



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Information pack for applicants

Welsh Food Advisory Committee

Appointment of a Member

Closing date: 04/05/2018

Welsh Food Advisory Committee

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Making an application

Thank you for your interest in the appointment of a member to the Welsh Food Advisory Committee. The new member will be expected to attend meetings and contribute to discussions. Members are collectively responsible for ensuring that the decisions of the Food Standards Agency take proper account of scientific advice, the interests of consumers and other relevant factors. The attached Annexes provide details on the role of the member and the person specification, the role and responsibilities of the Welsh Food Advisory Committee and the selection process.

To make an application please visit the Welsh Government public appointment website here <https://cymru-wales.tal.net/vx/lang-en-GB/mobile-0/appcentre-3/brand-2/candidate/jobboard/vacancy/7/adv/>.

To apply for this role, click on the vacancy and click on 'Apply' at the bottom left hand corner. The first time you apply for a post, you will need to complete a registration form for the Welsh Government's online application system. You will only need to register once, and you will be able to keep yourself updated on the progress of your application, and any other applications you make, via your registered account.

Once you've registered, you'll be able to access the application form. To apply you will need to upload a personal statement and CV to the 'Reasons for applying' section of the online application form.

Personal Statement

The personal statement is your opportunity to demonstrate how you meet each of the criteria set out in the person specification. How you choose to present the information is up to you. However, you should aim to provide detailed examples that demonstrate how your knowledge and experience matches each of the criteria, and which describe what your role was in achieving a specific result. It will also benefit the selection panel if you can be clear which particular evidence you provide relates to which criteria. Providing separate paragraphs in relation to each criterion is common practice.

Please limit your personal statement to two pages. Your application may be rejected if you exceed this limit.

CV

Please ensure your CV includes brief details of your current or most recent post and the dates you occupied this role. Please identify any past or present Ministerial appointments.

Guaranteed Interview Scheme

The Welsh Government operates a Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS) for disabled people. The Equality Act 2010 defines a person as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day to day activities. Under the GIS a disabled candidate will be selected for interview if they meet the minimum essential criteria for the post.

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Diversity Statement

The Welsh Government believes that public bodies should have board members who reflect Welsh society - people from all walks of life - to help them understand people's needs and make better decisions. This is why the Welsh Government is encouraging a wide and diverse range of individuals to apply for appointments to public bodies. Applications are particularly welcome from all under-represented groups including women, people under 30 years of age, black, Asian and minority ethnic people, disabled people, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

Indicative timetable

Closing date:	04 May 2018
Shortlisting complete:	11 May 2018
Interviews held:	w/e 16 June 2018

Key facts about the post

Location:	Committee meetings are usually held in Cardiff; however, there may be occasions when meetings are held throughout Wales.
Remuneration:	£5,319 per annum
Time Commitment:	2-3 days per month with 6 meetings per year

Contacts:

For further information regarding the role of the Welsh Food Advisory Committee and the role of the Members please contact Helen George or Lucy Edwards:

Tel: 02920 678907 and 02920 678957

Email: walesadminteam@food.gov.uk

If you have any queries about the application process or would like to apply in hard copy, please contact:

Tel: 0300 062 8204 (and ask for the Public Appointments Unit)

Email: PublicAppointments@gov.wales

Appointment of a Member of the Welsh Food Advisory Committee

Information for applicants:

Applications are invited for members of the Welsh Food Advisory Committee. This note contains details of the Committee, duties involved, including indicative time commitment, remuneration and information on how to apply.

2. Background

The Welsh Food Advisory Committee (WFAC) acts as an advisory body to the Food Standards Agency. Members of the WFAC are appointed by the Minister responsible for the Department of Health in accordance with the Food Standards Act 1999. The statutory role is defined as follows:

"There shall be an advisory committee for Wales for the purpose of giving advice or information to the Agency about matters connected with its functions (including, in particular, matters affecting or otherwise relating to Wales)."

Members appointed to WFAC should comply at all times with the Seven Guiding Principles of Public Life, laid down by the Nolan Committee on Standards in Public Life (Annex C).

