



NIJAC

*Northern Ireland Judicial
Appointments Commission*

NIJAC Plenary Justice Committee Minutes

3pm Thursday 12 March 2015

Headline Building 3rd Floor

Present: The Right Honourable Sir Declan Morgan, the Lord Chief
Justice of Northern Ireland (Chairman)
The Right Honourable Lord Justice Coghlin
The Honourable Mr Justice Stephens
Mr Brian Coulter
Mr Eoin Doyle
Mrs Breidge Gadd
Mrs Fiona Keenan
His Honour Judge Kinney
Mr James McNulty QC
District Judge (Magistrates' Courts) Rosalie Prytherch
Mr Alastair Rankin
Professor Nichola Rooney
Mr Lindsay Todd

In Attendance: Mrs Mandy Kilpatrick
Ms Adeline Frew
Miss Cathy Woods
Mr Andrew Millar

Plenary Agenda 3pm

- 1) No apologies
- 2) No conflicts of interest declared

Agenda Items

- 3) Responsibility for NIJAC's sponsorship transfers on 1 April 2015 from the Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister's (OFMDFM) Central Management Unit to the North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) Division. The sponsorship team remains the same however Mr Colm Shannon NSMC Director (Grade 5) will be responsible at board level. (Letter of 9 March distributed).

Action arising: Plenary agreed Mrs Kilpatrick to seek clarification regarding role of NSMC, as concerned that a misperception of NIJAC having a connection to North South bodies issues may arise. This will be raised at the April sponsorship meeting.

- 4) Approval is sought, ahead of consultation, for an amendment to the Business Plan. Under 'Working with Others' to include 'Establish a Flexible Working Group'.

Action arising: Approval given for - Establish a Flexible Working Group; to establish an initial meeting and provide proposed Terms of Reference, target 30 June 2015.

- 5) Secondment arrangements of Mrs Kilpatrick, CEO and Catherine Woods, NIJAC Accountant.

Action arising: Plenary asked the CEO to request an extension of C. Woods' secondment (expires 31 March 2015). Consideration to be given to secondment arrangements for CEO (expires October 2015).

- 6) Strike action affecting public transport on Friday.

No issues arising for NIJAC; office will be staffed as usual.

Justice Committee Visit 3.30pm

Flexible Working within the Judiciary

Plenary was joined by:

Mr Alastair Ross Member of the Local Assembly (MLA),
Justice Committee Chair

Mr Raymond McCartney MLA, Justice Committee Deputy
Chair

Ms Christine Darragh, Clerk of the Committee

Mr Cathal McCorry, Presiding Master, on behalf of the
Judges' Council

Mrs Maura Campbell, Department of Justice (to become
Principal Private Secretary to Lord Chief Justice 1 April
2015)

7. Welcome and opening remarks from NIJAC's Chairman, the Lord Chief Justice, Sir Declan Morgan
8. Presentation by Judge Rosalie Prytherch, NIJAC Commissioner and District Judge (Magistrates' Courts).
9. Open, frank and wide ranging discussion touching upon challenges and opportunities of flexible working: engaging with those who can make change, the potential for requests from serving judges to reduce hours, financial and deployment issues, addressing some negative perceptions of flexible working, other employment options for those working flexibly, changes to statutory maximums and potential for digital justice.

Action arising: Justice Committee will helpfully assist with influencing the Department of Justice (DOJ), bearing in mind the potential for change within current structures and potential future structure, being mindful of financial considerations.

NIJAC will engage with DOJ, Courts and Tribunals, Office of the Lord Chief Justice, the Judges' Council,

other tribunal sponsoring departments and the legal professional bodies aiming to progress a Flexible Working Strategy for Courts and Tribunals.