



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

Recruitment round for the Animal Welfare Committee and Animal Sentience Committee

Briefing pack for applicants

Closing Date: 12pm (midday) on Monday, 6th June 2022

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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.

Appointment principles

The selection of Chairs and members of the Animal Welfare Committee and Animal Sentience Committee is being carried out by Defra. Appointing high-calibre people from diverse backgrounds with relevant skills, knowledge and experience to the committees will help us to 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 are 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 at Defra and Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for the Animal Welfare Committee and the new Animal Sentience Committee. I'm very pleased that you are considering applying to join the committees and am very much looking forward to working with the successful candidates.

The Animal Welfare Committee plays a key role in informing policy makers in Defra and the Devolved Administrations through its provision of expert advice on the welfare of animals. The Animal Welfare Committee's advice is well-respected and carries weight with both Government and industry.



We are also launching the Animal Sentience Committee. The Animal Welfare (Sentience) Act 2022 has recently been granted Royal Assent. The Act recognises in law that animals are sentient beings and establishes the Animal Sentience Committee. The Committee will consider how the welfare of sentient animals is taken into account in central Government policy making decisions.

The two Committees present exciting opportunities to innovate and build on the UK's strong animal welfare reputation. I'm delighted that you're looking to apply and hope to meet you soon.

Best wishes,

Gareth

Recruitment round for the Animal Welfare Committee and Animal Sentience Committee

Introduction

This is a joint recruitment round for the Chairs and members of the Animal Welfare Committee (AWC) and the new Animal Sentience Committee.

The AWC is a non-statutory expert Committee which provides **advice** to Government on animal welfare issues. The Committee issues advice as requested by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Welsh Government and the Scottish Government. In summary, the AWC reports on the welfare needs of animals in line with its commissions.

The Animal Sentience Committee **scrutinises** policy decision making in the UK Government, but not in the Devolved Administrations. It has statutory powers to produce reports containing its view on whether, or to what extent, the UK Government is having, or has had, all due regard to the ways in which policy decisions might have an adverse effect on the welfare of animals as sentient beings. The Committee ensures that UK Government policy decisions are appropriately informed by a scientific understanding of the impacts of those decisions on the welfare of sentient animals. The Animal Sentience Committee, therefore, is also able to select which UK Government policy decisions it wishes to investigate and needs the capability and capacity to fulfil this function.

Both the AWC and the Animal Sentience Committee are constituents of the Animal Welfare Centre of Expertise (AWCE), which brings together expertise on matters pertaining to the welfare of animals. Each of the constituent committees has its own distinct purpose whilst also sharing joint interests. The AWCE's other constituents are Welfare at Killing (WAK) (a standing committee of the AWC) and the Zoos Expert Committee (ZEC).

What we are looking for

We are looking for 8 people to join the AWC, including a Committee Chair. We are also looking for 8 people to join the new Animal Sentience Committee, including a Committee Chair.

You may apply for positions on the AWC, the Animal Sentience Committee, or both if your skills and experience are relevant to vacancies on both committees.

Animal Welfare Committee Roles

About the AWC

The AWC is a non-statutory, expert committee of Defra and the Scottish and Welsh Governments. The Committee:

- Provides independent, authoritative, impartial and timely expert veterinary and scientific advice to Defra and the Scottish and Welsh Governments:
 - on the welfare of farmed animals (including farmed animals on agricultural land, at market, in transit and at the place of killing), companion animals and wild animals kept by people; and
 - on any other matters that might be considered necessary to improve standards of animal welfare.
- Provides independent scientific support and advice, as requested, in line with Article 20 of Council Regulation (EC) No.1099/2009 on the protection of animals at the time of killing. The Welfare at Killing standing committee fulfils this role and also advises the Northern Ireland Executive in this respect.

You may be asked to join the Welfare at Killing standing committee if you have the relevant skills and experience in the welfare of animals at the time of killing.

You can find more information about the AWC, including the Committee's terms of reference and its recent publications, [here](#).

Role description and person specification: 8x vacancies (7x Committee Members and 1x Committee Chair)

Background

Defra and the Scottish and Welsh Governments have ambitious animal welfare programmes underway. Animal welfare is a devolved matter but there is excellent cooperation and collaboration across the administrations. This is an exciting time to join the AWC, with a number of positions available. You will have the opportunity to shape a refreshed AWC, whilst ensuring that the highly regarded expert scientific and veterinary advice the AWC delivers continues to support and guide Government decision making.

