish Government, and will hopefully be brought to the September Board meeting.

Operational Plan Update

3.2.7 The Board then moved on to discuss the Operational Plan.

3.2.8 Miss Meikle informed the Board that the Chief Executive had been in contact with APS about working with an interactive, changeable plan. She was having some trouble with this, however this could potentially be fixed by purchasing Adobe PDF editor.

Monthly Financial Reporting

3.2.9 Miss Meikle provided the Board with a verbal update regarding finance. She shared with the Board that as current plans stand, we are around £5,500 over the forecasted budget. This is due to the 3% civil service pay rise which was announced after the budget was finalised, as well as Board Members' fees coming in ahead of

this time last year and the cost implications of the Public Face project. In the worst case scenario, the overspend could potentially rise to £10,000 due to the finalisation of the project. Scottish Government have been made aware of the situation. The BMU are working hard to not let the overspend drift.

3.2.10 The Board agreed that the BMU revert back to providing the Board with a finance paper each month, instead of each quarter.

Action Point: BMU to provide the Board with a finance paper at each Board meeting.

Tribunals Paper

3.2.11 The Board then moved on to talk about the paper on Tribunals, provided by Mr Wallace.

Unconscious Bias Training

3.2.12 Miss Meikle gave an update to the Board on arranging unconscious bias training for Board members. Mark Douglas, from Blue Ptarmigan, has been identified as the provider. Discussions are underway to agree a suitable time for training. The Board will be updated when a suitable date has been agreed.

4. Outreach Strategy

4.1 The Board moved on to talk about their outreach strategy. Miss Meikle delivered a presentation on the aims of the Boards outreach strategy, format of engagement, key partners to hold outreach sessions with and what will inform the content of outreach events.

4.2 The Board agreed that outreach also needs to be aimed at those who are not yet eligible to increase the attractiveness of a judicial career, such as newly qualified solicitors and students.

4.3 Mr Morris also shared his thoughts that working with the Bar Associations around Scotland may help in reaching some of the potential future applicants. Working with the Trainee and Newly Qualified Society (TANQ) in a similar fashion to our current event with the Scottish Young Lawyers' Association (SYLA) would also help in reaching future applicants in and around Glasgow, as SYLA can appear be more Edinburgh based.

4.4 The Chairing Member shared with the Board that after talks with Lorna Jack, she was made aware that the Law Society's most visited page on their website is that of their training videos. For this reason, the Chairing Member shared her view that this should be something we continue creating. The Board agreed with this point.

4.5 Miss Meikle confirmed with that this would be picked up with Jim McKay from the Law Society and a plan would be put in place for the September Board meeting.

4.6 Miss Meikle informed the Board that they had been invited to attend the Law Society Annual Conference which could help with this. Board members confirmed that they would like to attend.

4.7 Further to this, Mrs Fulton asked that website analytics be added to the monthly updates, to see what people are finding helpful and how best we can use our social platform. The Board agreed that this would be useful.

Action Point: BMU to create a plan for training videos to bring to September Board meeting.

Action Point: Miss Meikle to confirm with the Law Society that Board Members will be in attendance at their Annual Conference.

Action Point: BMU to provide analytics on website and social media for future Board meetings.

5. Assessing Qualities

5.1 Lord Minginish shared his paper on Formulation of Legal Skills and Knowledge Qualities. The board agreed that it would continue to refine and develop qualities needed for all judicial offices including tribunals.

5.2 Some amendments to the paper were proposed by the Board. It was agreed that once Lord Minginish had made these changes, the paper would be presented to the Board for final agreement.

Action Point: Lord Minginish to make suggested amendments and present the paper to the Board for final agreement.

5.3 Mrs Burnley presented the Board with the skills matrix for judicial and personal qualities. Some amendments were proposed by the Board. It was agreed that Mrs Burnley would make these suggested amendments.

5.4 Mrs Fulton shared her view that it may be helpful, particularly from a lay perspective, to have a skills matrix similar to this for legal requirements.

Action Point: Mrs Burnley to make suggested amendments to skills matrix and present the final version to the Board for agreement.

6. Forward Look

6.1 The Charing Member informed the Board that she plans to meet with Ash Denham, Minister for Community Safety on 23rd August, and Humza Yousaf, Cabinet Secretary on 13th September.

7. Meeting Closed at 12:35