



**THE SUPREME COURT OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM AND THE
JUDICIAL COMMITTEE OF THE
PRIVY COUNCIL**

BUSINESS PLAN

1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014

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Section 1

Introduction and Summary

Introduction

1. The Supreme Court of the United Kingdom (UKSC) was established by the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 (CRA) and came into being on 1 October 2009. Its mission and strategic objectives, which can be found in the next section, remain essentially the same as those set out at its launch, although they have been slightly broadened to encompass, where relevant, the work of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. This Business Plan covers the UKSC's fourth full financial year of operation and sets out our key aims and objectives for that period and how we plan to achieve them. Our key Performance Indicators (PIs) are set out in Annex C to this Business Plan.

The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (JCPC)

2. From 1 April 2011 the UKSC took over from the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) responsibility for the administration of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (JCPC), which has been co-located with the UKSC since the UKSC's inception in October 2009.

3. The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council is a separate court from the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom but its permanent Judges are the Justices of the Supreme Court. The JCPC is the court of final appeal for the UK Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies and for those Commonwealth Countries that have retained the appeal to Her Majesty in Council or, in the case of Republics, to the Judicial Committee. A list of the relevant countries is at Annex B to this plan. The JCPC normally sits in London, although in recent years hearings have taken place in Mauritius and in the Caribbean. Although the Judicial Committee was instituted by a United Kingdom Act, the substantive law which it applies is the law of the country or territory from which the appeal comes.

Managing within the Spending Review (SR) Settlement

4. This is the third of the four years covered by the settlement resulting from the 2010 Spending Review. This is a period of declining resources for the UKSC / JCPC. How the Court more broadly envisages it will continue to manage within its resources for the final year of that period is set out in the UKSC's Strategic Plan for 2012 – 2015, but this Business Plan sets out how it plans through greater efficiencies and otherwise to meet the key aim of living within its declining means in the financial year 2013 – 2014.

Background and Context

5. The UKSC's creation in 2009 marked the visible separation of the United Kingdom's highest court from both the executive and the legislature. It was designed both to increase the transparency of the judicial process and to clarify the relationship between the Judiciary, Government and Parliament. The role of the Court and the Justices is to act as the final Court of Appeal for arguable points of law of general public importance arising from civil cases throughout the United Kingdom; and from criminal cases in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Court also hears cases to determine issues relating to the legal

competence of the devolved administrations, Parliaments and Assemblies. (This jurisdiction transferred to the UKSC on 1 October 2009 from the JCPC.)

6. The UKSC is independent of the Ministry of Justice and of the separate Court Services in England & Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. As an administration it is a non-Ministerial department headed by a Chief Executive who is also the Accounting Officer. The CRA sets out the statutory framework and defines the responsibilities of the Lord Chancellor, the President of the Court and the Chief Executive. An ongoing task for the Court is to ensure that the separate roles of the Judiciary, Executive and Legislature are clear and widely publicly recognized.

Ongoing aims for 2013 – 2014

7. (i) We will maintain the constitutional position of the UKSC as the apex of the judicial branch of the State and its independence from the Executive, in reality as well as in theory. Since the Executive is a party in over half the cases which come before the court, it is particularly important that this both is, and is seen to be, the case.

(ii) A key outcome will therefore be that the UKSC will continue to be publicly recognized as unequivocally independent of political influence and interference; and it will remain visibly separate from both the executive and the legislature and be publicly acknowledged to be such.

(iii) It will also continue to be recognized as the single apex of the UK's civil law and, apart from Scotland, for criminal law as well. A key indicator will be that there will therefore be no successful challenges in the European Court of Human Rights on the grounds that a lack of judicial independence in the UKSC has compromised the Article 6 Requirement for a fair trial.

(iv) The UKSC will also devote effort to demonstrating that, although London based, it is truly a UK institution. The Justices reiterate that, if suitable cases arise, they would in principle hold sittings in Edinburgh, Belfast or Cardiff.

Section 2

Securing the Justices' Constitutional And Financial Independence

Relations with the Lord Chancellor

8. The President and Deputy President of the Court have regular, if occasional, bilateral meetings with the Lord Chancellor to discuss matters of mutual concern, although the Lord Chancellor and his officials are not in any way involved in the day to day running of the Court, the administration of which is a fully independent Non – Ministerial Department in its own right. In accordance with Section 48(4) of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 (CRA) the Chief Executive of the Court must carry out her functions in accordance with any directions given by the President. These meetings will continue in 2013 – 2014.

Financial Independence

9. The main interface with the Lord Chancellor is that the CRA (Section 50(1)(b)) places upon the Lord Chancellor the duty of providing the UKSC with such resources as he thinks are appropriate for the Court to carry on its business. In practice this duty is discharged in the context of the Spending Reviews conducted Government wide by the Treasury from time to time, which determine Departmental budgets for the following three or four years. 2013 – 2014 is the third year of the Spending Review settlement announced in the autumn of 2010 for the four fiscal years running from April 2011 to March 2015. Thus the Court knows what its resources should be for both the 2013 – 2014 fiscal year and the following one. Like the resources of all other Departments the Court’s resources have been set to decline each year in the Spending Review period.

10. The duty on the Lord Chancellor to provide the Court with adequate resources to carry on its business is balanced by a duty on the Chief Executive to ensure that the Court uses those resources to provide an efficient and effective system to support the Court in carrying on its business (CRA Section 51).

11. The UKSC has remained within its budget in every financial year since its inception and will aim to do so again in 2013 - 2014.

12. The UKSC / JCPC’s resources actually comprise four different elements. The first is an amount directly voted by Parliament in accordance with the terms of the Spending Review settlement.

13. The other three elements comprise:

(1) fees paid directly by UKSC / JCPC litigants. The amount the UKSC / JCPC expects to receive from these is obviously a forward projection, based on fee levels and the volume of cases the two courts have historically received in recent years. Although we can control fee levels, we cannot control demand. Indeed to the extent that fee levels increase, they will likely act as a small disincentive to demand, although the larger drivers of demand are likely to be factors in the wider economy and in society determining the propensity to litigate and over which the UKSC / JCPC has no control.

(2) income derived from so called ‘wider market initiatives’, which in our case means the income the UKSC / JCPC can generate from hiring out parts of the building and from the sale of gifts and souvenirs. We have some control over this by means of promoting the marketing of the building as a suitable venue for events and from producing an attractive range of souvenirs and selling them at attractive prices.

