



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government



Valuation Tribunal Service Chair

Information Pack for Candidates

Closing date: Thursday 11th February at 11.00pm





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Welcome to the Valuation Tribunal Service



*Alex Skinner, Director
of Local Government
Finance, MHCLG (VTS
Senior Sponsor)*

Dear Candidate

Thank you for your interest in the Chair vacancy on the Valuation Tribunal Service (VTS) Board. The Valuation Tribunal Service provides the administrative function to the Valuation Tribunal for England, the independent appeals body for businesses and the public to use when challenging decisions of the Valuation Office Agency or local councils in connection with their business rates or council tax bills.

The VTS plays a crucial role in delivering an efficient appeals service for a wide range of users. As Chair of the VTS board, you will be responsible for leading the organisation to ensure that it continues to respond effectively to the demands on its services, and to facilitating the development of ever more responsive and flexible approaches to hearings.

We are looking for a motivated team player with strong leadership skills with high-level experience of providing strategic guidance in a Board context. The successful candidate will be able to see the big picture whilst recognising the interests of a wide range of stakeholders, and will have proven governance, organisational and financial skills including those relating to strategic planning, risk management and organisation-wide performance management.

We hope to receive applications from a diverse range of individuals, we would particularly welcome candidates from a Black, Asian or Minority Ethnic (BAME) background. Full details of the roles and responsibilities are set out in this document and I very much hope you will decide to apply.

Further Information about the VTS, Board members and more can be found on the VTS [website](#).



About the Valuation Tribunal Service

The Valuation Tribunal Service is an executive non-departmental public body of the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). It was established under the Local Government Act 2003 to provide administrative support, procedural advice and central direction to the Valuation Tribunal for England. It has a strong corporate identity and clearly delegated powers and responsibilities.

The VTS employs around 70 staff and is able to encourage the spread of best practice across the organisation, leading to better public service delivery.

Aims & Objectives of VTS

To support the Valuation Tribunal for England in the administration of a fair, efficient and accessible system to deal with appeals against council tax and business rates valuation. This will be done by providing guidance and supporting the recruitment, induction and integration of new members.

- To drive continuous improvement of performance and efficiency across all aspects of the organisation.
- To enhance the quality and consistency of service to all stakeholders.
- To work in partnership with the sponsor Department to support policy development.
- To build capacity and capability in the staff with continuous learning and improvement.
- To operate with financial and organisational initiative and efficiency.

About the Board

The Board comprises of a Chair and members appointed by the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (“Secretary of State”). There are 9 members including the President of the Valuation Tribunal for England who is an ex-officio member of the Board. The founding legislation for the VTS, the Local Government Act 2003, requires there to be service members’ majority on the VTS Board. Service members are Board members who are VTE Chairmen who sit on Appeal Tribunal panels.

The Board ensures that effective arrangements are in place to provide assurance on risk management, governance and internal control as per the [framework document](#) that exists between VTS and MHCLG.

The Board is specifically responsible for:

- establishing and taking forward the strategic aims and objectives of the VTS, consistent with its overall strategic direction and within the policy and resources framework agreed with MHCLG;
- ensuring that the Secretary of State is kept informed of any changes which are likely to impact on the strategic direction of the VTS Board or on the attainability of its targets, and determining the steps needed to deal with such changes;
- ensuring that any statutory or administrative requirements for the use of public funds are complied with; that the Board operates within the limits of its statutory authority and any delegated authority agreed with MHCLG, and in accordance with any other conditions relating to the use of public funds; and that, in reaching decisions, the Board takes into account guidance issued by MHCLG;
- ensuring that the Board receives and reviews regular financial information concerning the management of VTS; is informed in a timely manner about any concerns about the activities of VTS; and provides positive assurance to MHCLG that appropriate action has been taken on such concerns;
- demonstrating high standards of corporate governance at all times, including by using the independent audit committee to help the Board to address key financial and other risks; and
- appointing, with the Secretary of State’s approval a Chief Executive and, in consultation with MHCLG, set performance objectives and remuneration terms linked to these objectives for the Chief Executive which give due weight to the proper management and use and utilisation of public resources.

