



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Appointment of chair of the Animal Health & Welfare Board for England

Briefing pack for applicants

Closing Date: 12 Noon, Monday 5 July 2021



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Defra mission statement

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) is the UK government department responsible for safeguarding our natural environment, supporting our world-leading food and farming industry, and sustaining a thriving rural economy. Our broad remit means we play a major role in people's day-to-day life, from the food we eat, and the air we breathe, to the water we drink.

The environment is fundamental to all that we do, and we must protect and enhance it. Our job is to make our country a great place for living. We do this by supporting our superb food, farming and fisheries industries, enhancing our beautiful rural environment, and better protecting against flooding, disease and other natural threats.

Appointing high-calibre people from diverse backgrounds, with relevant skills, knowledge and experience will help us ensure that our work is more effective, resilient and accountable.

Equal Opportunities

UK government has a policy of equality of opportunity. We aim to promote equal opportunity policies whereby no one suffers unfair discrimination either directly or indirectly, or harassment, on grounds such as race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sex, gender identity, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religious beliefs or age.

Diversity

We positively welcome applicants from all backgrounds. All public/ministerial appointments are made on merit following a fair and open competition, in accordance with the rules/regulations set by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

Disability

We guarantee to interview anyone with a disability whose application meets the minimum criteria for the post. 'Minimum criteria' means you must provide sufficient evidence in your application, demonstrating that you meet the minimum level of competence required for each essential criterion, as well as meeting any of the qualifications, skills or experience required. The Cabinet Office and Defra is committed to the employment and career development of disabled people. To show this we proudly display the Disability Confident Leader logo. More information about Disability Confident Leaders is available by clicking this [link](#). If a person with disabilities is put at a disadvantage compared to a nondisabled person, we have a duty to make reasonable changes to our processes where possible. If you need a change to be made so that you can make your application, please refer to the '[How to apply and submit your application](#)' section below.

Director Welcome

Hello and welcome!

I am Gareth Baynham-Hughes, the Director of Animal and Plant Health and Welfare and an Executive Director on the Animal Health and Welfare Board for England. I'm very pleased that you are considering an application for the crucial role of chair of the Animal Health and Welfare Board to England and am very much looking forward to working with the successful candidate.



The Animal Health and Welfare Board for England is a key player in development of our work in the Animal and Plant Health and Welfare Directorate. The government has high ambitions to transform animal health and welfare, building on our already world leading status and there has never been a more important time to get the relationship between government and industry right. As an independent trading nation, we are now embarking on the delivery of our top priorities for animal welfare, set out in the recently published Action Plan for Animal Welfare; starting to deliver post-CAP transformational change in farm animal health and welfare through the Animal Health and Welfare Pathway; and embracing new market opportunities for our top quality British produce. We want to work together with all our industry sectors to increase productivity and contribute to economic growth, deliver positive environment outcomes, help mitigate climate change and boost international trade. The Board plays a pivotal role in all of this and as its chair you will be at the heart of strategic policy development, bringing benefits for generations of farmers and animal keepers to come.

I'm delighted that you're looking to apply and hope to meet you soon.

Best Wishes,

Gareth

About the Animal Health & Welfare Board for England (AHWBE)

The [AHWBE](#) was created in 2011 to provide advice to Defra Ministers on strategic animal health and welfare issues relating to England. Its scope covers the whole range of kept animals including companion animals and aquatic animal health. Now, 10 years later it is right to look again and refresh both the Board's mandate and its membership to provide support, advice and constructive challenge to Defra's Ministers and their officials in the development and implementation of animal health and welfare strategy and policy to support UK in its new independent status following our exit from the EU and to enable the development of post-exit strategic policy objectives.

The Board provides leadership, championing the ethos of partnership working between industry, animal keeping sectors and Government. It acts as a focal point for communication and co-ordination across the various sectors of industry, ensuring broad, deep, two-way engagement.

This gives stakeholders with an interest in animal health and welfare a route into the heart of decision making on matters affecting them. It has led the work on many policy areas including initiation and development of the Animal Health & Welfare Pathway and reform of the department's contingency plans for managing exotic animal disease outbreaks. The Board also played a key role in the establishment of the Electronic Equine Database and refreshed policies on puppy smuggling. You can learn more about the work of the Board in recent times at www.gov.uk

The Board encourages and enables action by all animal keepers at individual and sectoral level to minimise threats to animal and public health and animal welfare, whilst maintaining competitiveness. The Board works collaboratively with teams across the Defra Group to achieve this. It looks at both policy development and its practical application, offering insight into which interventions or initiatives will be most effective in the different sectors. More information can be found in the Terms of reference for the AHWBE, at Annex A.

We are seeking to appoint a new Chairperson for the Board through this recruitment exercise.