(3) the largest of these three elements (about 85%) is annual contributions from the judicial systems of the three jurisdictions from which cases come to the UKSC - England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. In turn the lion’s share of these (88%) inevitably comes from England and Wales, since the contributions are based on the proportions of civil cases which come from each jurisdiction. This last element is intended to reflect the benefits to all civil litigants of judgments given here. This is a regime agreed by Ministers as part of the funding arrangements after the passage of the CRA.

14. In 2013 – 2014 the UKSC / JCPC will continue to seek to secure the resilience of each of these three elements. It is particularly important that we are able to rely on receiving the annual contributions from the three jurisdictions, and especially that from England and Wales, since these, and especially this last one, form such a high proportion of the income the UKSC receives which does not come directly from Parliament.

Research Project on Judicial Independence and Accountability

15. The court will continue to contribute to a research project on judicial independence and accountability being undertaken by academics from the Constitution Unit at University College London, the School of Law at Queen Mary College, London and the University of Birmingham. The Chief Executive, the Director of Corporate Services and the Registrar have all been interviewed as part of the project.

Section 3

Promoting the Rule of Law

Casework

16. This is the core work of both the UKSC and the JCPC and it will be given the highest priority. The jurisdiction of the UKSC and the permission to appeal (PTA) requirements are set out in Annex B to this Plan, as are the jurisdictions from which cases come to the JCPC.

17. In cases where PTA is required from the UKSC (or, more rarely, the JCPC), once the required papers have been filed with the Court, the Court's target is, and in 2013 – 2014 will continue to be, to determine that application within twelve sitting weeks. In urgent cases, a request for expedition may be made and the Court can often determine an expedited application within 14 days or even less.

Appeals

18. Appeals are normally heard in open court before five Justices, although in cases which meet the criteria set out below seven or even nine Justices will sit. The criteria to be used when considering whether more than five Justices should sit on a panel are:

- If the Court is being asked to depart, or may decide to depart from a previous decision.
- A case of high constitutional importance.
- A case of great public importance.
- A case where a conflict between decisions in the House of Lords, Judicial Committee of the Privy Council and /or the Supreme Court has to be reconciled.
- A case raising an important point in relation to the European Convention on Human Rights.

Sitting Days

19. Once permission to appeal has been granted, a hearing date is fixed based on the time estimate provided by the parties. The Court's target is that all hearing dates will be offered within four sitting weeks of the grant of permission for UKSC cases and within eight sitting weeks of the grant of permission for JCPC cases. Hearings in the UKSC usually last for two days. The Court's target remains for all appeals to be heard within nine months of the grant of permission.

20. The Court is, however, sensitive to the needs of a particular case and of its parties. It therefore seeks to arrange hearings according to the availability of parties' legal representatives; and it is invariably this factor which causes hearings to be delayed beyond nine months from the grant of permission on the occasions when this happens. The Court would not be accessible, if it insisted on parties instructing new counsel if their existing counsel was not available, and it would be hugely expensive for parties to have to instruct new counsel, simply in order to expedite a hearing. In practice the Court can and has arranged hearings within weeks of the grant of permission in a number of urgent cases (e.g. family and extradition cases).

Policy Developments

21. The UKSC / JCPC will aim to keep in touch with relevant policy developments throughout Government, which might impact on UKSC business, as Departments introduce initiatives designed to improve their own efficiency and value for money. With effect from February 2013 we have also instituted an arrangement whereby the President and Deputy President will make an annual appearance before the House of Lords Constitution Committee to give evidence on topical issues which may impact upon the court. They are likely therefore to appear again before that Committee in the early months of 2014.

22. The Ministry of Justice (MOJ), for example, has reviewed the provision of legal aid, which could impact on the flow of cases to the UKSC. Similarly, the outcomes of proposals to reform the extent of judicial review will be monitored closely to assess any potential impact on the Court's caseload.

23. Also, following Lord Justice Jackson's report on civil costs and the still very recent amendments to the Costs Rules, the UKSC will in 2013 – 2014 study these amendments closely and consult its users as to what steps it should take, in order to see whether the UKSC's procedures and those of the JCPC need to be correspondingly changed.

24. We shall also be working with the MOJ in order to implement recent changes in respect of Recovery of Defence Costs Orders and fee remissions to the extent that these are relevant to the UKSC.

25. The UK Government is continuing to pursue reform of aspects of the administration and governance of the European Court of Human Rights. We will continue to monitor any consequential implications from this for the nature and volume of the UKSC's own caseload. The Government's proposed referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union following the next General Election and after negotiations on elements of the terms of such membership could also have implications for the Court, and again we will monitor developments.

26. The Justice and Security Bill and the Crime and Courts Bill both have potential repercussions for the work and administration of the Court (and at the time of writing are both awaiting final debates in the Houses of Parliament and Royal Assent). We will assess the final implications for the work of the UKSC, once this new legislation is enacted.

27. Reflecting the UK Government's commitment contained in the Coalition's mid-term review to extend court broadcasting to other courts in England and Wales, we stand ready to continue to help relevant policy teams with advice on our own experience of operating broadcasting services from the Court.

28. We will also be monitoring policy developments in Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales, to see how they might impact on the work of the Court. In Scotland, for example, significant reform of the legal system is planned over this and subsequent years.

A court and procedures which users find clear and easier to use

29. Another key objective for the UKSC is that it should be an accessible court for users with procedures which are clear, simple and understandable, providing an efficient and effective service to all court users:

- We will continue the regular meetings with court users to ensure that the procedural regime we have in place continues to achieve our objectives. We will make any revisions to the procedural regime, which appear to be necessary, and consider recommendations for changes to procedures and practices to promote service improvements. The User Committee includes representatives from all the UK jurisdictions and from users of the JCPC and the minutes of the User Committee meetings can be found on the UKSC website.

Use of modern technology to improve court functions

30. The UKSC / JCPC has an integrated modern Information Technology (IT) system, supporting both the conduct of cases in court and the back office case management, library services and office support work. There is a UKSC and a separate JCPC website as well as an intranet for Justices and staff.

- This technology has begun to enable the development of more effective and efficient support to the Justices with improved and quicker access to UKSC and JCPC judgments. Judgments are usually placed onto the UKSC or JCPC website within an hour of their being handed down in court. In addition, a pilot scheme is ongoing to test alternative IT provision for Justices that will enable more efficient and easier remote access when working away from the Court building.
- The UKSC and the JCPC have started to move towards the use of electronic bundles accessible on screen for the actual hearing of cases in court. Two test cases have been heard using electronic bundles and the Court is now working with regular users to identify further cases where this can happen.

