



Summary of meeting

Advisory Council on National Records and Archives

19 July 2007

Note of the meeting

The following is a summary of the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Council on National Records and Archives held on July 19th 2007 at the Ministry of Defence.

Sir Anthony Clarke, Master of the Rolls, in the Chair. Members present were Ms Else Churchill, Viscount De L'Isle, Dr Jeevan Deol, Professor Harry Dickinson, Sir David Durie, Dr Clive Field, Dr Jennifer Haynes, Mr Graeme Herd, Professor Arthur Lucas, Professor Heidi Mirza, Dr Michael Riley, Lord Roper, Ms Janet Smith, and Ms Stephanie Williams. Also present were Ms Natalie Ceeney, Chief Executive, together with Dr David Thomas, Ms Meg Sweet, and Mr Nick Kingsley of The National Archives, Ms Judy Anckorn, Private Secretary to the Master of the Rolls, and Miss Lâle Ozdemir as Secretary.

Home Office

The first quarterly report of the Home Office that aimed to address the records transfer backlog was presented to the Council members. The re-organisation of Home Office functions has resulted in the Ministry of Justice inheriting some of the records backlog. The Council asked that both the Ministry of Justice and the Home Office would report back on progress of the project.

Access to public records

The query raised in the previous meeting with regard to juveniles was answered: It was reported that the application of section 40 (Personal information) was sometimes used to fill a gap in legislation where statute did not apply to some sensitive information upon transfer. The Council accepted this explanation.

The Council also asked for more information on the general use of the following FoI exemptions: 27 (International relations), 40 (Personal information) and 41 (Information provided in confidence).

Advisory Council recruitment

The Council approved the recommendation that future recruitment would focus on key skills. The forthcoming recruitment campaign would aim to fill two posts: one with an expertise in political experience and another in information rights.

Chief Executive's update

The Chief Executive reported that the scanning of the 1911 census was underway, the work to expand and refurbish the reading rooms as part of Kew 2008 was out to tender and TNA had been allocated £3.5 million to lead on developing a shared service preservation service for central government.