3. What is the Food Standards Agency?

The Food Standards Agency is an independent UK non-Ministerial Government Department set up by Act of Parliament in April 2000 as a food safety watchdog to protect the public's health and consumer interests in relation to food. Its sphere of influence ranges across the entire food chain, from pesticides and veterinary medicines to food safety and hygiene standards in shops, restaurants and takeaways. The FSA works closely with other bodies such as local authorities, other Government Departments and Executive Agencies to ensure that regulations on food safety and standards are enforced to protect consumers. Research and survey work is commissioned from a variety of sources (including independent Advisory Committees, individual experts and interested bodies) to ensure that policies are based on the latest and best-available evidence. This is particularly important as the FSA often has to manage food risks in the face of incomplete knowledge or disagreement amongst experts.

The FSA is equally accountable to the Westminster Parliament, the National Assembly for Wales, and the Wales Assembly through their relevant Health Ministers. In addition to its London headquarters, the FSA has offices in Cardiff, Belfast and supporting its functions in Wales and Northern Ireland respectively with an additional regional office in York.

The FSA is a Government Department, but is led by a Board rather than directly by a Minister. This enables it to work at "arm's length" from Government. The legislation which established the FSA (the Food Standards Act 1999) reinforced the FSA's position by giving it powers to publish any advice it issues, including advice to

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Ministers. One Wales Member, Dr Ruth Hussey, is appointed to the UK Board and Chairs the Welsh Food Advisory Committee.

Recognising the range of often conflicting and confusing advice on food, the FSA aims to ensure that it is the UK's most reliable source of advice and information about food, in which the consumer can have confidence. The FSA's guiding principles are:

- putting the consumer first
- openness and transparency
- science- and evidence-based
- acting independently
- enforcing food law fairly

In putting the consumer first, the FSA has made food safety its top priority. It aims to provide consumers with understandable, accurate and reliable information on which they can base their decisions about food and which will help them understand all the issues surrounding food, food safety and diet and nutrition. The FSA is committed to supporting all consumers in food matters, including the most socially and economically disadvantaged.

The FSA bases its decisions and advice on the best evidence available, aiming to ensure that the decision-making process is as open and transparent as possible, seeking the views of interested parties before reaching conclusions and always explaining the reasons for its decisions and advice in a straightforward manner. It has made a commitment to decide on policy issues in public and after open debate.

4. Role and responsibilities

WFAC was established in 2000 to provide advice and information to the FSA. Such advice and information will be on food safety, food standards and allied subjects, particularly as they relate to Wales. Candidates will wish to note that the FSA in Wales is not responsible for nutritional advice since this function transferred to Welsh Government in 2010. The Agency is required to take account of such advice or information that is reasonable or practical, whether or not given at the Agency's request. WFAC members are appointed by the Minister of Social Service and Public Health in accordance with the Food Standards Act 1999, to provide a wide range of expertise, experience and practical knowledge.

The Committee:

- acts as a sounding board for Agency officials and its Board on specific issues
- acts collectively in the public interest
- advises on the development of policy and legislation undertaken by the Agency
- helps to establish priorities for the Agency taking account of:

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- consumer concerns
- surveillance or research data
- topical issues
- committee members' judgement

WFAC is committed to working in an open and transparent way by:

- holding public meetings in a variety of locations across Wales;
- listening to the views of Wales stakeholders;
- supporting the FSA at public events;
- identifying issues that are important to Wales; and
- producing thorough and well considered advice.

In the last year the Committee has:

- held four open meetings in Wales and 2 development day/briefing meetings; and
- provided advice to the Agency on a variety of topics including: the review of the National Food Crime Unit; FSA Science; food and feed Surveillance; developing proportionate controls for “risky foods”; animal welfare; the Regulating Our Future programme; EU Exit; the consumer interest in the food system; antimicrobial resistance; the Incidents and Resilience Annual Report 2017/18; Raw Drinking milk; the sustainable funding model project; and campylobacter reduction.

General responsibilities of WFAC members

WFAC acts as an advisory body to the FSA. The Committee's term of reference is:

- to give advice or information to the Agency about matters connected with its functions including in particular matters affecting or otherwise relating to Wales.