Public Access, Education & Outreach

31. A key objective of the UKSC / JCPC is to present the two Courts' activities in the most clear and accessible ways possible, to the widest range of audiences. We now average over 70,000 visitors to the building per year with our website averaging over 40,000 distinct visitors each month.

32. During 2013 – 2014 we plan to build further on this progress and, informed by our experience to date, develop programmes and initiatives to increase awareness of the Courts taking account of present resource limitations.

Access to the Court

33. The UKSC and JCPC building is easily accessible by the public who are able to visit it and attend hearings. Details of forthcoming cases and judgments are already published on our websites, and we will continue to explore what further background papers might be made available online to assist those interested in attending cases. Details of any planned closures will be published online.

34. The UKSC / JCPC will continue to improve the accessibility of our websites for partially sighted users, alongside further training for our staff on how appropriately to assist those with access difficulties.

35. In addition, we will continue to film all proceedings of the court and, on request, make recordings available to educational establishments and to the main public broadcast organisations for use in news or current affairs programmes. Since May 2011 we have allowed Sky News to use our footage to stream proceedings live on a specially created Sky webpage which is currently visited by more than 20,000 unique users each month. Early in 2013 we launched our own YouTube channel, upon which we will continue to upload footage from the case summaries given by the Justices when they hand down their judgment in court. This will include significant JCPC judgments as well as every UKSC judgment.

36. We will continue to offer a dedicated reception/information desk service every day the Court is open, to welcome visitors and deal with enquiries. We will continue to seek entries in key tourist guides to encourage more visitors. Following last year's consolidation of our visitor leaflets to generate cost savings over the longer term, we will similarly revamp the JCPC leaflet this year to update the content in light of visitor feedback.

37. In 2013 – 2014 we will again open the Court for seven 'open access' days. These are designed to give members of the public the opportunity to see some private areas of the building. The dates will be publicized on the Court's website and through clear external signage. We plan again to include children's activities.

38. Two of the days will be part of the London 'Open House' weekend, when numerous buildings of architectural interest in the capital are open to visitors. Last year, for the first time, instead of pre-arranged tours we allowed visitors to come to the building at their leisure. This generated a very encouraging response, with almost 2,700 visitors looking around the building over the course of the weekend. We aim to repeat this in 2013, and to focus visitor material on the centenary of the Middlesex Guildhall building (which will form the topic of our temporary summer exhibition this year). We additionally plan to open the building on a Saturday in May 2013 as a pilot to ascertain the volume of demand for occasional weekend opening, in order to allow a broader range of visitors to see the building.

Media liaison

39. We will continue to distribute alerts about forthcoming judgments, and issue judgments to media contacts by email as soon as they are delivered in Court. We will continue to supplement this with forward planning lists highlighting the forthcoming cases likely to be of the most public interest before each legal term.

40. We will respond to media requests in a timely fashion, continue to develop our database of media contacts, and identify proactive opportunities to highlight aspects of the Court's work, particularly focusing on forthcoming cases and our educational work.

41. We will develop a media handling strategy for the retirement of Lord Hope as Deputy President as well as the appointment of his successor.

42. In February 2012 we launched an official 'Twitter' feed for the Court, to keep users of this popular micro-blogging site updated with information on our judgments and other news. We have so far attracted almost 30,000 'followers' (as at March 2013) and in 2013 – 2014 we will continue to monitor tweets received (although as a matter of policy we do not reply to all messages received).

Education and Outreach

43. We aim to continue to increase the number of visits from school, college and university groups during 2013 - 2014, especially from beyond England, and to add value to their time in the Court by developing more curriculum-related materials that groups can use before, during and after their visit. Feedback on this material will be collected and analysed to inform future developments.

44. We have continued our partnership with the National Centre for Citizenship and Law to offer schools the opportunity to spend a half-day at the Court learning about the concepts of advocacy, precedent, and the Rule of Law. During 2013 - 2014 we will organize one of these sessions each month (except in July and August). For 2013, the Court has increased considerably the number of bookings we have arranged for the final rounds of mooting (mock legal debate) competitions organized by university groups. Growing demand for the Court to serve as a venue for such events has led us to develop and publish a policy for university groups, explaining the basis upon which we will consider requests.

45. Other educational initiatives in the coming year include the production of a film aimed at GCSE level students to watch before a visit to the court, to set our work in context; and continued support for the third year for the "Big Voice London" project (a student-led initiative exploring themes around legal and political advocacy, aimed at engaging AS Level students who might not usually consider a career in law).

Exhibition Development

46. Following last year's successful large scale temporary exhibition titled 'Playing by the Rules: Sport and the Law', we will again produce and curate an exhibition to be mounted during the summer months, which for 2013 will focus on the centenary of the Middlesex Guildhall building (opened in December 1913 as the headquarters for Middlesex County Council). We are working with a number of special interest groups, including the Middlesex Guildhall Art trust, the Middlesex Regimental Association and Westminster Abbey, to seek to reflect a breadth of stories about the building's history.

47. In addition we are developing our permanent exhibition informed by visitor feedback: we will add one of the Letters Patent granted to new Justices, and update the “Be a Justice” interactive database of noteworthy appeals.

Guided tours and other new services

48. Demand continues from membership and professional organisations for Court staff to provide guided tours of the building. The guided tours, for which we now charge, include areas not normally open to the public. Offering pre-bookable tours on certain days allows us to concentrate more fully for the remaining majority of days on educational tours and activities, while still encouraging ‘ad hoc’ visitors freely to explore the building. We aim to deliver at least the same number of ‘paid for’ guided tours as we did in 2012-13.

49. As part of the Court’s objective to take opportunities to develop appropriate revenue streams, we hire out some of the building’s larger rooms for corporate events when the court is not sitting. We will continue to market this service during 2013-14 and to build on the operating profit achieved during 2012-13.

50. During 2012 we built up a range of new souvenir gift lines, which we intend more actively to promote during 2013-14 through the installation of a larger, bespoke display cabinet in our café area.

