

Candidate Brief and Job Description

Senior Independent Panel Members for Public Appointments in Wales

Foreword from the Deputy Minister & Chief Whip, Jane Hutt AM

“Thank you for your interest in the post of Senior Independent Panel Member (SIPM) for Public Appointments in Wales.

Every year in Wales, over 100 Public Appointments are made across a range of our Public Bodies, Health Boards and Trusts. These are critical appointments, which provide an opportunity to lead, shape and influence the services we all rely on. However, it is clear that when recruiting to public life, we are not making the most of the diverse talent throughout our communities, and many of our Boards continue to lack representation from a range of backgrounds, including Black Asian Minority Ethnic backgrounds and disabled people.

As Minister with responsibility for Public Appointments in Wales, I am committed to changing this and in February, I launched the first Welsh Government’s Diversity and Inclusion Strategy for Public Appointments in Wales. The Strategy is underpinned by an action plan, which sets out an ambitious programme of work aimed at making the appointment process more accessible and improving the diversity of our public appointments.

As part of this work, I wish to ensure the Advisory Assessment Panels that recruit on behalf of Welsh Ministers offer the best possible advice, perspectives and experiences when interviewing candidates. Senior Independent Panel Members recruit to the most significant Public Appointments in Wales, so it seems logical to start here. We will recruit a pool of SIPM’s drawn from a range of backgrounds, to inform the recruitment process, and sit on the recruitment panels of the most significant appointments.

I urge you to consider these opportunities carefully and wish you every success in your application”.

Ministerial Appointments to Regulated Public Bodies

The Welsh Government sponsors over 50 regulated public bodies in Wales and, every year, around 100 Ministerial public appointments are made to these bodies.

Public bodies in Wales carry out a wide range of important functions such as independent regulation, advice, adjudication, ombudsman services, funding, partnership, commercial and health services.

All appointments made by Welsh Ministers are made in accordance with the Governance Code on Public Appointments and are regulated by the UK Commissioner for Public Appointments (the Rt Hon Peter Riddell CBE).

Purpose of Post

Whenever there is a significant public appointment to a regulated public body, an appointment panel (otherwise known as an Advisory Assessment Panel) will be assembled to oversee the process. The Senior Independent Panel Member (SIPM) will be a member of that panel and will play a vital role in ensuring that the recruitment process is carried out in a fair and transparent way, in accordance with the Governance Code for Public Appointments. This helps to provide assurance to the relevant Minister who will make the final decision on who is appointed. The role of the appointment panel is not to choose candidates for the appointment in question but to provide Ministers with a list of candidates capable of undertaking the appointment—from which Ministers can make their selection.

The SIPM must be independent of the Welsh Government and the public body to which an appointment is being made and must not be currently politically active*.

Appointment panels also have a key role in exploring potential conflicts of interest and due diligence, so SIPMs need to have an understanding of the public interest and the [Nolan Principles](#) of Public Life.

SIPMs also have a responsibility to report any concerns about the appointments process to the Public Appointments Team and, if necessary, to the Commissioner.

The Welsh Government holds a list of SIPMs who can be called upon as and when needed. Each time a SIPM is proposed for a particular campaign, Welsh Ministers are required to consult the Commissioner for Public Appointments on that choice, before the process commences.

Senior Independent Panel Members may also be invited to take part in Welsh Government Senior Civil Service recruitment campaigns.

For each recruitment campaign, the SIPM would need to be available for approximately 4 days to allow time for sift meetings, interviews and post-interview discussions. In addition, the SIPM would need to be willing to undertake some training and development during the term of their appointment. We estimate a time commitment of approximately 10 days per year.

Interview panels should be as diverse as possible and reflect the population we serve in order to make appointments which are themselves diverse. We are therefore keen to attract assessors from different backgrounds and walks of life and with different life experiences.

Senior Independent Panel Members will wish to familiarise themselves with the [Governance Code](#) on Public Appointments. They will also wish to note the list of [significant Welsh Government appointments](#). These appointments specifically require a Senior Independent Panel Member for chair appointments.

*[*Politically active is defined as an individual being employed by a political party, holding significant office in a party, standing as a candidate for a party in an election, having publicly spoken on behalf of a political party or having made significant donations or loans to a party. Significant loans and donations are those of a size which are reported to the Electoral Commission, in line with a central party's reporting threshold.]*

Job Specific Criteria:

Senior Panel Members must:

- Have a clear commitment to and understanding of promoting equality, diversity and inclusion;
- Have experience of senior recruitment or other comparable experience to bring this perspective;
- Be familiar with the Governance Code for Public Appointments, the public appointments principles and the Nolan Principles;
- Have an understanding of the work of public bodies in Wales;
- Have an understanding of how diverse groups bring their lived experiences as transferable skills and experiences;
- Have good inter-personal skills and be willing to challenge, where necessary, while working as a member of the appointing panel.

