



Ministry
of Justice

The Right Honourable
David Lammy MP
Deputy Prime Minister
Lord Chancellor & Secretary
of State for Justice

ANDY SLAUGHTER
HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON
SW1A 0AA

MoJ Ref: ADR134654

3 June 2026

Dear Andy Slaughter,

Proposed Establishment of a Business and Property Division of the High Court

I am writing to inform the Committee of proposals to modernise the structure of the High Court, specifically through the creation of a new Business and Property Division.

As you will be aware, much of the current structure of the High Court has remained largely unchanged for over a century. In light of evolving demands—particularly the increasing complexity and international nature of commercial and business disputes—the judiciary has brought forward a series of proposals for reform. I have therefore agreed to establish a new Division consolidating the existing Business and Property Courts.

These courts currently operate as a collection of specialist jurisdictions dealing with high-value and complex disputes, including commercial, property, technology and intellectual property matters. They are presently split across the Chancery Division and the King's Bench Division. While they are internationally respected, this distribution can present challenges in terms of accessibility for court users and clarity of leadership.

The proposed reform would bring together these jurisdictions into a single Division by transferring the relevant Business and Property Courts from the King's Bench Division to the Chancery Division. The Chancery Division would at that point be renamed the Business and Property Division. The current leadership judge, the Chancellor of the High Court, would assume the title of President of the Business and Property Division.

The proposal was initiated by and has the support of the Lady Chief Justice. The objectives of this reform are:

- **To support economic growth**, by strengthening the international profile and attractiveness of these courts, thereby reinforcing the UK's position as a leading global dispute resolution centre;
- **To improve access to justice**, through a clearer and more modern structure for both domestic and international users;

- **To enhance judicial governance**, by establishing a single, coherent leadership structure for these jurisdictions; and
- **To improve the flexibility of judicial deployment**, enabling more efficient allocation of judicial expertise.

Subject to finalisation of policy and operational detail, the legislative mechanism for these changes will be an Order in Council, which will be subject to Privy Council approval and will be laid before Parliament as a negative statutory instrument in due course. A programme of consequential amendments to secondary legislation, as well as updates to the Civil Procedure Rules and associated materials, will also be required.

Operational work is underway with HMCTS to assess the necessary changes to systems, processes and guidance. No additional judicial or staffing costs are anticipated as a result of this proposal.

I would be happy to provide further detail or evidence if that would assist the Committee's scrutiny.

Yours sincerely,

RT HON DAVID LAMMY MP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David', followed by a long horizontal stroke and a small loop at the end.

**DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
LORD CHANCELLOR AND SECRETARY OF STATE FOR JUSTICE**