



Ministry
of Justice

Lord Bellamy KC
Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State
for Justice

To: Chair of Justice Select Committee

Sir Robert Neill
Justice Select Committee
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

8th June 2023

Dear Sir Bob,

THE ONLINE PROCEDURE RULE COMMITTEE (OPRC)

The Judicial Review and Courts Act allowed for the creation of the Online Procedure Rule Committee (OPRC). The committee will oversee the development of rules for online proceedings, as well as data and behavioural standards for online dispute resolution (ODR) in the pre-action space (before such proceedings are started) in the civil, family, and tribunal jurisdictions.

I am writing to you to confirm that the provisions for the creation of the OPRC will come into force on 28th June. The committee is due to hold its first meeting at the end of the month. As the committee will be able to make rules within the civil, family, and tribunals space, the heads of these jurisdictions make up the judicial members of the committee in the first instance. Non-judicial members have now been appointed after open competition, and I am pleased to say that the members are:

- Sir Geoffrey Vos, the Master of the Rolls (chair)
- Sir Keith Lindblom, Senior President of Tribunals
- Sir Andrew McFarlane, President of the Family Division
- Brett Dixon, legal expert
- Sarah Stephens, expert in the lay advice sector
- Gerard Boyers, technology expert

The committee will spend its first few meetings providing a foundational understanding of the civil, family, and tribunal justice systems. Once a full induction has taken place, the members will discuss their initial work programme. The legislation dictates that the committee will make rules for proceedings of a specified kind – “specified” meaning specified in regulations. Members will be discussing what these proceedings should be. An affirmative Statutory Instrument will in due course be required to specify the proceedings within the committee’s remit and is expected to go before Parliament next year.

Yours sincerely

Christophe Bellamy

LORD BELLAMY KC