

<i>Meeting</i>	OLC Board	<i>Agenda Item No.</i>	8
		<i>Paper No:</i>	103.7
<i>Date of meeting</i>	26 March 2020	<i>Time required</i>	5 Minutes

<i>Title</i>	<b>Annual Report &amp; Accounts 2019/20 – Update</b>
<i>Sponsor</i>	Sarah Ritzenthaler – Parliamentary and Policy Officer
<i>Status</i>	OFFICIAL
<i>To be communicated to:</i>	Members and those in attendance

<b>Executive summary</b>
<p>The OLC produces an Annual Report &amp; Accounts every year, which provides information about the performance of the organisation over the financial year, remunerations and staff, organisational governance and risk, and detailed accounting information.</p> <p>There are clear parameters in which the report must be produced, and it must be reviewed and signed off by the National Audit Office (NAO) in advance of laying in Parliament.</p> <p>This paper sets out the key elements of the process and provides an update on progress so far, as well as details of next steps. A full timetable of the Annual Report process for 2019/20 is provided in Appendix 1.</p>
<b>Recommendation/action required</b>
Board is asked to <b>NOTE</b> the update provided.

## Annual Report & Accounts 2019/20

### Overview

Each year, the OLC is required to produce an Annual Report and Accounts, as an Arm's Length Body (ALB) of the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), and in line with s26 of Schedule 15 of the Legal Services Act 2007.

This is produced according to guidance laid out in the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) and presented to both Houses of Parliament before the summer recess following year-end.

A project team is formed each year, made up of contributors to the Annual Report from across a variety of business areas. This team works together to produce the content for the Annual Report, and it is compiled and project-managed by the Parliamentary and Policy Officer. A gantt chart is produced every year to map the process from January – July in order to ensure each step of the process is completed and our final deadlines can be met. Please see Appendix 1 for a copy of the gantt chart for 2019/20.

### Key dates

Building on lessons learned from last year's project, we have adjusted the process and timetable for producing the 2019-20 Annual Report and Accounts. The key dates are set out in the table below.

Step	Date
ARAC to discuss key messages and agree timetable	2 March
First draft submitted to OLC Board	27 April
Annual report and accounts shared with ARAC	11 May
Annual report and accounts shared with NAO	12 May
Comments on draft from ARAC	18 May
End of BDO audit	29 May
NAO draft audit completion report	15 June
OLC Board discuss final annual report and accounts	29 June
ARAC final recommendation	1 July
OLC Board to approve out of committee	?
Final annual report and accounts for NAO certification	4 July
Comptroller & Auditor General certification	2 July
Final annual report and accounts sent to LSB	11 July
Annual report discussed by the LSB Board	14 July
Annual report laid before Parliament	16 July

### *Progress so far*

We are in the early stages of the process, as we have not yet reached year end. So far:

- Diary and process planning has been completed following establishment of this year's project team and initial discussions on timescales.
- The organisation has had its interim financial audit, in anticipation of the final audit taking place in May.
- A planning report has been submitted to ARAC for information and approval.

In the next two weeks:

- High-level messaging is to be finalised with the Chief Ombudsman.
- NDPB Green and FReM will be reviewed and 2018-19 templates will be sent to contributors along with key messages before the end of March. This will assist them with drafting their specific sections of the report.
- Our in-house designer will be briefed with basic requirements for the look and feel of this year's Annual Report.
- A target laying date will be agreed with the MoJ ALB Division.

### *Key messages*

This year's Annual Report & Accounts will focus on the following key points:

- We are at the rebuilding stage now, and this is a step on a longer journey to sustainable improvement which requires a cultural shift.
- Quality and timeliness must be balanced in assessing performance.
- Our current staff have good skills and the potential to develop even further, and we will be investing them to slow attrition.
- We are moving towards focusing on the impact of our service – reviewing what we have already done and what is left to do.

### *To note*

This process has been managed by the Parliamentary and Policy Officer for the past two years. As this member of staff will be leaving the organisation in April, plans have been agreed for this work to be taken on jointly by the External Affairs Manager and Business Performance Manager.