Section 4

Providing Efficient and Effective Administration

Governance Arrangements

51. To support the Chief Executive both in her statutory responsibilities, and her responsibilities as an Accounting Officer, an internal governance structure has been established which comprises a Management Board, an Audit Committee, and a Health and Safety Committee. The Management Board meets monthly, and the Audit Committee and the Health and Safety Committee meet quarterly. Two Non-Executive Directors have been appointed to the Management Board, one of whom chairs the Audit Committee. The Audit Committee also includes representatives from Scotland and Northern Ireland. The membership of these committees as at 31 March 2013 is as follows:

Management Board

Jenny Rowe – Chief Executive
William Arnold – Director of Corporate Services
Louise di Mambro – Registrar
Olufemi Oguntunde – Director of Finance
Martin Thompson – Building/Health and Safety Manager
Ben Wilson – Head of Communications
Chris Maile – Head of Human Resources
Paul Brigland – Head of ICT and Records Manager
Alex Jablonowski – Non-Executive Director
Philip Robinson – Non-Executive Director

Audit Committee

Philip Robinson – Chairman
Alex Jablonowski
Charles Winstanley – Representative from Scotland
Laurene McAlpine – Representative from Northern Ireland

Health and Safety Committee

William Arnold (Chair)
Martin Thompson – Building / H&S Manager
Toyin Soley – Deputy Building / H&S Manager
Chris Maile – Head of Human Resources
Ian Sewell - Trade Union H&S representative
James Noone – Security Manager
Clive Brown – Building Engineer
Georgina Isaac – Head of Judicial Support
Jackie Lindsay – JCPC Chief Clerk
Nadia Lopes – Café Supervisor

Finance

52. The Finance Division supports the Chief Executive and the Management Board in order to enable effective corporate decision making and to assist in the shaping of the Court's future direction. Its aim is to put the Court's customers (both internal and external) at the heart of everything the UKSC does, ensuring that finance & procurement systems and processes meet their needs and continue to meet the expectations of all stakeholders.

53. Its main priorities in 2013 – 2014 will be to

- Continue to seek more efficient ways of delivering value for money in the finance, procurement and payroll functions by fully optimizing the opportunities presented by the new finance system.
- Continue to improve the existing arrangement between HR Shared Services Payroll and look to find the most cost effective way to deliver an efficient payroll service that is suitable for the Court.
- Continue to maintain a robust framework of financial planning, management and reporting (including value for money) in the court; and
- Respond to requirements from key external Departmental stakeholders (e.g. the Treasury, the MOJ and both Internal & External Auditors etc.) in a timely manner.

Resources

54. The division also manages UKSC / JCPC finances overall and ensures that none of the control limits imposed by the Treasury is breached.

55. The UKSC's Spending Review 2010 Budget Settlement for 2013 - 2014 is summarised below:

	£ '000
Judicial Pay & Expenses	3,700
Depreciation	1,041
Other Costs	8,487
Total Gross Costs	13,228
Contributions from Jurisdictions	(6,442)
Fees & wider Market Initiatives	(1,035)
Net Resource DEL	5,751
Capital DEL	46

56. The main finance objectives of the UKSC / JCPC over the period covered by this plan are:

- Operating within the agreed budget control limits and ensuring value for money, propriety and regularity are demonstrated in all financial decisions.
- Ensuring all processes are in place to make timely and accurate financial payments.
- Production of an unqualified set of 2012 - 2013 Resource Accounts and ensuring they are laid before the summer 2013 Parliamentary Recess.
- Ensuring an adequate system is in place to monitor spending and report it regularly to the Management Board.
- Ensuring timely and appropriate Supplementary Estimates are agreed with the Treasury.
- Producing IFRS compliant resource accounts at the end of 2013 - 2014 in accordance with a timetable agreed with the external auditors.

Greater Transparency in the use of public funding

57. The UKSC's last three sets of accounts demonstrate that proper financial systems and controls are in place with clear accountability for all funding and services and that efficiency and value for money are being delivered from the resources consumed through the UKSC's improved facilities (and its co-location with the JCPC). The aim is that this will continue in 2013 - 2014.

58. Key indicators will continue to be no adverse National Audit Office (NAO) comments on the accounts; and that these and the Annual Report are produced and published before the Summer Parliamentary Recess.

59. Details of Justices and Senior Management remuneration will be published in the Annual Report together with the details of Justices' expenses, which will also continue to be published annually on the UKSC website.

JCPC Fees

60. As a separate court the JCPC continues to have its own fee regime and the fee income it receives is identified separately in the UKSC Accounts. This provides the necessary transparency between the two courts. During 2012 – 2013 after consultation with those Government departments which have an interest in the operation of the JCPC, we consulted the jurisdictions which use the JCPC on a rationalization of the JCPC fee regime, so that JCPC fees might better reflect the marginal additional costs of bringing cases before the JCPC.

61. As a consequence a revised fee regime for JCPC fees comes into effect on 1 April 2013 and in the financial year 2013 – 2014 we shall therefore be monitoring carefully what impact this has on both the JCPC workload and the overall income generated by JCPC fees.

Risk

62. Risk is an inherent part of doing business. The management team has the responsibility for managing principal risks on a day to day basis and has developed a robust process for identifying, evaluating and managing the risks faced by the UKSC. These are formally reviewed by the Management Board on a monthly basis with a more detailed review taking place quarterly. The identified risks are captured in the UKSC's Risk Register. Ownership of each risk is allocated to an individual member of the Management Board who is responsible for managing actions devised to reduce the likelihood and impact of the risk.

63. There is also a Business Continuity Plan in place to support the continued operation of the UKSC (and / or the JCPC, as the case may be) and in particular its casework.

64. Additionally, the audit committee reviews and advises how the UKSC / JCPC should identify, model and manage risks. The committee comprises two non executive directors and two members from the contributing jurisdictions of Scotland and Northern Ireland.

65. In relation to internal risks the UKSC / JCPC has a clear set of rules and procedures. This covers all aspects of finance, HR, procurement, information security and general areas of governance. In relation to external risks the UKSC conducts an annual review of what these might be and how it might mitigate their impact upon the conduct of the business of the court.

People

66. In line with the wider Civil Service Reform Programme in 2013 – 2014 our challenge will be to find imaginative ways of maintaining our commitment to developing our staff and to build on the achievements made during our first four years of operation while ensuring that all new initiatives and existing services offer value for money and are the right decisions for the long term future of the Court.

67. To assess levels of employee engagement our third annual staff survey was issued in October 2012. We received an impressive 92 % completion rate with overall positive responses from staff about working at the UKSC/JCPC and giving an overall engagement score of 77%. The survey highlighted some further areas for improvement, such as encouraging development opportunities and improving communication across different teams. As a result a team comprising four key members of staff from different parts of the Court has published a 'Results into Action' Plan on the Intranet alongside the survey results to help address the areas for improvement during 2013-14. Progress with the action plan will be measured against the 2013 staff survey results.

