



Ministry
of Justice

The Right Honourable
Alex Chalk KC MP
Lord Chancellor & Secretary of
State for Justice

Ms Pippa Lambert
Interim Chair, Senior Salaries Review Body
3rd Floor, Windsor House
50 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0TL

MoJ ref: 111240

20 December 2023

Dear Pippa,

JUDICIAL PAY REVIEW 2024/25

I am pleased to write to you to formally commission the SSRB to undertake the 2024/25 annual review of pay for all salaried judicial office holders. This letter sets out the details of that commission.

Context for 2024/25

The judiciary play a unique constitutional role in upholding the rule of law, which is central to the delivery of justice. Recruiting and retaining the best professionals for judicial office is key to the effective running of our courts and tribunals and maintaining the excellent reputation of our world-class justice system. Pay awards must strike a careful balance – recognising the vital importance of the judiciary to our justice system, whilst delivering value for the taxpayer, not increasing the country's debt further, and being in line with the Government's target to reduce inflation. Last year, the SSRB recommended a pay award of 7% which was over and above the figure proposed by my department as sustainable and affordable. After careful consideration, I accepted this recommendation in full, requiring reprioritisation of funds from wider investment in the justice system. I did so in recognition of the exceptional economic circumstances and increases of this scale will not be affordable or sustainable in the coming year.

We are due to have a Major Review of the Judicial Salary Structure, which usually takes place every 5 years. Since the last Major Review in 2018 we have delivered on our commitment to major pension reforms with the successful introduction of the new judicial pension scheme. The MoJ is working to understand the impact of these changes, as well as the 7% pay award delivered for the year 23/24. I am committed to commissioning the Major Review when recruitment for a new judicial lead and permanent chair of the SSRB concludes.

I have seen your letter dated 13 November 2023 regarding your concern about delays to member recruitment and its impact on the SSRB's ability to undertake this year's annual review. I can assure you that the robust and independent advice given by the SSRB to the Government is highly valued and that I attach considerable importance to the expert and independent judgement of the SSRB. My officials will continue to work closely with the Cabinet Office and the Office for Manpower Economics to facilitate an effective pay round.

Detailed remit

In 2023-24, the PRBs recommended historically high pay awards for their respective workforces in light of the extraordinary macroeconomic context. Accepting these recommendations, whilst not increasing borrowing, required tough decisions. It is vital that the PRBs consider the historic nature of the 2023-24 awards and the Government's affordability position that will be set out further in written evidence.

I would like the SSRB to make recommendations to the Government on the 2024/25 annual pay award for all judicial office holders for whom I set the rate of remuneration. This should take account of evidence which my Department will provide, including the affordability of any award and evidence on recruitment, retention and diversity of judges. The SSRB should also consider the role of the upcoming Major Review in enacting wider structural reform.

I ask that you submit your report by the end of May 2024.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Alex Chalk".

RT HON ALEX CHALK KC MP

LORD CHANCELLOR AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR JUSTICE