LORD CHIEF JUSTICE
OF ENGLAND AND WALES

SENIOR PRESIDENT
OF TRIBUNALS

Judicial Diversity Statement

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The Lord Chief Justice and the Senior President of Tribunals are convinced of the benefits of a more diverse judiciary and are committed to supporting the development of the judiciary in ways that support greater diversity.

Appointment to judicial office is based solely on merit. The independent Judicial Appointments Commission (JAC) must, therefore, be able to select from the widest pool of candidates; and potential applicants must be assured that they will not be disadvantaged by factors such as ethnic origin, gender, disability, sexual orientation or background. They must also be confident that they will be treated fairly after appointment.

The judiciary is therefore committed, not only to encouraging suitable applicants to apply, but also to ensuring that principles of equality and fair treatment apply to all aspects of judicial life. It will therefore have regard to diversity in connection with deployment decisions wherever possible. It is also committed to developing the concept of a judicial career, as envisaged by the independent Advisory Panel on Judicial Diversity chaired by Baroness Neuberger in 2010 (the Neuberger Panel).

Much has already been achieved, including the implementation of many of the recommendations of the Neuberger Panel. The judiciary has long been engaged in an extensive range of activities, many of which are undertaken by judges in their own time, to inform the public about the role of a judge, to improve public confidence in the justice system and to encourage people from non-traditional backgrounds to consider the possibility of a judicial career. The judiciary is continuing to support this work within the resources available and with the goodwill of the individual judges involved.

There is further work to be done. The Lord Chief Justice and the Senior President of Tribunals have therefore commissioned a strategy for encouraging diversity within the judiciary of England and Wales. This will be developed by the Judicial Diversity Committee of the Judges' Council chaired by the Lord Chief Justice.

The direction and purpose of the judicial diversity strategy will be threefold. First, it will be aimed at serving office-holders, supporting those who wish to progress to the more senior levels of the judiciary; at the legal professions, encouraging suitable applicants from all backgrounds to consider applying for judicial office; and at law students and others who may be considering a career in legal practice and have the potential to become the judges of the future. Second, it will remind all judicial officeholders of their responsibilities for promoting diversity, both within their courts and tribunals, and as part of their outreach to the wider community. Third, it will support the work of informing the general public

about the role of a judicial office-holder and the justice system so as to improve their understanding of and confidence in the rule of law.

The Neuberger Panel recognised that change must be implemented as a comprehensive package of reform, involving not just the Lord Chancellor, the Lord Chief Justice and the Chairman of the Judicial Appointments Commission, but also the leaders of the legal profession (Bar Council, Law Society, and Chartered Institute of Legal Executives (CILEx)) and the Senior President of Tribunals. Responsibility for delivering change rests with these authorities acting individually and cumulatively. We must work together effectively if real progress is to be made.

The Diversity Committee, which is supported by staff in the Judicial Office, will report annually to the Judges' Council and to the Judicial Executive Board, the Senior President of Tribunals and the Tribunals Judicial Executive Board. Reports will include an overview of the costs of diversity initiatives (e.g. the work of the DCRJs). Progress will be measured not simply by improvements to the overall diversity figures for the judiciary but also through analysis of data on trends and through the sharing of qualitative information collected from the Diversity Task Force and other sources. The strategy will be reviewed annually and reissued as appropriate.