Remuneration

Members of the Welsh Food Advisory Committee are contracted for two/three days per month, at an honorarium of £5,319.00 per annum, paid monthly in arrears at one twelfth of the annual rate by bank credit. The honorarium is non-pensionable, is subject to the deduction of National Insurance and is taxable. The Agency will determine any variation in the level of annual remuneration. The right to this remuneration under the Act ends on the expiry of your term of office or its earlier termination.

While we welcome applications from Civil Servants and other public sector workers, Executive Office Public Appointments Guidance states: “Applicants who already work in the public sector need to be aware that no one should be paid twice from the public purse for the same period of time. As a result, applicants who already work in the public sector may not be entitled to claim remuneration for a public appointment if the duties are undertaken during a period of time for which they are already paid by

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the public sector.” These principles will apply in appointing members to the Committee.

Meetings held in public

As part of its commitment to openness, a minimum of six meetings per year are held in public, and any interested member of the public or press can attend. During the course of each meeting there is an opportunity for members of the public to ask questions of speakers and Committee members. These meetings may be held at the Food Standards Agency Wales’s office in Cardiff, however Committee meetings may also be held throughout Wales, and members must be willing to travel accordingly. Because these meetings are held in public, and to a tight timescale, Committee members need to be able to speak clearly and confidently in public and be able to make their contributions succinctly. Discussions that deal with internal Committee business such as organisational issues and future work plans, are generally held at the Committee’s planning sessions and are conducted in closed session.

Time commitment

The role involves a time commitment of approximately 2/3 days per month, including Committee meetings and preparation time. You may also be required to undertake other Committee duties elsewhere as the need arises, for example contributing to a WFAC sub-committee established to consider a particular subject area, or representing WFAC at another event. All reasonable expenses for travel and subsistence will be reimbursed.

The appointment will be for 2 or 3 years initially, renewable for a further term on the recommendation of the Chair and subject to satisfactory performance during the initial period of office. The final decisions on appointments and re-appointments are made by the Minister of Social Services and Public Health. There is no automatic presumption of reappointment and there is a strong presumption that no individual should serve more than two terms or serve in any one post for more than 10 years.

Please note that the Food Advisory Committees in Wales and Northern Ireland are currently being reviewed in terms of the way they operate and the general responsibilities as outlined in the above paragraphs may be subject to change because of this.

5. Person specification

The Committee is looking for individuals who meet the following criteria:

Essential skills and knowledge:

- Ability to think and act both strategically and analytically;
- Have good judgement, a high level of integrity and public responsibility, coupled with the ability to participate in making difficult decisions;
- Ability to interpret and communicate information effectively orally, in writing and through a variety of media channels;

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- The ability to serve either without conflict of interest or to demonstrate how they would deal with any potential real or perceived conflict;
- Experience of considering and understanding scientific advice, evidence and argument;
- Candidates would be expected to have substantial background experience in 1 or more of the following disciplines:
 - Science
(e.g. Microbiology, Medical, Epidemiology, Veterinary or Social Science particularly behaviour change)
 - Education/Academia
(Preferably agri-food or food systems and safety)
 - Communications
(e.g. Engagement with consumers through various channels, especially social media)
 - Food Production
(Food production background)
 - Other
(e.g. Food fraud, feed industry or catering/restaurant hotel sector, policy making in related areas, community food initiatives, consumer protection, consumer research)

**Please note that the FSA's remit in Wales does not cover Nutrition.*

Essential/Desirable skills and knowledge:

- Commitment to food or consumer issues/consumer insight within the Wales context;
- Understanding of the role of a Committee member of a major public organisation and the associated collective responsibilities;
- Ability to speak Welsh is essential for one post and desirable for the second post.

In all of these, preference will be given to those most able to help deliver the Agency's Strategic plan as part of a collegiate structure. The appointment will take into account the balance of skills on the Committee. The FSA Strategy and Strategic Plan 2015-2020 as well as the Wales Annex and Science, Evidence and Information Strategy 2015-2020 Delivery Plan can be found on the FSA's website at:

www.food.gov.uk/about-us/about-the-fsa

6. Equal Opportunities

Public appointments are based on the principles of merit and equal opportunities, with independent assessment, openness and transparency of process. WFAC is committed to achieving diversity amongst its members. Applications are welcomed

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from suitably qualified people, regardless of race, religion, ethnic origin, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age or disability, who are able to represent the interests of the public in Wales.