68. In order that we make the best use of the range of skills that we have, we will continue to keep our staffing structure under review in order to ensure that it likewise continues to offer the best service and provides the best value for money.

69. Although we use the MoJ HR Shared Services Centre and have developed with them an effective operating model for the Court, during 2013 - 14 preparations will begin to explore alternative options to provide the full range of HR services in the longer term for the UKSC / JCPC, in order to ensure we have the most appropriate service for a small organization which also provides the best value for money.

A place where people want to work

70. Staff turnover has been relatively low with only three resignations in the last 12 months and with staff sickness absence levels well below the Civil Service average. The staff survey results in 2012 gave an excellent overall picture of engagement. Staff commented how proud they were to work at the UKSC / JCPC and that they enjoyed their work and understood how their role fitted with the strategic objectives of the Court. We have agreed a set of shared values for staff and will ensure that these are recognised by UKSC / JCPC staff as a set of values to which they can all adhere and which are reflected in everyday actions.

71. The annual Judicial Assistants Campaign successfully continues to attract a wide range of lawyers interested in the opportunity from across the United Kingdom and allows us to promote the court within the legal profession.

Complaints, correspondence and core standards

72. The UKSC / JCPC deals with complaints in accordance with our complaints policy covering staff and administrative procedures. The policy was amended in January 2013 to provide greater clarity around the steps involved in investigating a complaint, and to make clearer the role of the Chief Executive and Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman in the process. We monitor the level of complaints, using them as a tool to improve our performance. We have begun to register an increasing volume of general correspondence and requests to the UKSC, which in 2013 – 2014 could lead to a pressure for additional staffing resource to enable them to continue to be handled in line with the relevant performance indicators (as set out in Annex C).

73. All staff at the UKSC / JCPC operate under a set of agreed core office standards which deal with external contacts and communications, together with internal issues such as staff management, Information Technology, use of resources, health and safety, security and team-working.

Library facilities

74. Access to relevant and up-to-date legal information is important to the Justices, Judicial Assistants, and the court. The librarians will continue to ensure that the library contains, identifies, acquires and catalogues material that supports the work of the Justices

and the court. This will also involve endeavouring to fill gaps in the serials collection and building up a collection of old editions of practitioner textbooks. The librarians will also ensure that there is access to relevant electronic databases.

75. The librarians will continue to collate and disseminate information on legal resources, both print and electronic, via the *Library Handbook*, which will be updated annually, and via the library's intranet pages which will be updated regularly.

76. The librarians will continue to alert the Justices, JAs, and the court to relevant books, journal articles, and court judgments, via a monthly current awareness newsletter.

77. The library will monitor the situation regarding copyright for print material, i.e. central government negotiations with the Copyright Licensing Agency. It will maintain the current copyright compliance information on the Intranet.

78. The library will build on its relationships with other law libraries, both in the UK and abroad, with a view to sharing information, expertise and resources. The head Librarian will attend the annual conference of the British & Irish Association of Law Librarians (BIALL) in June 2013. She is a founder member of the Government Law Librarians Forum (GLLF) and is leading a GLLF project to produce a union list of law serials held in government libraries which will be completed in spring 2013. A new project to map government holdings of old editions of textbooks will start in summer 2013.

Security Guarding Contract

79. Security guarding is an area of significant expenditure and great operational significance. As of 1 February 2012, and following an open competition, the UKSC has had a direct contract with Carlisle Security Services Limited. The contract period is four years with an option to extend by up to two years. We will continue to monitor the performance of the contractor to ensure that exemplary levels of security are maintained.

80. We also recognise that the guards are in the front line of interaction with professional court users and members of the public visiting the Court. We have received a number of compliments in past years on their attitude to these groups, and we intend to continue to pass on such compliments in order to motivate and encourage the behaviours that are working in this regard.

Building and Accommodation

81. Subject to the availability of funds we will continue to operate the building at the best efficiency we can achieve, and to maintain it in excellent condition as befits such an important public building. As a Listed Building the court must secure consent for any work affecting the historic fabric, and to this end we maintain a close working relationship with English Heritage and Westminster City Council Planning Department through annual liaison meetings and ad hoc consultation when required for a project under consideration.

82. Maintenance, repairs and building projects were until 2012 – 2013 undertaken by a Facilities Management company operating under two Ministry of Justice contracts:

- Planned Preventative Maintenance (PPM) for day-to-day running of the building
- Measured Term Contract (MTC) for repairs and alterations as needs arise

These MOJ contracts come to a conclusion in May 2013 and we have therefore run a competitive tender, which has resulted in M. J. Ferguson being awarded the contract (with PPM and MTC combined) to run the services, termed Hard Facilities Management (Hard FM), for an initial period of 5 years from 1 June 2013.

83. The new contract should deliver PPM services at a lower cost than under the MoJ contract and we will administer the new contract, which is a NEC3 industry standard contract endorsed by government, to achieve that. Expenditure on building projects under the MTC element of the new contract is also expected to reduce markedly from that in 2012 - 2013, although this is difficult to predict in that there have previously been instances of unforeseeable repair and upgrading works being necessary.

84. Cleaning services have also, up to now, been undertaken by a company operating under a Ministry of Justice contract, albeit in this instance reaching a conclusion on 30 April 2013. We have therefore run a competitive tender for cleaning services also, which has resulted in Julius Rutherford being awarded the contract to run these services for an initial period of 5 years from 1 May 2013. The new contract should deliver cleaning services for no more than under the MoJ contract notwithstanding our requirement that the contractor should pay its staff at least the London Living Wage.

85. We will ensure the incumbent contractor continues to fulfill its contractual obligations until the MoJ contract concludes on 30 April. It is possible that all or some of the MoJ contractor's cleaners will then transfer to the new service provider under TUPE. We will work with the new contractor during a mobilisation phase to achieve a smooth take over of the services and, thereafter, monitor the contractor's performance and identify areas, if any, where delivery can be enhanced.

Information and Communication Technology

86. The UKSC already has its own contracts for telephony services. At present IT equipment and support is provided via the MOJ's contracts with Logica and ATOS, which are due to expire in 2013 - 2014. Work is now under way to arrange for the future provision of IT services and equipment for the UKSC. This will involve the UKSC purchasing its IT equipment and services directly. These purchases will be via the approved frameworks operated by the Government Procurement Service or via the governments G-Cloud Store. It is envisaged that any new arrangements will be operational before the end of the 2013-14 Financial Year.

