

First Deemster attends the Opening of the Legal Year in Belfast

Deemster Corlett, the First Deemster, became the first Manx judge to attend Northern Ireland's ceremony to mark the Opening of the Legal Year in Belfast, which this year was held at the Royal Courts of Justice on 6th September 2021.

He was present at the invitation of Lady Chief Justice Dame Siobhan Keegan who was sworn in as Lady Chief Justice of Northern Ireland, the UK's first female Chief Justice, on 2nd September 2021.

Also in attendance at the ceremony were the Lord Chancellor, Robert Buckland QC, MP; Lord Stephens, a former Northern Ireland Lord Justice of Appeal and now a Justice of the UK Supreme Court; Dame Victoria Sharp, the President of the Queen's Bench Division of England and Wales; Mr Justice Donal O'Donnell, nominated as the next Chief Justice of Ireland from October 2021; and Lady Dorrian, Lord Justice Clerk and President of the Second Division of the Court of Session of Scotland.

In her address the Lady Chief Justice spoke of the challenges facing the courts as result of the Covid-19 pandemic and of the need to ensure that the judiciary is open to a wide variety of appointees, regardless of sex, ethnicity or disability.

The Deemster's visit provided an opportunity to discuss issues of common concern with other senior judges of the British Isles and also to meet members of the Northern Ireland legal profession. Deemster Corlett hopes that his visit will mark the beginning of a closer relationship between the judiciaries of Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man. Given their geographical proximity it is hoped that such meetings will become more frequent in the future and provide additional opportunities to further the already strong judicial links across the British Isles.