



Ministry  
of Justice



We are looking for an outstanding individual for the post of

## **Chair of the Lay Observers' National Council**

**Reference number: PAT150044-LayObservers-CHAIR**

**(please use the above reference in all correspondence)**

**Location:** The Lay Observers' secretariat is based in central London. Meetings will require the post holder to come to London at regular intervals.

**Term of appointment:** Three years

**Time commitment:** Up to 96 days a year (eight days per month)

**Closing date for applications is noon on 19 March 2018**

Applications should be submitted to the Ministry of Justice Public Appointments Team via [PublicAppointmentsTeam@justice.gov.uk](mailto:PublicAppointmentsTeam@justice.gov.uk).

Alternative format versions of this candidate information pack are available on request from the Public Appointments Team, contact details as above.

 [Twitter](#) Follow us to keep up to date with public appointments vacancies.

All public appointments are advertised on the Cabinet Office's Public Appointments website (<http://publicappointments.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/>) and the Public Appointments Twitter feed (@publicappts).



## 1. Introduction

### Message to candidates

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for your interest in becoming the Chair of the Lay Observers' National Council. The Lay Observers play an important role in a part of the criminal justice system that receives little scrutiny but is responsible for people in places when they can be at their most vulnerable; the transitions between police stations, courts and prisons.

In their work, by inspecting vehicles or cells and when talking to detained persons, the Lay Observers form an important part of the National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) by which the UK fulfils its obligations to the UN Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT). OPCAT expects the independent inspection or monitoring of all places of detention.

The fact that the Lay Observers serve in a voluntary capacity does much to underscore their independence. However, it also means that the National Council is instrumental in determining not just their day-to-day work, but also providing for their leadership, support and development.

If after reading the material you have further questions about any aspect of this post, you are welcome to contact Sally Grocott at [Sally.Grocott@justice.gov.uk](mailto:Sally.Grocott@justice.gov.uk) or call 07970 307 053. If you have questions about the appointment process, you can contact the Public Appointments Team at: [PublicAppointmentsTeam@Justice.gov.uk](mailto:PublicAppointmentsTeam@Justice.gov.uk), or call Amira Aufogul on 020 3334 4013.

If you believe you have the experience and qualities we are seeking, we very much look forward to hearing from you. I do hope you will consider applying for this important position.

**Alison Wedge**  
**Deputy Director Arm's Length Body Division**

## 2. About the

Lay Observers are volunteers appointed by the Secretary of State under the Criminal Justice Act 1991. They form the membership of an Independent National Council and sit alongside a number of other criminal justice scrutiny bodies.

Lay Observers monitor the escort of prisoners who are being moved between courts, prisons and police stations. The National Council shares regular intelligence from monitoring visits with courts and escort contractors and reports annually to the Secretary of State on its findings.

Lay Observers are also members of the UK National Preventive Mechanism (NPM) as required by the United Nations Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT). OPCAT is an international human rights treaty designed to strengthen protection for people deprived of their liberty and aims to prevent ill-treatment through establishing a system of visits or inspections to all places of detention. The Chair of the Lay Observers will be expected to participate in UK NPM meetings and will contribute to the NPM annual report.

With the recent Ministerial focus on independent scrutiny, this is an exciting time to join the Lay Observers. We are looking for an experienced leader to strengthen existing national governance arrangements and increase membership.

## 3. The role of the Chair of the Lay Observers' National Council

### Eligibility

- There must be no employment restrictions, or time limit on your permitted stay in the UK. You should normally have been resident in the United Kingdom for at least three years prior to your application.
- You should not be employed by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) or employed in the UK civil service.
- You should not sit in any capacity on any of the MoJ's Arms' Length Bodies.

### Essential criteria

Candidates will be able to demonstrate the following:

- A commitment to fair and humane treatment and to the value of diversity and equality.
- Strategic vision: an ability to manage change and well developed organisational and management skills.
- Leadership skills: an ability to inspire and command the confidence of others.
- Experience of building successful collaborative working relationships and an ability to demonstrate highly developed negotiating skills.
- High level analytical skills and written and oral communication skills.
- An ability to engage with senior stakeholders.

The following criteria, although not essential, will be taken into account by the selection panel.

### Desirable criteria

- An understanding of working with volunteers
- Interest, knowledge or experience of issues faced by those in custody and those who manage prisoners/detainees on a day to day basis
- Experience in management and governance
- A high level of achievement in the applicant's particular area of expertise.

#### 4. Other important appointment information

**Tenure:** Public appointments are offered on a fixed term basis. We do this to ensure that the leadership of our public bodies is regularly refreshed and can benefit from new perspectives and ideas. The appointment will run for three years with the possibility of reappointment for a further term subject to satisfactory appraisal and at the discretion of Ministers. In line with the Governance Code for Public Appointments, there is a strong presumption that no individual should serve more than two terms or serve in any one post for more than ten years.

The Chair is required to adhere to the Lay Observers' code of practice and rules of conduct - these documents are available at:

<http://www.layobservers.org.uk/images/stories/Uploads/lo%20cop%20apr13.pdf>

The role is expected to be undertaken on a voluntary basis and is therefore unremunerated. The commitment time is up to 96 days a year, however this is flexible. Reasonable standard travel expenses will be payable.

