

HMCTS response to Justice Select Committee report on court and tribunal reforms



Responding to the report, Susan Acland-Hood, the CEO of HM Courts & Tribunals Service said:

Improving access to justice is at the heart of our courts and tribunals reform programme.

Change will always challenge the status quo. But by re-designing the justice system around those who use it, we can provide more accessible, comprehensible and user-friendly services.

More than 250,000 people have used our new online services since last year with over 80% satisfied with their experience. We will continue to prioritise the needs of all users, particularly the most vulnerable, as we progress the programme.

We don't believe the report presents a balanced assessment of reform, but along with colleagues at the Ministry of Justice and the senior judiciary, will take the time to carefully address the committee's findings and respond fully in due course.

Supporting guidance:

We have made reforms to the way in which HMCTS operates including:

- in 2016, the Lord Chancellor and senior judges set out their vision for the £1.2bn HMCTS Reform programme, to modernise the courts and tribunals system and reduce complexity in processes
- four new online services have been delivered to the public covering Divorce, Probate, Civil Money Claims and Social Security Appeals and have been used by over 250,000 people with user satisfaction rates over 80%
- we have begun using the Common Platform in the magistrates' courts,

which in time will deliver a single online system enabling the police, the CPS, HMCTS and legal professionals to access and share all relevant information about a case

- we used to reject 40% of paper divorce applications because they were incorrectly filled in. The new online service has received over 65,000 applications and the rejection rate has dropped to under 1%
- two Courts & Tribunal Service Centres (CTSCs) have been opened in Birmingham and Stoke-on-Trent with a third due to open in Loughborough in 2020. CTSCs are transforming the way we deliver justices services and manage cases by providing a centralised, national service for all users
- Wi-Fi has been installed in all of our courts and tribunals, and more than 80,000 professionals are accessing Wi-Fi in our courts each week
- we have closed underused, dilapidated court buildings, raising £125m to invest more effectively in improving our justice system
- a new system for summary offences has handled over 68,000 Transport for London and TV Licensing cases, cutting delays and inefficiency.

Links

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