The Parliamentary and Policy Officer will compile the first draft of the report in advance of the OLC Board's meeting on 27 April.

After this, there will be a comprehensive handover of duties. There is also a clearly articulated process in place which should be transferrable between members of staff, reducing any significant risk to delivery.

## Appendix 1 – Full 19/20 Timetable

	Timetable	Target Completion Date	Completed On
Planning	Annual Report diary and process planning	20/01/2020	21/01/2020
	Initial meeting on high-level messaging	21/01/2020	18/03/2020
	Project team established with initial discussions	22/01/2020	22/01/2020
	Finance Preparation for Interim Audit	14/02/2020	14/02/2020
	Interim Financial Audit	21/02/2020	18/02/2020
	Planning report submitted to ARAC	21/02/2020	21/02/2020
	First ARAC Meeting	02/03/2020	02/03/2020
	Agree Draft Timetable	02/03/2020	02/03/2020
	NDPB Green Review and Preparation	19/03/2020	
	FReM Review and Preparation	19/03/2020	
	2018-19 Template sent to Business Areas/Contributors	20/03/2020	
	Messages and requirements sent to contributors	20/03/2020	
	Brief designer with initial concept	27/03/2020	
	Confirm target laying date	27/03/2020	
Production	Chair Foreword	03/04/2020	
	ARAC / RemCo Report	03/04/2020	
	Non-Exec Director Report	03/04/2020	
	Category 1 Publication Report	03/04/2020	
	Draft Governance Statement	06/04/2020	
	Confirmation of data and graphs	07/04/2020	
	Chief Ombudsman Report	15/04/2020	
	Ops Performance Review	15/04/2020	
	Service Complaints Adjudicator Report	15/04/2020	
	Review against FReM Disclosure Checklist	16/04/2020	
	Make appropriate adjustments	17/04/2020	
	Submit summary/progress update to OLC	17/04/2020	
	OLC Meeting	27/04/2020	
	Draft Accounts	01/05/2020	
	Send final compiled draft to Finance and DCS	04/05/2020	
	Draft Annual Report sent to ARAC	11/05/2020	
	Draft Annual Report sent to BDO/NAO	12/05/2020	
	Feedback from ARAC	18/05/2020	
	Incorporate appropriate changes	20/05/2020	
	Full proofread of AR&A	22/05/2020	
	Finance Preparation for Final Audit	15/05/2020	
	Send draft copy of Annual Report to MoJ	22/05/2020	

	Share (pre-audit) final draft AR&A with NAO/BDO	20/05/2020	
	Customer satisfaction numbers due	26/05/2020	
	End of BDO audit	29/05/2020	
	Media plan and messages prepared	10/06/2020	
	Finalise design	12/06/2020	
Final Stages	NAO draft audit completion report	15/06/2020	
	Final proofreading	17/06/2020	
	Final Annual Report sent to OLC	17/06/2020	
	Contact printers for quote and timescale	19/06/2020	
	OLC Meeting	29/06/2020	
	Final Annual Report sent to ARAC	24/06/2020	
	ARAC Meeting & Recommendation	01/07/2020	
	OLC Board approval (out of committee)		
	Accounting Officer to Sign	02/07/2020	
	Letter of Representation with enclosures	02/07/2020	
	Final Draft Annual Report & Accounts to NAO (by courier/email)	02/07/2020	
	Meeting with Minister		
	CEO to confirm to NAO that they would still sign accounts	10/07/2020	
	Comptroller & Auditor General to sign Annual Report	10/07/2020	
	Send AR to the printers	11/07/2020	
	Send final report to MoJ and LSB	11/07/2020	
	Circulate embargoed press release and report	15/07/2020	
	Prep website with all content	15/07/2020	
	Circulate stakeholder email alert	16/07/2020	
	Internal communications issued	16/07/2020	
	Annual Report Laid	<b>16/07/2020</b>	
	<b>House of Commons rises</b>	21/07/2020	