**Performance Appraisal:** The Chair will be assessed at least once a year against objectives for each year of the appointment and linked to the performance of the Prison Escort and Custody Services (PECS) contract. The appraisal will be carried out by a person of appropriate level within the Ministry of Justice.

**Standards in Public Life:** Public appointees are required to uphold the Committee on Standards in Public Life's Seven Principles of Public Life (see Appendix 1). You are also expected to adhere to the Code of Conduct for board members of public bodies.

It will be important that the Chair's other commitments do not cast any doubt on their ability to act independently and impartially in discharging the role; any potential conflict of interest must be declared.

#### 5. Advisory Assessment Panel membership

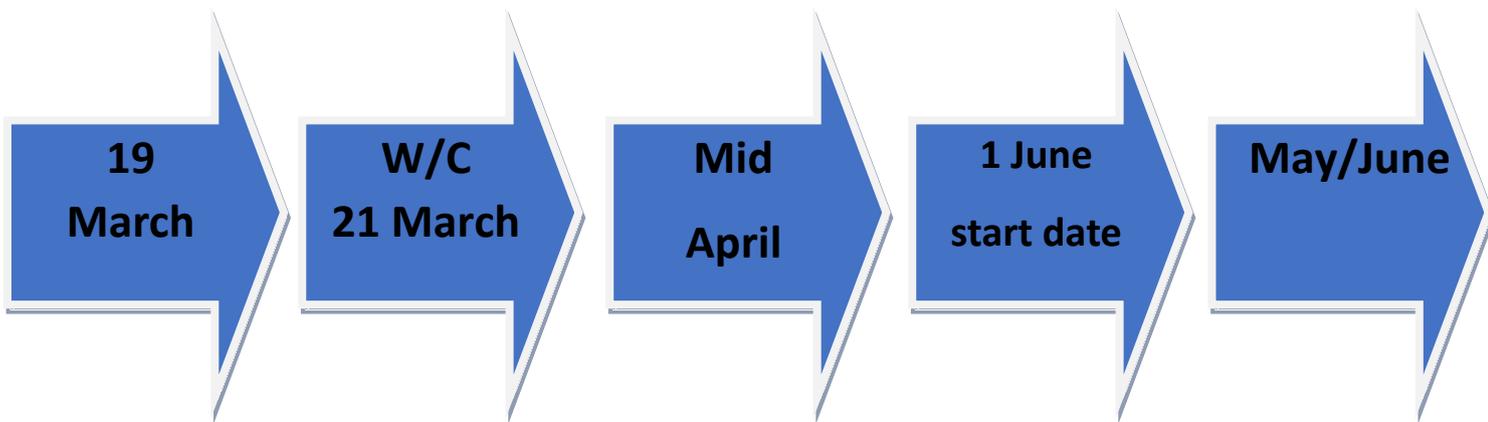
**The Panel will be:**

- Amy Rice (Chair Panel), Director of Commissioning, Offender Reform and Commissioning Group and lead sponsor
- Mark Stewart, Deputy Director, Operations Directorate, HMCTS; and,
- Rudi Page, Independent panel member.

#### 6. The appointment process and time line

The figure below sets out the key stages and timings in the process.





Please note that it may not be possible to provide specific, individually tailored feedback following the sift stage but we will provide, on request, feedback to those who are interviewed.

If you accept an invitation to interview, we will take two references in advance of the interview. By providing the details of two referees you are consenting to us approaching them in this way.

**Please note that we do not pay travel expenses to attend interviews.**

The Secretary of State or another Minister may ask to meet each of the candidates before or after interview.

If called for interview, the Advisory Assessment Panel will explore your experience and expertise to determine whether you meet the essential criteria for the role. You may be asked to start the interview with a short presentation. If required, this will be confirmed in your invitation to interview letter.

### **Security Clearance**

For successful candidates, confirmation of appointment will be subject to basic clearance checks, covering confirmation of identity and right to work in the UK plus a criminal record check. This will involve completion of several paper and electronic forms and can take up to **five weeks** to process following completion of the forms.

## **7. How to apply**

To make an application, please send:

- **A CV (maximum two sides of A4)** detailing your qualifications, employment history and any appointments or offices you hold. Please also provide your preferred contact number and email address.
- **A personal statement (maximum two sides of A4)** providing evidence against the role criteria and your suitability for the post, including evidence of leadership qualities and a vision for the organisation. Please consider the role and criteria carefully in preparing your statements. Information from Advisory Assessment Panels indicates that applications which offer specific and tailored examples against the criteria, making clear the candidate's role in achieving an outcome are often the strongest. Structuring the statement around the criteria using relevant headings also aids clarity.