7. Eligibility

Applicants should be persons who conduct themselves at all times in a manner which will maintain public confidence.

In particular applicants are required to declare whether they are aware of anything in their private or professional life that would be an embarrassment to themselves or to the Welsh Government if it became known in the event of appointment.

Members will be required to declare all their personal or business interests which may, or may not be perceived by a reasonable member of the public to influence their judgement. These will be published annually in a register of interests. Commercial, professional or financial involvement or service as an employee in food or agriculture related industries will not automatically represent a conflict of interest which could exclude appointment to the Advisory Committee (although any current or past connection of the applicant or his or her partner should be disclosed in the application).

You should particularly note the requirement for you to declare any private interests which may, or may be perceived to, conflict with the role and responsibilities as a Member of the Welsh Food Advisory Committee, including any business interests and positions of authority outside of the role in the Welsh Food Advisory Committee.

If appointed, you will also be required to declare these interests on appointment which will be entered into a register which is available to the public.

8. Standards in public life

You will be expected to demonstrate high standards of corporate and personal conduct. All successful candidates will be asked to subscribe to the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies, you can access this document at:

<http://www.bl.uk/aboutus/governance/blboard/Board%20Code%20of%20Practice%202011.pdf>

The selection process

The interview panel will assess candidates' CVs and personal statements to determine who it believes best meet the criteria for the role, and who will be invited to interview. The panel will rely only on the information you provide in your CV and statement to assess whether you have the skills and experience required. Please ensure that you provide evidence to support how you meet all of the essential criteria.

The selection panel will comprise of Chris Brereton, Chief Environmental Health Officer, Welsh Government and will also comprise of Ruth Hussey, Board Member for Wales and Chair of the Welsh Food Advisory Committee and Andrew Jones, Deputy Director of Public Health Services / Director of Integrated Health Protection, Public Health Wales as an Independent Panel Member.

Your application may be "long-listed", subject to the volume of applications received, before it is passed to the shortlisting panel for consideration. You should be aware that in this situation, your application might not be considered in full by the panel.

We anticipate that during May 2018 the panel will have decided who will be invited for interview in June 2018.

The panel will select for interview only the strongest applicants who it feels have demonstrated that they best meet the criteria set out in the person specification. However, if you have applied under the guaranteed interview scheme and you meet the minimum essential criteria for the post, then you will also be invited for interview.

If you are invited to interview and if the interview date is not already provided in this information pack, we will aim to provide you with as much notice as we can of the interview date. If you are unable to make the arranged interview date, we will endeavour to re-arrange it but it might not be possible due to time constraints within the appointment timetable or selection panel availability.

You will receive email communication from the Appoint system to let you know whether or not you have been invited to be interviewed. It is our intention that interviews will take place in Cardiff.

If invited to interview, the panel will question you about your skills and experience, asking specific questions to assess whether you meet the criteria set out for the post.

Candidates who the panel believe are 'appointable', will be recommended to Ministers who will make the final decision. The Minister may choose to meet with appointable candidates before making a decision. If he does, he will meet all candidates and in the presence of the panel chair or their nominated representative. There will be a time gap between interview and a final appointment decision being made. Candidates who have been interviewed will be kept informed of progress.

If you are successful, you will receive a letter appointing you as a member of the Welsh Food Advisory Committee, which will confirm the terms on which the appointment is offered.

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If you are unsuccessful at interview, you will be notified by Welsh Government. We appreciate it takes a lot of time and effort to apply for roles and that feedback is a valuable part of the process. As a result, the letter will provide the details of who you may approach for feedback on your interview and application, if you so wish

Queries

For queries about your application, please contact the Helpdesk on 0300 062 8204 (and ask for the Public Appointments Unit) or PublicAppointments@gov.wales

If you are not completely satisfied

Welsh Government will aim to process all applications as quickly as possible and to treat all applicants with courtesy. If you have any complaints about the way your application has been handled, please contact the Helpdesk on 0300 062 8204 (and ask for the Public Appointments Unit) or PublicAppointments@gov.wales

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE

Selflessness

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Integrity

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interests.

Leadership

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.