Role description and person specification

The appointee will:

- Provide strategic direction and advice to Defra Ministers on the health & welfare of kept animals (including companion animals and aquatic animal health).
- Provide direction and leadership to the other Non-Executive Board members and ensure Defra priorities are understood by Board members.
- Bring constructive challenge to Defra policies on animal health & welfare.
- Have the ability to take a strategic view in their decision-making, whilst acting with impartiality in providing evidence-based advice and guidance.
- Support the development and ongoing delivery of the Animal Health & Welfare Pathway.
- Lead the potential for co-design in developing existing and new policy and communication e.g. through specific task and finish groups.
- Have strong existing industry networks and to be able to expand these as needed.
- Maintain and build links with industry sector council groups.

Essential criteria

Applicants will need to show evidence of their experience and skills in the following areas, in their "statement of suitability":

Skills

- A strong strategic thinker, able to bring expertise / experience to bear, in order to robustly investigate complex issues.

- Contributes objectively and impartially on issues at a national scale and brings constructive critical challenge where needed.
- Uses data, information and evidence to drive decision making, seeking out more evidence as needed and situating all analysis within specific political, financial and strategic frameworks.
- Sensitive to people and situations, working with total confidentiality (when applicable), yet constructively listening/challenging others in order to identify and deliver shared outcomes.
- Proactive in building and maintaining effective working relationships with Ministers, public officials, private sector and third sector organisations.
- Able to communicate confidently and effectively with a variety of people, balancing conflicting interests and negotiating/persuading to achieve consensus.

In order to demonstrate this confidence and trust, **candidates are requested to provide at least two supporting statements.**

The successful candidate will be expected to abide by the Nolan principles of public service and relevant security checks (attached at [Annex C](#)).

Time commitment and term of office

Period of appointment

It is expected that the chair will be appointed to start in August 2021 (as chair designate until 1 November 2021) and will serve for up to three years. There is the possibility of reappointment for a further term, subject to satisfactory performance appraisal and business need.

Time Input

It is anticipated that successful candidate will devote **approximately 50 days a year** to the work of the Board. In line with current government guidance for work during the Covid-19 pandemic, the AHWBE will meet at least on a quarterly basis (using a mix of online collaboration tools and face to face meetings) and remuneration will be on a pro-rata basis accordingly. This may be reviewed as restrictions lift.

Remuneration and expenses

The role will be fee-based and non-pensionable. There will be a remuneration equivalent to **£500 per day**, to cover time spent on the role. Reasonable travel and subsistence expenses will also be covered in line with current Defra policy. Details will be set out in a contract.

The recruitment process

The closing date for applications is **Monday 5 July 2021**. We expect to have shortlisted candidates for interview the week commencing **12 July 2021**, with panel interviews taking place during the week commencing **26 July 2021**.

The Assessment Panel will consist of Michael Seals (current Chair of the Animal Health & Welfare Board for England), Senior Defra officials, a member of the AHWBE Secretariat team and an independent panel member. Applications will be assessed against the essential criteria in deciding whom to invite for interview.

Further details about the format of interviews will be provided to candidates in advance but are expected to be virtual.

A final decision on the appointment will be made by Ministers.

How to apply and submit your application

Candidates should submit:

- a CV of no more than two sides of A4 including education, professional qualifications and employment history.
- a supporting suitability statement of not more than one side of A4, setting out how you meet the essential criteria (skills, knowledge and experience) for this role – make sure you refer to the contents of this document.
- at least **two** supporting statements from peers / stakeholder organisations or other experts.
- The political activity form and diversity questionnaires included with the application pack.

Attachments

Monitoring form 1 (Political activity)

Monitoring form 2 (Diversity Questionnaire)

These posts are not regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

If you have any questions about the appointments process, please send an email to:

AHWBEsecretariat@defra.gov.uk

To arrange an informal discussion about the role, please contact Julie Fitton, Head of the AHWBE Secretariat at: julie.fitton@defra.gov.uk

Completed applications should be emailed to AHWBEsecretariat@defra.gov.uk by 12 noon, Monday 5 July 2021.

Conflicts of Interest/Due diligence

If you have any interests that might be relevant to the work of the AHWBE, and which could lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest if you were to be appointed, please provide details in your application. If you have queries about this and would like to discuss further, please contact the [Public Appointments Team](#).

Given the nature of public appointments, it is important that those appointed as members of public bodies maintain the confidence of Parliament and the public. If there are any issues in your personal or professional history that could, if you were appointed, be misconstrued, cause

embarrassment, or cause public confidence in the appointment to be jeopardised, it is important that you bring them to the attention of the Advisory Assessment Panel and provide details of the issue(s) in your application. In considering whether you wish to declare any issues, you should also reflect on any public statements you have made, including through social media.

As part of our due diligence checks we will consider anything in the public domain related to your conduct or professional capacity. This will include us undertaking searches of previous public statements and social media, blogs or any other publicly available information. This information may be made available to the Advisory Assessment Panel and they may wish to explore issues with you should you be invited to interview. The information may also be shared with ministers and Cabinet Office.