### Supporting Documents

Please also complete and return the following supporting documents:

- **potential conflicts of interest:** You should declare any actual or potential conflict of interest. The Advisory Assessment Panel may wish to explore these further with you if you are shortlisted for interview. Conflicts might arise from a variety of sources such as financial interests or share ownership, membership of, or association with, particular bodies or the activities of relatives or partners. If you need further advice, please contact Amira Aufogul at [PublicAppointmentsTeam@justice.gov.uk](mailto:PublicAppointmentsTeam@justice.gov.uk).
- **note of public appointments** – please list any appointments currently held;
- **referee details** – please give names/contact details of two referees (who will be contacted if you are shortlisted for interview);
- **the political activity declaration form** – in line with the Governance Code for Public Appointments, details of any declared activity will be made public if you are appointed; and
- **the equal opportunities monitoring form** – information is requested for monitoring purposes only and plays no part in the selection process. It will be kept confidential and will not be seen by the Advisory Assessment Panel.

Please send your CV, personal statement and supporting documents to: [PublicAppointmentsTeam@justice.gov.uk](mailto:PublicAppointmentsTeam@justice.gov.uk) quoting reference PAT150044-LayObservers-CHAIR in the subject line of your email. We will acknowledge receipt.

If you have any questions about any aspects of this post, you are welcome to contact Sally Grocott at [Sally.Grocott@justice.gov.uk](mailto:Sally.Grocott@justice.gov.uk) or call 07970 307 053.

## 8. Diversity and equality of opportunity

**We encourage applications from all candidates regardless of ethnicity, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability or gender identity. We particularly welcome applications from women, those with a disability and those from a black or ethnic minority background.**

We would also particularly welcome applications from those currently working in, or with experience of, the private sector, and those who have not previously held public

appointments. We want to explore the widest possible pool of talent for this important position.

### **Arrangements for candidates with a disability**

#### Guaranteed Interview Scheme

There is a guaranteed interview scheme (GIS) for candidates with disabilities who meet the minimum selection criteria.

**The MoJ is a disability confident employer; further information can found here** <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/disability-confident-campaign>

**Adjustments:** If you have a disability and require adjustments to help you if you are called to attend an interview, please contact: Amira Aufogul in the Public Appointments Team (by e-mail [PublicAppointmentsTeam@justice.gov.uk](mailto:PublicAppointmentsTeam@justice.gov.uk) to discuss further). Please quote PAT150044-LayObservers-CHAIR in any correspondence.

To discuss any adjustments that you may require if appointed, please contact: Sally Grocott at [Sally.Grocott@justice.gov.uk](mailto:Sally.Grocott@justice.gov.uk) or call 07970 307 053.

## **9. Complaints Process**

If you have a complaint about any aspect of the way your application has been handled, we would like to hear from you. In the first instance please write to or e-mail the Public Appointments Team at the address or e-mail address given below quoting the appropriate reference number.

Maggie Garrett, Ministry of Justice, Head of the Public Appointments Team, ALB Division, 2.54, 102 Petty France, London, SW1H 9AJ.

E-mail address: [PublicAppointmentsTeam@justice.gov.uk](mailto:PublicAppointmentsTeam@justice.gov.uk)

**Complaints must be received by the Public Appointments Team within 12 calendar months of the issue or the closure of the recruitment competition, whichever is the later.**

We will acknowledge your complaint within two working days of receipt and reply as quickly and clearly as possible; within 20 working days of receipt. We will tell you if we cannot meet this deadline for any reason and provide an expected reply date.

**Taking it further:** If you are still concerned after receiving your reply you can write to:

Commissioner for Public Appointments, Room G/8, Ground Floor, 1 Horse Guards Road, London, SW1A 2HQ.

The Commissioner for Public Appointments regulates and monitors appointments to public bodies to ensure procedures are fair. More information about the role of the Commissioner, the Governance Code for Public Appointments and the complaints process is available at <http://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk/>

Alternatively, please contact the Commissioner's office on 020 7271 0831 for a printed copy of the complaints process.

Commissioner for Public Appointments Survey

The Commissioner for Public Appointments would like to find out what you think of the public appointments process. When you have completed the process, the Commissioner would appreciate a few minutes of your time to complete this survey: <http://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk/candidate-survey/>. Your response will be anonymous and will inform the Commissioner's ongoing work with Government Departments to improve the public appointments process.

## 10. Checklist

Please refer to the table below to ensure you send us all the necessary information.

Documents to be completed and sent	Tick
Your CV	
Supporting Statement	
Completed Supporting Documents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• potential conflicts of interest;</li> <li>• public appointments held;</li> <li>• referee details</li> <li>• political activity declaration form; and</li> <li>• the equal opportunities form</li> </ul>	

## 11. Your personal Information

We will process your application in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Ministry of Justice's Information Charter, which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-justice/about/personal-information-charter>. Your data will be held securely and access will be restricted to those dealing with your application or involved in the recruitment process. By submitting your application, you are giving consent to your data being stored and processed for the purpose of the recruitment process, diversity monitoring and, if successful, your personal record.

## **Appendix 1 - The seven principles of public life**

All candidates for public appointments are expected to demonstrate a commitment to, and an understanding of, the value and importance of the principles of public service. The seven principles of public life are:

### **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

### **Integrity**

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

### **Objectivity**

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

### **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

### **Openness**

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

### **Honesty**

Holders of public office should be truthful.

### **Leadership**

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.