

Press release: Lord Chief Justice appointment: Rt Hon Sir Ian Burnett

Her Majesty The Queen has been pleased to approve the appointment of The Rt Hon Sir Ian Burnett as the Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales from 2 October 2017.

This appointment follows the retirement of The Rt Hon The Lord Thomas of Cwmgiedd on 1 October 2017.

Further information

Sir Ian Burnett was born on 28 February 1958. He was called to the Bar (Middle Temple) in 1980, becoming a Bencher in 2001. He was in practice as a barrister, Temple Garden Chambers, from 1982-2008 (Head of Chambers from 2003-2008). He was Junior Counsel to the Crown, Common Law, 1992-1998 and became Queen's Counsel in 1998. He was appointed Assistant Recorder, 1998-2000; Recorder, 2000-2008; a Deputy High Court Judge, 2008; Deputy Chamber, Security Vetting Appeals Panel, 2009. He was appointed Judge of the High Court, Queen's Bench Division, in 2008 and was Presiding Judge on the Western Circuit from 2011-2014. He was appointed to the Court of Appeal on 6 October 2014. He was Vice-Chairman of the Judicial Appointments Commission from 2015-2017.

The appointment

The appointment of the Lord Chief Justice is made by Her Majesty The Queen on the advice of the Prime Minister and the Lord Chancellor following the recommendation of an independent selection panel chaired by Lord Kakkar, Chairman of the Judicial Appointments Commission. The other panel members were: Lord Neuberger, President of the Supreme Court, Sir Adrian Fulford, Investigatory Powers Commissioner, Dame Valerie Strachan (DCBE), lay member of the JAC and Professor Noel Lloyd (CBE), lay member of the JAC. This selection exercise was run under the relevant sections of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005 as amended by the Crime and Courts Act 2013.

In accordance with section 70 of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005, as amended by the Crime and Courts Act 2013, the panel determined the selection process to be followed and consulted the Lord Chancellor and the First Minister of Wales on the process followed.

In accordance with s.10(3) of the Senior Courts Act 1981 c.54, the selection exercise was open to all applicants who satisfied the judicial-appointment eligibility condition on a 7-year basis, or were judges of the Supreme Court, Court of Appeal, or High Court.

Given the need to deliver significant Court reforms and to steer the judiciary through our exit from the EU, candidates were expected to be able to serve for at least 4 years.