

MINUTES

BOARD MEETING 28 JULY 2021

Board: Sir Nicholas Green, Chair
Professor Nicholas Hopkins, Commissioner for Property, Family and Trust Law
Professor Sarah Green, Commissioner for Commercial and Common Law
Professor Penney Lewis, Commissioner for Criminal Law
Nicholas Paines QC, Commissioner for Public and Welsh Law
Phil Golding, Chief Executive
Matthew Jolley, Head of Legal Services
Joshua Rozenberg QC, Non-Executive Board Member
Baroness Deech, Non-Executive Board Member

Attendees: Douglas Hall, Parliamentary Counsel
David Connolly, Team Manager
Laura Burgoyne, Team Manager
Henni Ouahes, Team Manager
Manesh Mistry, Head of Corporate Services
Charmaine Hunte, Executive Assistant to the Chairman

Apologies:

Item 1: Approval of Minutes of the Meeting of 30 June 2021

1.1 The minutes were approved.

Item 2: Matters Arising

1.2 None.

Item 3: 14th Programme Update

1.3 PG said that, as things stood, the response rate to the consultation was strong, albeit that some responses we were expecting were yet to arrive, or may be received after the consultation closed. It seemed that the overall numbers would be lower, but that was simply because we had not received campaign templates as with the 13th Programme (Dangerous Dogs for example). However, the overall number of individual law reform suggestions is very similar. PG thought this an excellent achievement given other preoccupations which most of those responding were facing. He also thought that the enormous amount of engagement undertaken pre-consultation had paid off.

Item 4: Business Plan 2021/22 - draft

- 1.4 The Board was informed that the Law Commission's Business Plan 2021/22 was in its final stages of draft and on track to be published during the summer. This will include translated version in Welsh.
- 1.5 The Business Plan for 2021/22 covers our key work objectives as well as wider corporate issues such as how we've collectively handled COVID-19 as an organisation, working remotely and key steps we continue to take for diversity and inclusion.
- 1.6 Overall the Board welcomed the draft and supported the strategic direction, approach and objectives covered for 2021/22.

Item 5: Annual Report 2020/21 - Final/ published

- 1.7 The Board were shared a copy of the Law Commission's Annual Report 2020/21 and informed that this was published and laid in parliament. The Board acknowledged the key achievements and also noted that despite it being a challenging year working remotely and managing COVID-19 the Commission had performed well given the circumstances.

Item 6: Return to the office

- 1.8 The Board was given a verbal update on the latest status of returning to the office. The key messages were staff are free to use the office space however this is still limited to 20% capacity with social distancing rules still in place for safety. The Board were informed that the Commission would trial meeting pods/ booths to see if this can effectively work for those participating in MS Teams meetings whilst in the office to minimise disruption to other staff. The Board were informed that there is no pressure on any staff to attend the office as safety is the main priority and that we are closely monitoring key updates from MoJ.

Item 8: Welsh Language Policy review

- 1.9 PG thanked Awen Edwards for all her work on the review. It was a strong piece of work and showed that the Commission was generally in good shape in terms of meeting the Welsh Language Policy. There were some recommendations to be taken forward, many of which were already underway. The Board agreed that the review should be put into a format where it could be published externally. It should also be sent to the WAC for any views they may have prior to publication.

Item 8: SMT Decisions

- 1.10 The Board noted SMT decisions made since the last Board meeting.

Item 9: Board Report and Forward Look

- 1.11 Commissioners highlighted issues relevant to their individual projects. The Board also noted forthcoming peer review dates.

Item 10: AOB

- 1.12 No items were raised under AOB.