Section 5

Maintaining Relationships with All the UK Jurisdictions

Managing Relationships with all the UK jurisdictions

87. The Court takes very seriously its position as a Court of the United Kingdom and we seek to keep in touch with political and legal developments in all parts of the UK.

88. The context is regularly changing. For example in a referendum in March 2011 the people of Wales voted in favour of greater legislative powers for the National Assembly for Wales (NAW). In 2012 the UKSC received its first formal reference testing the validity of the first piece of legislation enacted by the NAW under its enhanced powers. In Scotland the election of a majority SNP Government in May 2011 led to a change in relationships with the rest of the UK which is still developing.

89. Key issues for 2013 – 2014 are therefore to be ready for any increase in work, which may result from the greater legislative powers of the National Assembly for Wales, and the implications for the UKSC of the majority SNP Government’s commitment to hold a referendum on full independence for Scotland in late 2014.

90. During 2013 - 2014 particular priorities will be to:

1. Ensure that, with the coming into force of sections 34 to 37 of the Scotland Act 2012, which provide that raising a devolution issue in criminal proceedings will be largely replaced by appeals and references in relation to “compatibility issues” (under sections 288AA and 288ZB of the Criminal Procedure (Scotland) Act 1995), practitioners are aware of the procedural changes introduced by changes to Practice Direction 10, in particular that the powers of the Supreme Court will be exercisable only for the purpose of determining a compatibility issue. (Specific provision is also made in PD 10 for the procedure in references.)
2. Maintain effective communications with all the territorial authorities and courts.
3. Continue regular visits by the Chief Executive to Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales.
4. Continue in suitable cases to invite appropriate Judges from Scotland and Northern Ireland as well as from England and Wales to sit in the UKSC and JCPC.
5. Continue in the annual recruitment of Judicial Assistants to seek those whom have expertise in the laws of Scotland and Northern Ireland
6. Monitor any implications for the Supreme Court of the legislative programme being pursued by the Welsh Government, and any relevant outcomes from Phase II of the Commission on Devolution in Wales (tasked with reviewing the powers of the National Assembly for Wales and to recommend modifications to the present constitutional arrangements and expected to report in Spring 2014).

7. Monitor developments on the scheduled referendum for Scottish independence in 2014.
8. Monitor and prepare for any changes or developments in the powers of the devolved government in Northern Ireland.
9. Continue to encourage visits from schools and educational institutions from around the UK, particularly encouraging those from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Section 6

Maintaining International Relationships

Maintaining International Relationships

91. The UK Supreme Court has attracted a good deal of international interest since its creation. That interest has increased since the Court has become a more established feature of the constitutional and judicial landscape. The overall volume of visitors and length of visits has also increased and the member of staff who devotes about half of her time to international liaison work has seen a marked rise in the number of requests received.

92. The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council is almost solely concerned with cases from overseas jurisdictions. We are keen to maintain and develop relationships with the judges and court officials in those countries which use the JCPC. We will continue to monitor the potential impact on the JCPC's work – load and fee income of those countries in the Caribbean which may be contemplating replacing the JCPC with the Caribbean Court of Justice as their final court of appeal.

93. The UKSC receives frequent requests for information on and for visits to the Supreme Court and the JCPC, combined with discussions with both Justices and administrators. We do our best to accommodate these requests and during 2013 - 2014 we already have the following visits in the programme:

- On 2 May 2013 we are hosting a visit from the Young Professional Organisation inside Westminster.
- On 22 May 2013 we are hosting a visit from members of the State Bar of California on their biennial week in legal London.
- On 6 June 2013 we will be hosting a delegation of 36 Thai Judges from the office of the Thai Judiciary as part of their two week programme on Consumer Protection Law.
- We are expecting a judicial delegation from the USA at some point in the year

94. With the agreement of the President of the Court, designated Justices will continue to sit as additional judges in the Court of Final Appeal in Hong Kong. These sittings form part of an agreement reached by the UK Government and the Government of China at the time of the handover of Hong Kong in 1997. All expenses are paid by the Hong Kong Government. We expect two Justices to spend a month sitting in the Court of Final Appeal during the course of 2013 – 2014.

95. Our work will continue with the Slynn Foundation and other NGOs to assist on building relationships with other jurisdictions, particularly those in Eastern Europe.

96. We will work towards achieving a successful outgoing exchange in early May 2013 between Justices of the Supreme Court and the Israeli Supreme Court as part of the continuing UK-Israeli Legal Exchange programme.

97. We will continue to work with colleagues in the Foreign Office to ensure that the JCPC meets the needs of the British Overseas Territories and other Commonwealth

countries and also discuss with them the best way to co-ordinate visit requests from overseas members of the judiciary.

98. As part of our ongoing commitment and membership of the Network of President's of the Supreme Judicial Courts of the European Union and ACA Europe Exchange of Judges we will continue to host visits from fellow members.

99. Justices will continue their regular international activities, giving lectures at and attending a range of international legal conferences.

100. We will continue to support the JAs' annual visit to the US and to welcome the Temple Bar Scholars here, in order to help maintain good working relationships with the US judicial system.

101. As part of the Middlesex Guildhall Centenary we will be contacting the Embassies of Poland, Greece, Norway, Belgium and The Netherlands who used the Guildhall as a court during World War 2, to see if they wish to participate in the Centenary celebrations.

Section 7

Delivering Corporate Responsibilities

Diversity and equality

102. The UKSC / JCPC strives to be an organisation that reflects fully the diversity of the society we serve and truly values the contributions which employees from all sections of society make to our work.

103. We are committed to providing fair and open access to justice for everyone. We want to ensure that we do not discriminate against anyone using our services and address any real or perceived disadvantage experienced by the public and/or professional court users.

104. In 2013-2014 we will continue to make progress with the actions set out in the UKSC Equality and Diversity Strategy. These will include:

- ensuring compliance with the provisions contained in the Equality Act 2010 including the Public Equality Duty;
- publishing our Equality and Diversity Strategy on both the intranet and the external website.
- encouraging a diverse range of people to visit the Court and addressing any relevant concerns raised by the Court User Group.
- ensuring our website conforms to all recommended accessibility requirements;
- training staff in Diversity and Equality issues to increase awareness and encourage respect for individual differences.
- continuing to seek ways to achieve experience among the staff from all the jurisdictions of the United Kingdom; and
- actively encouraging diversity among the appointment of Judicial Assistants in the annual recruitment campaign, provided this remains consistent with the requirements of fair and open competition and appointment on the basis of merit.

