Courts and Tribunals (Online Procedural Bill) Fact Sheet

The Government's Court Reform Agenda:

- Over £1bn is being invested in transforming the courts and tribunal service, making the justice system simpler to access, convenient to use and more efficient to run.
- Increasing use of technology to bring the processes of justice into the 21st century will enable people to resolve legal disputes more quickly and efficiently.
- Our transformations and modernisation will enable the civil, family and tribunal jurisdictions to work more effectively for everyone involved in the process.

The Courts and Tribunals (Online Procedure) Bill:

- This Bill is a key supporter of the court reform programme, and it aims to ensure that online services are designed for the everyday user – by creating an Online Procedure Rule Committee (OPRC) who will design rules to support our online services.
- This will help ensure our digital services are accessible and our processes reflect the evolving nature of technology and user needs.
- The recommendation for changes to existing rulemaking was made in the Civil Courts Structural Review (CCSR) - a judicially led review conducted by Lord Briggs, published in 2016.
- Lord Briggs described the current system as designed by lawyers for lawyers; which means that civil courts have increasingly become inaccessible to the ordinary user.
- A central part of the Briggs plan to redress the balance was for the introduction of the 'online Court' governed by a set of simplified rules overseen by the new OPRC.

How do online justice services currently work?

- Digitisation of the initial stages of the court process for applications is now a well-established feature of the civil justice landscape.
- Recently we introduced the Online Civil Money Claims pilot, which went live in March 2018 and offers a digitial service for money claims for less than £10k.
- Since launch, the service has processed in excess of 62,000 claims, with an 87% user satisfaction rate.

What will the new rule committee do?

- The new Committee will build on this existing work and have a particular focus both in its membership and its purpose to focus on improving the online experience of users.
- The Committee will make rules to ensure that the services themselves are designed in a way which is simple and accessible.