Information for Candidates

Children’s Commissioner for Wales
1. Background

- The post of Children's Commissioner for Wales was established under the Care Standards Act 2000, and the post's remit was extended by 'The Children’s Commissioner for Wales Act (2001)’. Wales was the first country in the UK to have an independent Children’s Commissioner – a lead followed by the other nations.

- This is a unique post that is designed to influence positive change for children and young people in Wales, transforming understanding and acceptance in society of the importance of children’s rights.

- It is a high profile role which has a significant media and public profile. Appointments will be made by the First Minister.

- The office currently has over 25 full time equivalents of staff and the Welsh Government provides a budget of £1.715 million per annum.

- The Welsh Government has recently commissioned a full and independent review of the role and functions of the Children’s Commissioner for Wales. With a view to building on the work of the current Children’s Commissioner for Wales, the review will make recommendations aimed at further strengthening the Commissioner. It is, therefore, important for candidates to note that the role and functions, as well as the terms and conditions, of the post may change, either in the near future or over time, in light of recommendations made by the review.

2. Role Description for the Children's Commissioner for Wales

- You will safeguard and promote the rights and welfare of all children and young people up to the age of 18 (and in some cases to 25) in Wales. This is the principle aim of the Commissioner as set out in legislation.

- You will inspire people to achieve better outcomes for all children and young people in Wales under all areas of policy, legislation, decision-making and practice that affect their lives.

- You will stimulate national discussion and debate about achieving a society that respects children and young people and places a real value on offering them the opportunities they need to fulfil their individual potential.

- You will provide national leadership and will make a difference to children and young people’s lives by establishing strong partnerships and powerful relationships with people and organisations.

- You will lead on the scrutiny of Government and other organisations to deliver responsive services shaped by the thinking and opinions of children and young people.
Children’s Commissioner for Wales

- You will fulfil the role of Corporation Sole and Accounting Officer for the organisation, ensuring that transparent financial accounting monitoring and review mechanisms are implemented.

- You will lead a strong, confident, inspiring and resilient all-Wales organisation that works effectively as a team to ensure that children and young people are a national priority.

3. Key areas of responsibility for the Office of the Children’s Commissioner for Wales

The effectiveness of the Office

- To develop and share as appropriate the long term strategic vision and operational work plans.

- To act with significant autonomy in engaging with, challenging and advising regulated bodies and organisations.

- To ensure that there is independent scrutiny set up for the Office of the Children’s Commissioner for Wales.

- To foster a culture of high performance and quality outcomes within the Children’s Commissioner’s Team,

Policy development and response

- To review the way the National Assembly for Wales, Welsh Government and other public bodies exercise their functions in relation to children and young people.

- To undertake examinations, make reports on particular matters and to report annually to the Welsh Government on the work of the Office of the Children’s Commissioner for Wales on relevant matters affecting children and young people.

- To ensure that Government and organisations in Wales seek to continually improve services for children and young people and where challenges are identified work with those organisations to find solutions.

- To influence the development of national policy relating to children and young people and monitor the framework and effectiveness implementation.

- To consider and make representations to the National Assembly for Wales and the Welsh Government about any matter affecting the rights or welfare of children and young people in Wales.
Communicating and raising the profile of children’s rights

- To increase the awareness of children’s rights and of the Office of the Children’s Commissioner.
- Have a visible presence online using social media platforms and promote positive images of children and young people in Wales and to challenge negative images should they arise.
- To have an effective relationship with the media.

Participation and engagement

- To develop creative and engaging means of ensuring that the voices and opinions of children and young people inform the working of the Office, the Children’s Commissioner’s corporate and annual work plans and Annual Report to the Welsh Government.
- To be committed to listening to children and young people using their experiences, evidence and opinions to drive action and change.
- To create and provide innovative opportunities for children and young people to have their voices and opinions heard by the office of the Commissioner as well as other people and organisations.

Investigations and advice

- To act as a source of help and support for children and young people, (or those who care for them) who feel that they have been, or perceive themselves to have been, treated in a prejudicial manner including when there is a broader principle at stake.
- To use information gathered from investigations and helpline statistics positively in order to influence systemic change.