AWC members (7x vacancies)

Responsibilities

Members of the AWC have collective responsibility for the operation of the Committee. Typical responsibilities will include working with Government policy teams, Committee members and external stakeholders to produce expert scientific and veterinary advice in a

wide range of formats, contributing to Committee meetings and representing the Committee at external events. They must:

- Engage fully in collective consideration of the issues, taking account of the full range of relevant evidence, including any guidance issued by the sponsor departments.
- Ensure that the Committee works within its terms of reference.
- Ensure that the Committee's policy on openness is adhered to and that the Committee's advice is comprehensible to members of the public.

Skills and experience required

We are looking for people with a range of skills and experience, including, but not limited to the criteria below.

In your application, please provide examples, where applicable, of:

- How you have used your written and oral communication skills to put forward views clearly and cogently in discussion and to contribute effectively to the formulation of written advice when presenting complex findings to a generalist audience.
- Your ability to think analytically and creatively when considering evidence and contributing to advice.
- Your ability to understand and value different perspectives and to build productive working relationships both within and outside the Committee.
- Your ability to work as part of a team to deliver agreed objectives.
- Expertise in veterinary or other relevant science, or animal ethics.
- Your understanding of animal welfare legislation.

Desirable criteria

Where applicable, in your application please provide examples of significant current or recent experience of working with animals or keeping animals (e.g. as a farmer, vet, or researcher), in any of the following areas:

- Pig farming, including practical experience of a variety of illnesses/issues and the methods of treatment and the welfare of animals at the time of killing.
- Poultry farming, including practical experience of a variety of illnesses/issues and the methods of treatment and the welfare of animals at the time of killing.
- Equines, including practical experience of a variety of equine illnesses/issues and the methods of treatment and the welfare of animals at the time of killing.
- Dogs and cats, including practical experience of a variety of canine/feline-related illnesses/issues and the methods of treatment.
- Other pets (e.g. rabbits), including related illnesses/issues and the methods of treatment.
- Kept wild animals and exotic pets (e.g. snakes), including related illnesses/issues and the methods of treatment.

- Fish, including the ways in which they are caught and kept for commercial consumption and/or their natural habitats and ecosystems.
- Decapods and cephalopods, including the ways in which they are caught and kept for commercial consumption and/or their natural habitats and ecosystems.
- Practical or academic experience of animal ethics, with an understanding of the concepts of stress, pain and suffering and how these relate to animal welfare.

Time commitment

Committee members will work on a part-time basis, dedicating around 10-15 days per year to Committee business.

Term of appointment

Committee members are usually appointed for a term of four years, which may be renewed once (eight years in total). Members will be appointed for no more than two terms, although extensions in line with the Governance Code for Public Appointments may be sought under exceptional circumstances.

Remuneration and expenses

AWC members are entitled to an attendance fee of up to £300 per day for meetings and for time spent on AWC business not associated with a particular meeting, e.g. for research or drafting work. Reasonable travel and subsistence expenses will also be covered in line with current Defra policy. Details will be provided on appointment.

AWC Chair (1x vacancy)

Responsibilities

The Chair has responsibility for providing effective leadership and is the public face of the AWC. Typical responsibilities will include working with Government policy teams, Committee members and external stakeholders to produce expert scientific and veterinary advice in a wide range of formats, leading Committee meetings and representing the Committee at external events. The Chair is accountable for:

- Leading collective consideration of the issues, taking account of the full range of relevant evidence, including any guidance issued by the sponsor departments.
- Ensuring that the Committee works within its terms of reference.
- Ensuring that the Committee's policy on openness is adhered to and that the Committee's advice is comprehensible to members of the public.

In detail, this means the Chair is responsible for:

- The operation and output of the Committee, including assessing the workload and ensuring that the volume of work does not compromise the rigour of the discussion.
- Ensuring that the Committee meets at appropriate intervals, and that the minutes of meetings and any advice to Departments accurately record the decisions taken.

- Ensuring that the Committee makes best use of its available funding, in line with its work plan.
- Ensuring that every member has the opportunity to be heard and that no view is ignored or overlooked, using, where appropriate, a structured process which ensures that all views are captured and explored.
- Embedding a culture of inclusion and equal opportunity for all, where the diversity of individuals' backgrounds and experiences are valued and respected.
- Ensuring that any significant diversity of opinion among the members is fully explored and discussed and, if it cannot be reconciled, is accurately reflected in the advice.
- Providing final quality assurance and signing off all AWC advice, opinions and research.
- Meeting with Defra and Devolved Administration Ministers and reporting the views of the Committee to Defra and Devolved Administrations.
- Ensuring that new members are briefed on appointment and their training needs considered.
- Developing and maintaining strategic relationships with decision-makers and opinion-formers, e.g. sector groups, welfare groups and the research community.
- Responding appropriately to complaints, if necessary, with reference to the sponsor departments.
- Overseeing liaison between the Committee and other bodies, e.g. Animal Sentience Committee, Animal Health and Welfare Board for England, Zoos Expert Committee, Scottish Animal Welfare Commission, European Forum for Animal Welfare Councils (EuroFAWC).