Key Responsibilities of the Role

The Chair is responsible to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. He/she is responsible for ensuring that the VTS's policies and actions support the Secretary of State's wider strategic policies and that its affairs are conducted with probity. The role will involve:

- Leading the development of the Board's strategy to enable the VTS to deliver an effective and efficient appeals system;
- Chairing Valuation Tribunal Service Board meetings (8 per year), ensuring that strategy and policies are fully discussed and that clear decisions are taken and disseminated appropriately;
- Ensuring that the Board, in relation to decisions, takes proper account of guidance provided by the responsible minister or MHCLG;
- Promoting the efficient and effective use of staff and other resources;
- Delivering high standards of regularity and probity;
- Representing the views of the Board to the general public;
- Maintaining an appropriate relationship with the VTE, supporting and encouraging it to develop policies and procedures in line with Government policy and for the benefit of customers;
- Working with the Chief Executive to create and arrange for the implementation of policies and systems to discharge VTS's statutory responsibilities.
- Representing the VTS in discussions with Ministers and their officials and other organisations to offer advice on the development of Government policy and to facilitate its delivery;
- Supervising the work of the VTS Chief Executive and any committees or sub committees. Seeking, considering and acting upon, as appropriate, advice from the Chief Executive and others. Ensuring that the Board sub committee structure is kept under review to ensure it delivers effectively;
- Putting systems in place to ensure that propriety and regularity are maintained in all VTS operations, including the approval of expenditure and authorisation for the award of contracts, and that high standard of governance are maintained; and
- Supporting the role of the Chief Executive as the Accounting Officer for the VTS.

Selection Criteria

All candidates must demonstrate, in their CV and supporting letter, how they meet the selection criteria for the post, through their knowledge, skills and experience.

Essential Criteria:

1. Excellent communication, interpersonal and influencing skills and the ability to motivate and manage Board and staff members;
2. Strong strategic leadership experience and the skills necessary to lead the VTS and to hold the executive to account to make effective use of the organisation's staff and resources;
3. Experience of leading or delivering change programmes and reforms;
4. Independence, integrity and impartiality;
5. An ability to handle issues which may be politically, presentationally or legally sensitive;
6. An ability to take account of a wide context of stakeholder views when setting organisational aims and objectives

Desirable Criteria:

1. Knowledge of central or local government, or public administration.

Key Terms and Conditions

Remuneration: £8,839 per annum per annum.

Time Commitment: Your time commitment is expected to be a maximum of 24 days per annum.

Term: Appointments are made by Ministers for a period of up to 3 years.

Location: The location of the HQ for the Valuation Tribunal Service is at 2nd Floor, 120 Leman Street, London, E1 8EU. Board meetings are customarily held at this location. You will be entitled to reimbursement of reasonable travel and subsistence costs at the same rate as members of Tribunal staff.

Conduct: The Government expects all holders of public office to work to the highest personal and professional standards. In support of this, all non-executive board members of UK public bodies must abide by:

- the principles set out in the Cabinet Office's [Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies](#). The Code sets out, clearly and openly, the standards expected from those who serve on the boards of UK public bodies and will form part of individual members' terms and conditions of appointment; and,
- the [Seven Principles of Public Life](#).

Nationality: There must be no employment restrictions, or limit on your permitted stay in the UK.

How to Apply

In order for us to progress your application, please submit the following documentation to PublicAppointments@communities.gov.uk by **23:00 on 11 February 2021**, ensuring **'VTS – Chair'** as the subject line of your email. Please note: it is your responsibility to ensure we receive your application by the closing date.

1. A **CV** (maximum 2 pages) with your education, professional qualifications and full employment history.
2. An accompanying **Supporting Letter** (maximum 2 pages) setting out your suitability for the role and how you meet the Selection Criteria for the roles. We suggest you use specific examples to demonstrate how you meet the Criteria.
3. A **Supporting Information Form**. This is an online form in which you are asked to disclose any potential issues which could have, or be perceived to have an impact on public confidence on your suitability for the roles. A perceived, potential or actual conflict of interest would be such an issue. The Panel will explore your declarations during the interview process. Failure to disclose such information could result in an appointment either not being made or being terminated. Candidates should note that 'due diligence' may be carried out as part of the assessment process and may be shared with the Panel and/or Ministers. You should expect this to include searches of previous public statements, social media, blogs or any other publicly available information.
Please note documents 1, 2 and 3 are mandatory. If not provided your application will be not be considered.
4. A **Diversity Monitoring Form**. This is an online form. All data will be treated in confidence and will not affect your application in any way. If relevant please complete the Disability Confident Interview Scheme section in this Form.

