



HM Courts & Tribunals Service

HM Courts and Tribunals Service Board meeting – 7 May 2020

Present HMCTS Members:

Tim Parker	Independent Chairman
Victoria Cochrane	Senior Independent Non-Executive Member and Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Chair
Ian Playford	Non-Executive Member
Lakh Jemmett	Non-Executive Member
Susan Acland-Hood	Chief Executive, HM Courts & Tribunals Service
Kevin Sadler	Deputy Chief Executive & Operations Director
Andrew Baigent	Chief Finance Officer
Sir Ernest Ryder	Senior President of Tribunals (SPT)
Lady Justice Kate Thirlwall	Senior Presiding Judge (SPJ)
District Judge Tim Jenkins	Judicial Board member
Annabel Burns	Ministry of Justice, Director, Judicial and Legal Services Policy

Presenters and additional attendees:

Gemma Hewison	Crime Programme Director
Jan Gower	Non-Executive HMCTS Change Portfolio Board member/Critical Friend
Catherine Blair	Deputy Director, Strategic Finance
Senior Internal Audit Manager, Government Internal Audit Agency	
Louise Alexander	Human Resources Director
Business Change Manager	
Theresa Browne	Crime Programme Manager
Private Secretary to the SPT	
HMCTS Board Secretary	
Deputy HMCTS Board Secretary	

Welcome and Introductions

Tim Parker welcomed attendees to the meeting.

Minutes and actions

The minutes from 2 April 2020 were approved and updates on actions were noted.

Performance – HMCTS Response to COVID-19

The Executive Board members provided the Board with an update on performance and HMCTS's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. It was confirmed that after prioritising the initial response, there was now more focus on planning for the next stage in relation to increasing HMCTS activity, in the interests of ensuring access to justice, as rapidly and safely as possible.

In relation to current performance, the Board was informed that the majority of jurisdictions were not disposing of cases at pre-COVID-19 levels. It was confirmed that work was continuing to take place in partnership with the senior judiciary to maximise performance and use remote hearings wherever appropriate, with consideration of the learning and evaluation taking place of its use.

It was confirmed that staffing levels were increasing, and that further work was ongoing to prioritise staff being able to work remotely or safely return to their place of work. Staff rotas were being reviewed to optimise their efficiency, and work was taking place to modify the HMCTS estate to maximise the number of staff who could work while adhering to social distancing guidelines.

The Board was presented with the provisional end-year financial position.

HMCTS COVID-19 Business Recovery Plan

The Board discussed HMCTS's recovery planning work. It was confirmed that the proposed modelling was intended to provide consistent and accurate data to facilitate and support decision-making.

Contingency Risk Register – COVID-19 Emergency Period

The Board was informed that the contingency corporate risk register documented the organisation's strategic risks and issues associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, to help the organisation manage its response to the crisis.

The Board confirmed that it was content for the Contingency Risk Register to sit alongside the organisation's standing corporate risk register.

Report from the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) Chair

The Board was presented with the report from the last ARAC meeting on 6 May.

People Strategy

There was a discussion around the longer-term changes of approach and expectations of staff as a result of COVID-19 and more detailed work on this was ongoing and planned as the immediate response to COVID receded.

Common Platform Demonstration

The Board was presented with a demonstration of Common Platform functionality from the issue of proceeding to the conclusion of the hearing. The Board noted the good progress made and thanked those involved.