Information Assurance, Freedom of Information and Data Protection

105. Reliable and accurate information is critical to proper decision making. This makes information a vital business asset that needs to be protected. Procedures for the storage, handling, transmission and disposal of information are in place. Staff complete mandatory annual e-learning modules on information protection and use so that the UKSC's (and JCPC's) information is accurate, available only to the right people, in order to protect its confidentiality, and easily accessible for those with a right to see it.

106. In 2013 – 2014 we will start to realize the full benefits and potential of the electronic file system, which was first rolled out to some users in 2010 – 2011 with full training then being provided to the remainder of users in 2011-12. As well as providing easy access to information for internal administrative purposes it aids the preparation of prompt replies, where applicable, to Freedom of Information (FOI) and Data Protection (DP) requests. In addition the system will be used to implement the records retention and disposal schedule which is in place, ensuring that records are destroyed or retained at the correct times according to their administrative or historical worth in line with public records legislation. Members of staff have already been trained on and are using the case management system on a daily basis.

107. Work has commenced on preserving UKSC / JCPC records for future reference, in accordance with the requirements of the Public Records Act. Off-site storage facilities have been identified to ensure the UKSC / JCPC is able to meet the requirement of its retention schedule to retain records for the appropriate period before selecting those to be sent to The National Archives (TNA) for permanent preservation.

108. Discussions have been started with TNA about the transfer of digital recordings of UKSC and JCPC cases. TNA have indicated they would want to have all recordings of UKSC cases and a selection of JCPC cases. TNA are currently developing their digital storage facilities, but they will not be able to accept digital records until 2014 at the earliest. This has required the UKSC to hire additional digital storage space to preserve the records until TNA are ready to take them.

109. Information assurance processes are in place with the allocation of responsibilities to Information Asset Owners and regular reviews of the Information Asset Register and associated Risk Register. Further work in 2013 - 2014 will involve the continuing assessment and management of information risks in order to ensure compliance with the Hannigan requirements on information assurance.

110. Our FOI Publication Scheme is available on the website and is reviewed annually in September. The Data Protection Notification is in place and will be reviewed and renewed in September 2013.

Sustainable development

111. Sustainable development provides a framework for redirecting economies to enable everyone to meet their basic needs and improve their quality of life while ensuring that the natural resources on which they depend are maintained and enhanced, both for their benefit and for that of future generations. The UKSC has a role in this scheme and will continue to seek to source its supplies with sustainability as a key consideration.

112. Our building also consumes resources. The public sector is directly responsible for around 3% of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions. There is a commitment to reduce central Government emissions by 25% for 2014 - 2015 compared to a 2009 - 2010 baseline. The Court only came into existence in the course of 2009 - 2010, the baseline for the Government's targets, so our current consumption is being compared against the data for

2010 - 2011. Compared with 2010 - 2011, there was an overall decrease in peak and off-peak electricity consumption for 2012 - 2013 (March to February data available at the time of writing) of 15%; and, compared with 2010 - 2011, there was a decrease of 15% in kWh of gas used in 2012 - 2013.

113. What we have observed is that energy consumption decreased significantly in 2011 - 2012 from that in 2010 - 2011, but then stabilised and even crept up for 2012 - 2013. As we believe we have introduced all the conservation measures with a worthwhile pay-back (such as changing to the current generation of energy saving LED lighting, and fine - tuning the heating and cooling systems of our building), the only future reduction in energy consumption compared with the baseline will be the result of benign weather (warm winters and cool summers) rather than any further interventions. Thus, although we will continue to monitor energy consumption during 2013 - 2014, there is no expectation that it will be on a reducing trend.

114. This is reflected in the Display Energy Certificate rating of the building. When the DEC was renewed for 2012, there was an improvement in the points score over 2011 presumed to be due to the energy conservation works that had been implemented. Nevertheless, we again fell in the 'F' rating range rather than a 'D' or an 'E' said to be typical for our type of building. The Court is, however, difficult to operate at theoretical peaks of efficiency because, although there are modern heating and cooling installations, they are within a century old building which is open for long hours and welcomes large numbers of visitors.

Health & Safety

115. The health and safety of Justices, our staff and visitors is paramount and robust management procedures will continue to be applied. All statutory requirements will be met and compliance is regularly monitored by a Health and Safety Committee which reports quarterly to the Management Board. During 2013 - 2014 we will monitor our performance against targets set in the annually updated Health and Safety Corporate Plan.

**The Supreme Court of the United Kingdom
Parliament Square
London SW1P 3BD**

2 April 2013

ANNEX A

Aim and Objectives

Our Aim

Our aim is to provide an environment which enables the Justices of the Supreme Court to carry out their duties in an effective, visible and accessible way, and which best develops the rule of law and the administration of Justice, both in the UK and in the countries which use the JCPC.

Strategic Objectives for 2012 – 2015

The UKSC intends to do this by:

- Continuing to secure the Justices' constitutional and financial independence
- Promoting the importance of the Rule of Law and its role in securing democratic freedom
- Providing an efficient and effective administration
- Maintaining effective relationships with all jurisdictions in the UK
- Maintaining effective international relationships
- Ensuring the effective delivery of all UKSC corporate responsibilities

Continuing Objectives for 2013 – 2014 for the Administration of the UKSC

1. The UKSC will create an environment, which effectively maintains the independence of the Justices, in which they can carry out their work protected from external pressures and which empowers them to develop the Rule of Law.
2. The UKSC will maintain and increase confidence in the administration of justice throughout the United Kingdom. It will promote transparency in, accessibility to and knowledge of the ways in which justice should be rightly administered. It will thereby promote knowledge of the importance of the Rule of Law, not least as a guarantee of democratic freedom.
3. The UKSC will run an efficient and effective administration, which enables both the UKSC and the JCPC to secure the effective determination of justice, while demonstrating the best possible value for the resources with which they are provided. In particular it will operate case management systems, which provide

4. The UKSC will promote good relations with all the individual jurisdictions, legislatures and governments in the different parts of the United Kingdom.
5. The UKSC and, as appropriate, the JCPC will similarly develop appropriate relationships with courts in Europe, throughout the Commonwealth and in other countries, especially those which share their common law heritage.
6. The UKSC will demonstrate appropriate corporate social responsibility. In particular it will promote diversity amongst its staff, ensuring they are also representative of all the jurisdictions of the United Kingdom. It will also both source its supplies and consume its resources in ways which contribute as much as possible to sustainable development and the conservation of natural resources.
7. The UKSC, as the statutory custodian of its own records, will provide the most appropriate environment it can for the organisation, preservation and future inspection of those records.
8. The UKSC, as occupant of the former Middlesex Guildhall, will promote knowledge of, and interest in, this historic building, the works of art it houses, especially the Middlesex Art Collection, and more generally the history of the County of Middlesex. There will be particular opportunities to do so in 2013, which marks the centenary of the current Guildhall building.

