

# Judicial Communications Office

## SIR DECLAN MORGAN WELCOMES POLITICAL PARTIES TO A BRIEFING ON JUDICIAL-LED REFORMS

The Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland and representatives from the Judiciary extended an invitation to representatives of the five main political parties to a briefing this afternoon (14<sup>th</sup> June 2019) in the Royal Courts of Justice.

The purpose of the meeting was to brief the political party representatives on the judicial progress on reforms and developments across criminal, civil and legacy business.

The briefing was chaired by the Chief Justice, and Judges from across the various court tiers attended the meeting to discuss a wide range of matters including Problem Solving Justice; Sentencing; Legacy Inquests; Courtroom technology and digital reforms; Vulnerable Witnesses and Victims; Civil Justice; Commercial Court Reforms; Family Justice; and media in court

Speaking this afternoon, the Chief Justice said:

*“In the absence of a Justice Committee and a functioning Assembly, I have endeavoured to engage with political parties and I am delighted to welcome representatives from the main political parties today here to the High Court.*

*Despite there being no functioning Assembly, where possible, and where appropriate, Judges have taken the initiative to introduce reforms on a wide range of issues relating to the justice system.*

*I have always said judicial independence does not mean judicial isolation and I am looking forward to meaningfully engaging with the political parties in relation to these reforms and developments this afternoon. My judges and I are happy to take this opportunity to discuss these reforms with the political parties, and also highlight areas where we consider reforms are not possible due to the need for primary legislation.”*

### NOTES TO EDITORS

1. The following Political Parties were invited to send representatives: Alliance Party; DUP; SDLP; Sinn Fein and the UUP.
2. The Chief Justice last met the political parties in November 2017 at a similar-type event.

**ENDS**

If you have any further enquiries about this or other court related matters please contact:

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