Data protection

Defra is committed to protecting the privacy and security of your personal information and does so in accordance with data protection law including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). All the information you provide will be used to proceed with the public appointment listed in this information pack and in the case of diversity monitoring information may be anonymised and used solely for monitoring purposes. For more information about the way we collect and hold your information, please read the Privacy Notice accessible through the Cabinet Office's Public Appointments Website (<https://publicappointments.cabinetoffice.gov.uk>) or request a copy of Defra's Public Appointments Privacy Notice from publicappts@defra.gov.uk.

Annex A – Animal Health and Welfare Board for England

Role

The Board is the direct source of departmental advice to Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) ministers on all strategic health and welfare matters relating to all kept animals in England.

The Board's role is to set the broad strategic policy framework as the basis for day-to-day advice to ministers and for day-to-day operational actions. It operates within the broader departmental framework

Objectives

- leading the strategic direction and challenge on animal health and welfare including environmental aspects of conscious animal health and welfare.
- development of key policies and how they should be funded (including where appropriate charging regimes for funding these policies)
- support the development and ongoing delivery of the Animal Health & Welfare Pathway; help identify and develop new interventions including across new species to the Animal Health & Welfare Pathway as appropriate
- assessment of the risk of threats from animal disease and how to manage these
- determining what the surveillance and influence external research priorities within the remit of animal health and welfare.
- the implementation of policy, its delivery and ensuring value for money by the relevant Defra agencies and other delivery organisations
- the effectiveness and proportionality of the regulatory framework
- the contingency plans for dealing with new disease outbreaks and for reviewing these plans on an annual basis (or as circumstances require) - these should provide for speedy and effective day-to-day management of the outbreak by officials
- relationship management with other Defra animal health & welfare bodies.

Membership

The Board is made up of both senior Defra officials and 'external' (non-Defra) members, with not less than 10 and not more than 14 members. The chair will be an external member. The Defra officials on the board will be the SROs in Defra with responsibility for the relevant programmes and budgets relating to animal health and welfare policy and its delivery. The Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) (in their role as CVO for England) and the Chief Executive of APHA will be executive members. External board members will serve in an individual capacity as non-executive members rather than as formal representatives of particular sectors or organisations. Their key roles will be:

- to contribute actively and constructively to the deliberations and work of the board
- to reach agreed and soundly based views and decisions with due regard to value for money

- to build good working relations with other members of the board, and with officials
- to ensure the effective working of the board
- to take a 'portfolio', namely lead responsibility for effective engagement and communication with a sector (or sectors) of the livestock industry and/or animal keepers, and/or other interested groups
- to represent the Board, communicating its work, views and decisions to stakeholders and to the general public

External members will be individuals who have the confidence, trust, and support of major stakeholder interests and experience and knowledge of animal-keeping. Collectively, they will bring knowledge and experience of the relevant businesses, customers and wider interests in animal health and welfare, be able to articulate the views and concerns of those groups and interests to the board and the minister, and report back to those groups on the work, the thinking and the agreed view of the board.

The independent chair and other external members will be appointed by the Minister for fixed terms and will operate under the terms of an agreed contract. The appointments process will be transparent and open, and the appointments will be publicly advertised. Member's interests will be published, and any potential conflicts of interest will be dealt with in the appropriate way. The majority of external members will serve in a personal capacity rather than as formal representatives of sectors or organisations.

All external members will be remunerated. The AHWBE will be served by a secretariat within Defra.

Governance and reporting lines

The Chair and other external Board members are appointed by Ministers for a three-year fixed term (with the option of reappointment subject to performance and business needs). The appointment process is transparent and open and is publicly advertised.

Meetings and Ways of Working

The Board meets quarterly, with meetings between non-Executive directors, policy and delivery officials held in the intervening months. A [public report](#) will be published after each meeting of the Board. The lead responsible Minister also meets regularly with the Board Chair.

To ensure a joined-up approach with other relevant bodies within Defra's remit, the Chair liaises regularly with the Chairs of the Animal Welfare Committee (AWC), the TB Partnership Group and Farm Animal Genetic Research Group (FAnGR). There are also regular meetings with the UK Chief Veterinary Officer and the 3 other CVOs for Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland.

Animal health and welfare policy and its delivery are a devolved matter. The Board will consider UK and international issues and will formulate a view on the 'England' position. The board will be informed of views in other parts of the UK to aid its work.

Animal health and welfare policy and delivery affects, and needs to take account of other departmental interests (notably the Department of Health and Food Standards Agency in relation to public health and food safety). Current liaison arrangements at official level will continue as now. Relevant information and advice resulting from that liaison will be provided to the Board, when appropriate. Advice from other departments will be treated with whatever confidentiality restrictions they request. Board papers can remain confidential and external members will be required to abide by confidentiality requirements.

Annex B – The seven principles of public life

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.



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