Partnership working

- To advise and work in partnership with statutory, private and non-statutory Organisations.
- To work with similar bodies in areas of mutual interest, to ensure effective access to their services for particular children and young people.
- To develop and maintain co-operative working relationships with Children’s Commissioners and Ombudsmen in other countries in the UK and abroad, including sharing information where appropriate and supporting the development of contacts among child and youth led organisations.
4. **Person Specification**

The First Minister is seeking to appoint an individual who can demonstrate the following:

- the ability to demonstrate experience of representing the views of others, in particular any marginalised or under-represented groups;
- an understanding of the particular challenges of representing the views of children and young people;
- exceptional influencing skills, including the ability to inspire confidence with a diverse range of stakeholders from children and young people to decision-makers at the most senior level;
- the ability to express complex issues simply and articulately and present evidence in a clear and compelling way;
- independence of judgement and the ability to quickly analyse complex problems;
- the confidence and competence to speak out on issues affecting children and young people in Wales, including to the media, Government and National Assembly for Wales.
- experience of effective leadership of an organisation or distinct unit within a larger organisation, including financial and people management;
- self motivation and the ability to be pro-active, determined, positive and resilient;
- the enthusiasm to be an effective ambassador to improve outcomes for children and young people;
- professional integrity, credibility and sensitivity to maintain confidence and trust; and
- proven knowledge of political landscape in Wales and legislative position in respect of children’s rights and an understanding of how the Children’s Commissioner can operate effectively in this context.

5. **Eligibility**

Applicants should be persons who conduct themselves at all times in a manner which will maintain public confidence in accordance with the Nolan Principles:

The role of Children’s Commissioner involves contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults. As a result, applicants are required to provide or be subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). More information is available here on [DBS checks](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life). The appointee will not be confirmed in post until those checks/registration requirements are satisfied.

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1 https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life
6. **Terms of Appointment**  
The letter of appointment will fully outline the terms and conditions of the post and is based on the Civil Service Terms and Conditions.

7. **Duration of Appointment**  
The appointment is currently a seven-year, non-renewable term. It is important for candidates to note the role and functions, as well as the terms and conditions, of the post may change, either in the near future or over time, in light of recommendations made by the review.

8. **Time Commitment**  
The post is full time although flexibility in working hours may be considered. However you will be required to work such hours as may be necessary to discharge effectively your duties as the Commissioner.

9. **Location of post**  
The Children’s Commissioner for Wales currently has two offices: one in Swansea and another in Colwyn Bay. Travel throughout Wales is essential.

10. **Salary**  
The post of Children’s Commissioner for Wales will be paid at £90,000 to £95,000 per annum.

11. **Assistance for Disabled People**  
Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments will be made to enable the Children’s Commissioner to effectively carry out the role.

12. **Selection Process**  
Although these appointments do not come within the remit of the Commissioner for Public Appointments, these appointments are made using a process which takes into account the Commissioner’s Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies as best practice. It is the policy of the Welsh Government to promote and integrate equality of opportunity into all aspects of its business including appointments to public bodies. Applications are welcomed and encouraged from all groups and we ensure no eligible candidate for public office receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, or pregnancy and maternity. The principles of fair and open competition will apply and appointments will be made on merit.

13. **Starting date**  
The successful candidate is due to start in post on 1 March 2015.

14. **Further Information and Queries**  
For further information on the application process and to apply, please visit [http://wales.gov.uk/publicappointments](http://wales.gov.uk/publicappointments) or for queries contact the HR Helpdesk on 029 2082 5454 / hr-helpdesk@wales.gsi.gov.uk.

For further information about the Children’s Commissioner for Wales you may wish to visit their web site: [http://www.childcom.org.uk/](http://www.childcom.org.uk/) or contact 01792 765600.

For details of the legislation relating to the Children’s Commissioner for Wales
you may wish to visit: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/all?title=children%27s%20commissioner%20for%20wales


15. Application
Applications should be made by completing the on-line form. The Applicants Guidance Notes provide detailed guidance on completing the application and monitoring forms.

We hope you will find the on-line process simple to follow but we recognise not everyone will be able to use it because of their own individual accessibility requirements. If you are unable to apply online please contact the HR Helpdesk on 029 2082 5454 who will be able to provide a copy of the application pack in an alternative format.

16. Important Information about using the on-line application system
When using the on-line application system you should read the “Help and Instructions” which appears as an option on the first page of the application form after the log-in page. The instructions make the important point that you should use the “Save and Proceed” button at the bottom of the page in order to save any information you have inputted.

This is particularly important when you are completing the section on “Evidence of Suitability for Appointment”. It is a good idea to click “Save and Proceed” after completing each of the separate questions in this section to ensure no information is lost. You can navigate back to the “Evidence of Suitability for Appointment” section after clicking “Save and Proceed” by using the menu on the left hand side of the page.

A note of caution – if you click on the “Reset Page” button you will lose all the information you have inputted since you last clicked “Save and Proceed”.

17. Closing Date and Key Decision Dates
The closing date for applications is 21/11/2014. Application forms received after this date will not be considered. You will be informed whether or not you are being invited to interview at least two weeks before the interviews which are expected to be held week beginning 12/01/2015. The First Minister’s decision on this appointment is expected by 28/01/2015.