Assessment Process: Overview

The process is one of fair and open competition. Details of the process are set out in the Government's 'Governance Code for Public Appointments', and legislation allows for regulation by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

An Advisory Assessment Panel will provide Ministers with advice on your suitability for the role against the selection criteria, using initially only the evidence you have provided in your covering letter and CV, and then should you be invited, the information that you provide at interview. The Panel who will sift applications and conduct interviews for these roles will consist of:

- Alex Skinner – Director Local Government Finance, MHCLG - Panel Chair
- Chris Megainey - Deputy Director, MHCLG
- Lorna Stimpson, Member, the Building Regulations Advisory Committee (BRAC) – Independent Panel Member

In the present circumstances, interviews will be conducted remotely. Should the situation change and we are able to conduct interviews in person, they will be held in central London.

Please note that the Minister making the appointment may choose to meet with those candidates deemed by the Panel to be appointable before making a decision.

Due to the high volume of applications we receive we only provide feedback to candidates who reached the interview stage. The feedback can only be issued once the Minister has publicly announced the successful candidate.

Assessment Process: Indicative Timeline

Please note that the timetable could be subject to change – potentially at short notice.

If you are unable to meet these timeframes, please let us know by contacting PublicAppointments@communities.gov.uk.

Closing date: **23:00 on Thursday 11 February 2021**

Shortlisting: w/c 15 February or w/c 22 February 2021 TBC

Panel interviews: w/c 15 March or w/c 22 March 2021 TBC

Provisional start date: Late April/early May 2021 TBC

Due to the limited availability of Panel members, shortlisted candidates should ensure that they are available to attend in the advertised interview period as it is unlikely that alternative dates can be accommodated.

The time taken between interview and a final appointment decision being made can sometimes take a number of weeks. Candidates who have been interviewed will be kept informed of progress.

Assessment Process: Opportunities

We particularly encourage applications from those of a BAME background and those with disabilities, who are currently under-represented on the Boards of our Arm's Length Bodies.

Disability Confident

As a Disability Confident employer, we will ensure that a fair and proportionate number of disabled applicants that meet the minimum criteria for this position will be offered an interview. By 'minimum criteria,' we mean that you must provide evidence in your application, which demonstrates that you meet the level of competence required under each of the essential criteria.

If you want to apply under this scheme, simply complete the on-line form.

Reasonable Adjustments

If you would like a confidential discussion regarding any reasonable adjustments during the process, please indicate this in the email covering your application or contact PublicAppointments@communities.gov.uk.

Assessment Process: Personal Information

Your personal information will be held in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations. No personal information will be passed on to third parties for commercial purposes.

When we ask you for personal information, we promise we will:

- only ask for what we need, and not collect too much or irrelevant information.
- ensure you know why we need it;
- protect it and insofar as is possible, make sure nobody has access to it who shouldn't;
- ensure you know what choice you have about giving us information;
- make sure we don't keep it longer than necessary; and
- only use your information for the purposes you have authorised.

We ask that you:

- give us accurate information;
- tell us as soon as possible of any changes; and
- tell us as soon as possible if you notice mistakes in the information we hold about you.

If you apply for a post, the manner in which we share information with the interview panel is described above.

If you would like these details to be removed from our records as soon as this recruitment exercise is complete, please inform the Public Appointments Policy team via PublicAppointments@communities.gov.uk.

Assessment Process: Contacts

For further information about the role or application process please contact: Christina Machado at PublicAppointments@communities.gov.uk. Please put '**VTS – Chair**' as the subject line of your email.

We 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 PublicAppointments@communities.gov.uk.

If you feel this competition has not been conducted fairly, openly and with selection decisions taken solely on merit and you wish to make a complaint, you should contact the Appointments Team at PublicAppointments@communities.gov.uk.

If after investigation by the Department you remain dissatisfied, you may take your complaint to the Commissioner for Public Appointments. Details on how to make a complaint can be found on the Commissioner's website at: <https://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk/regulating-appointments/investigating-complaints/>