Response to the Public Accounts Committee’s fourth recommendation in its report
Transforming courts and tribunals, Fifty-Sixth Report of Session 2017–19

I am writing in response to the Committee’s fourth recommendation in its report Transforming courts and tribunals on the approach to identifying and evaluating the impact of changes on peoples’ access to, and fairness of the justice system. I am responding as the evaluation is being undertaken by the Ministry of Justice, externally from the reform programme.

Our response covers three broad areas:

- Has reform altered outcomes (fairness e.g. case/hearing outcomes, sentencing and financial awards)?
- Has reform changed the ability of users to pursue a case effectively (access to justice e.g. the ability and speed at which court users can access and pursue a case)?
- Has reform had an effect on costs incurred by those who use courts and tribunals (e.g. travel costs, costs of time wasted)?

The response describes our multi-tiered approach which sets out how the overarching evaluation fits with:

- The agile approach, incorporating review and assessment;
- Formal project level evaluations; and
- The on-going approach to cost/benefit assessment.

I enclose a copy of the response. A copy will also be provided to the Justice Select Committee.

Richard Heaton