ANNEX B

Jurisdiction of the UKSC

The jurisdiction of the UKSC is the same as that of the Appellate Committee of the House of Lords, with the addition of devolution matters. These issues were formerly determined by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council and have been transferred to the UKSC. As the final court of appeal, the UKSC hears appeals from the following courts in each jurisdiction:

England and Wales

- The Court of Appeal, Civil Division
- The Court of Appeal, Criminal Division
- (in some limited cases) the High Court

Scotland

- The Inner House of the Court of Session

Northern Ireland

- The Court of Appeal in Northern Ireland
- (in some limited cases) the High Court

The procedure for appealing: permission to appeal (PTA) applications

In nearly all cases (but civil cases in Scotland do not need permission to appeal, unless the cases are appeals from the Upper Tribunal) an appellant requires permission to appeal before he or she can appeal to the UKSC. The court appealed from may grant permission, but where that court refuses permission, the appellant can then apply to the UKSC itself for permission. Such applications are generally decided on paper without an oral hearing.

Jurisdiction of the JCPC

The jurisdiction of the JCPC depends largely on local legislation and/or the Constitution of the country from which the appeal is brought or, in some cases, on the relevant Order in Council. In many cases, there is an appeal 'as of right'; in other cases permission may be sought from the JCPC if refused by the courts below.

Jurisdictions where the Privy Council is the final Court of Appeal

Anguilla
Antigua and Barbuda
Bahamas
Bermuda
British Antarctic Territory
British Indian Ocean Territory
British Virgin Islands
Cayman Islands
Cook Islands
Dominica
Falkland Islands
Gibraltar
Grenada
Guernsey
Isle of Man
Jamaica
Jersey
Kiribati
Mauritius
Montserrat
Niue
Pitcairn Islands
Saint Christopher and Nevis
St Helena and dependencies
St Lucia
St Vincent and the Grenadines
Sovereign Bases of Akrotiri and Dhekelia
Trinidad and Tobago
Turks and Caicos Islands
Tuvalu

Brunei

Civil Appeals from the Court of Appeal to the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan for advice to the Sultan

UK

Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons
Church Commissioners
Arches Court of Canterbury
Chancery Court of York
Prize Courts
Court of the Admiralty of the Cinque Ports

Power to refer any matter to the Judicial Committee under section 4 of the Judicial Committee Act 1833

ANNEX C

Performance Indicators (PIs)

Section 51 of the CRA places a duty on the Chief Executive of the UKSC to ‘ensure that the Court’s resources are used to provide an efficient and effective system to support the Court in carrying on its business.’ The UKSC Rules also provide statutory time limits for certain steps and processes. The UKSC Executive team is therefore committed to seeing that the administration of casework and other non-judicial activities are carried out as efficiently and effectively as possible, whilst fully respecting and upholding the independence of the judiciary.

Overarching

- The UKSC will continue to be publicly recognized as unequivocally independent of political influence and interference; and it will remain visibly separate from both the executive and the legislature and be publicly acknowledged to be such.

Casework

Consultation with the UKSC User Committee and comparison with statistical data from the work of the Appellate Committee of the House of Lords has suggested the following PIs for the administration of the Court’s casework.

Independence and Fairness

- There will be no successful Article 6 challenges at the European Court of Human Rights.

Permission Applications

- All decisions will be made within 12 sitting weeks of the receipt by the Court of all necessary documentation.

Appeal Hearings

- All hearing dates will be offered within 4 sitting weeks of the grant of permission for UKSC cases and within 8 sitting weeks of the grant of permission for JCPC cases.

Costs

- All provisional assessments of costs (which are conducted on paper) will be completed within 2 months of the filing of the bill of costs.

Public Access, Education and Outreach

- The UKSC will continue to ensure that film of court hearings, particularly the delivery of judgments, is made available for news and current affairs broadcasting and for educational purposes promptly and efficiently (and by prior request for live transmission), subject always to the Court's overriding right to withhold this, if it would not be appropriate.
- We will ensure press summaries of UKSC and JCPC judgments are published on the relevant website promptly (and on the same morning) after they have been handed down, and that these are simultaneously distributed to media contacts. . We will additionally ensure that films of the judgment summaries are published on the Court's YouTube channel on the day they are delivered in court.
- We will continue to open for seven 'open access' days over the course of the year, and, through a dedicated Reception desk, we will continue to offer a welcome to court users and visitors from across the world to the building on all working days.
- We aim to offer a structured education programme to groups of A-level students for at least 10 separate days over the course of the year, partly delivered through our ongoing partnership with the National Centre for Citizenship and Law.

Finance

- The UKSC will produce and publish (as part of its Annual Report), by 31 July 2013, IFRS compliant resource accounts for the financial year that ended on 31 March 2013, without attracting any adverse National Audit Office (NAO) comments.
- The UKSC's Annual Report for 2012 – 2013 will demonstrate that it is using its resources efficiently and effectively.
- The UKSC will manage within its budget during the financial year 2013 – 2014, so that it is in a position to produce similar accounts in its Annual Report after the end of the present financial year.

Human Resources

- All staff performance appraisals will be completed within deadline.
- We will achieve at least a 70% overall engagement score measured by the annual staff survey.
- All vacancies will be filled in a reasonable timescale following the appropriate recruitment procedures in line with the Civil Service Recruitment Code.
- Provided resources permit, we will ensure that all training and development needs identified as required for staff are delivered.

Correspondence and Core Standards

The following service standards apply in dealings with both court users and members of the general public:

- The UKSC will write in plain English and structure and tailor its communications to the recipient. It will aim to reply (or send a holding letter) to 90% of enquiries within 10 working days of receipt (or to an agreed timetable).
- UKSC staff will aim to answer 90% of telephone calls within 5 rings or as soon as possible if the line is engaged dealing with another caller.

Data Protection & Freedom of Information Requests

- Freedom of Information (FOI) and Data Protection (DP) requests will be dealt with in accordance with the timings set out in the relevant legislation – within 20 working days for FOI and 40 calendar days for DP requests.