Welsh Language Skills

The Welsh Government acknowledges the importance of developing and growing bilingual capabilities in public appointments in Wales, and whilst Welsh language skills are not essential for this role, they would be beneficial to the work of the Advisory Assessment Panels. Panel members are expected to show an appreciation of bilingualism and a commitment to promoting and mainstreaming the Welsh language. We welcome your application whatever your skills level.

Equality

It is our policy to promote and integrate equality of opportunity into all aspects of our business including appointments.

We welcome applications from individuals regardless of age, marriage (including equal/same sex marriage) and civil partnership, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity, disability, race, religion or belief or pregnancy/maternity.

Wales has made great strides in relation to gender equality (for example, in 2018/19, 63.5% of those appointed to Boards in Wales were women, according to the UK Commissioner for Public Appointments' Annual Report), however, there is concern

about the low proportions of Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME)¹ people (3.0%) and people declaring disability (5.1%) appointed to Boards in Wales.

In the coming years, the challenge of under-representation of BAME and disabled people requires urgent redress. We therefore encourage applications from these protected groups in particular.

How to apply

Applications should be submitted via the Welsh Government online system and submitted **no later than 16:00 on Tuesday 1 September 2020**.

To apply, you will be asked to register for an account on the online system using an email address. It is recommended that you select an email address to which only you have access, as this will be our main method of communication with you regarding the selection process.

If you have an impairment that would prevent you from applying online, please email [public appointments](#) to request an alternative format, or to request a reasonable adjustment related to impairment in order to submit your application.

As part of the recruitment process, you will be asked to provide the following:

- **A completed application form;**
- **An up to date CV** setting out your career history with key responsibilities and/or outlining your lived experience and any achievements;
- **A personal statement of no longer than two sides of A4** explaining how your qualifications, skills, qualities and experience, which may include 'lived' experience, demonstrate your suitability for the role and, in particular how you meet the person specification.

Interviews

Interviews are scheduled for **the week beginning 12 October**. They are likely to be held virtually via Microsoft Teams or Skype. Interviews will last around 45 minutes.

Your interview will consider how your skills and experience as outlined in your application form, CV and personal statement meet the requirements for this post.

The Selection panel is as follows:

- Kathryn Bishop, Chair, Welsh Revenue Authority (Chair)
- Lawrence Conway, Chair of Sport Wales
- Craig Greenland, Head of Public Appointments, Welsh Government
- Usha Ladwa-Thomas, Head of Diversity Strategy Implementation, Welsh Government

¹ There is a wide range of terminology for ethnicity and different groups and individuals may prefer different labels. Currently BAME is in wide use in Government publications.

Conflicts of interest

Candidates must note the requirement to declare any conflicting interests such as business interests, share holdings, positions of authority, retainers, consultancy arrangements or other connections with commercial, public or voluntary bodies, both for themselves and for their spouses/partners.

Terms of Appointment

This will be a ministerial appointment for a three-year term. However, although we will make all appointment decisions at the same time, we will stagger start dates so not everyone will take up their post immediately.

We hope to be able to offer some training for Senior Independent Panel Members during their term of office.

Remuneration

This is a fee paid role and you will be paid a standard fee of £290 a day plus reasonable expenses.

Security Checks

Successful candidates will need to undergo standard security checks before starting the job.

Disability Confident

Welsh Government accepts the social definition of disability, in which it is recognised that barriers in society act to disable people who have impairments or health conditions or who use British Sign Language. We are committed to removing barriers so that potential candidates can perform at their best. The Equality Act 2010 uses the medical definition of disability (“a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term impact on a person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities”).

We guarantee to interview anyone who is disabled whose application meets the minimum criteria for the post. By ‘minimum criteria’ we mean that you must provide us with evidence in your application which demonstrates that you generally meet the level of competence for the role and any qualifications, skills or experience defined as essential.

If you have an impairment or health condition, or use British Sign Language and need to discuss reasonable adjustments for any part of this recruitment process, or wish to discuss how we will support you if you were to be successful, please email [public appointments](#) as soon as possible and a member of the team will contact you to discuss your requirements and any questions you may have. Alternatively you may wish to phone Catherine Evans on 03000 250310 or Craig Greenland on 07870 385175.

Diversity information

You will be asked to complete the Diversity Monitoring Form, however it will not be disclosed to anyone involved in assessing your application. If you do not wish to provide a response to a particular question, you should complete the 'Prefer not to say' option. You will not be able to submit your application if you leave any of the questions unanswered.

Collecting this information enables us to identify whether we are recruiting from the widest possible pool of talent and check that all groups are being treated fairly throughout the process.