Skills and experience required

In addition to meeting the criteria for AWC members, we are looking for a Chair with a range of skills and experience, including, but not limited to:

- Practical knowledge and experience chairing meetings/committees with good prioritisation skills.
- Strong and progressive leadership skills.
- The ability to understand and value different perspectives and to build productive working relationships both within and outside the Committee.
- Good communication skills with experience of playing a leading role in informing the strategic direction of organisations in an expert veterinary or scientific advisory capacity and making sure that expertise is heard and respected by the people shaping the policies.
- Confidence in engaging publicly.
- Experience of working with Government Ministers.
- Experience of working with stakeholders in an open, honest and transparent manner.
- The ability to see the bigger picture, including how animal welfare links to the environment and health.

Please provide examples of these in your application.

Time commitment

The Chair of the Committee will work on a part-time basis, dedicating at least 20 days per year to Committee business.

Term of appointment

The Chair of the Committee is usually appointed for a term of four years, which may be renewed once (eight years in total). The Chair will be appointed for no more than two terms, although extensions in line with the Governance Code for Public Appointments may be sought under exceptional circumstances.

Remuneration and expenses

The Committee Chair is entitled to an attendance fee of up to £500 per day for meetings and for time spent on AWC business not associated with a particular meeting, e.g. for research or drafting work. Reasonable travel and subsistence expenses will also be covered in line with current Defra policy. Details will be provided on appointment.

Animal Sentience Committee Roles

About the Animal Sentience Committee

The Animal Sentience Committee is a new Committee, established under the Animal Welfare (Sentience) Act 2022. The Act provides assurance about how the welfare of sentient animals is taken into account in central Government policy decisions. The Committee's remit does not extend to devolved matters.

The Animal Sentience Committee has statutory powers to produce reports on whether, or to what extent, the Government is having, or has had, all due regard to the ways in which policy decisions might have an adverse effect on the welfare of animals as sentient beings.

The Committee will be expected to produce around 6-9 reports per year.

You can find the Animal Sentience Committee's draft Terms of Reference [here](#).

Role description and person specification: 8x vacancies (7x Committee Members and 1x Committee Chair)

Background

This is an opportunity to help set the direction of a new expert Committee, which will consider how individual central Government policies take account of animal welfare. We are looking for individuals with experience in the animal welfare sector, who would like to be a part of this new Committee.

Animal Sentience Committee members (7x vacancies)

Responsibilities

Members of the Animal Sentience Committee have collective responsibility for the operation of the Committee. Typical responsibilities will include working with Government policy teams, Committee members and external stakeholders to produce expert reports, contributing to Committee meetings and representing the Committee at external events. They must:

- Engage fully in collective consideration of the issues, taking account of the full range of relevant evidence.
- Ensure that the Committee works within its statutory remit.
- Ensure that the Committee's policy on transparency is adhered to.

Skills and experience required

We are looking for people with a range of skills and experience, including, but not limited to the criteria below.

In your application, please provide examples, where applicable, of:

- How you have used your written and oral communication skills to put forward views clearly and cogently in discussion and to contribute effectively to the formulation of written advice when presenting complex findings to a generalist audience.
- Your ability to think analytically and creatively when contributing to advice for Government.
- Your ability to understand and value different perspectives and to build productive working relationships both within and outside the Committee.
- Your ability to work as part of a team to deliver agreed objectives.
- Expertise in veterinary or other relevant science, or animal ethics.
- How you have used your extensive knowledge and understanding of animal welfare legislation and policy to think analytically and creatively when contributing advice or in your engagement with Government Departments in policy development.
- Your awareness of current research/science in the animal welfare space and the ability to assess to what extent decision making is led by relevant research/science.

Desirable criteria

Where applicable, in your application please provide examples of the below:

- An understanding of domestic and international developments in animal welfare legislation.
- Significant understanding of animal behaviour for a variety of animals and a general knowledge of the welfare of kept animals.
- Practical knowledge of a variety of animals and their welfare needs with regard to caring for and keeping animals, either in private ownership or commercially.
- Academic experience of research into animal welfare and caring for animals.
- Experience in informing the strategic direction of organisations in an advisory capacity.
- Practical knowledge and experience of conservation, ecology, or a biological background.
- Practical or academic experience of animal ethics, with an understanding of the concepts of stress, pain and suffering and how these relate to animal welfare.

Time commitment

Committee members will work on a part-time basis, dedicating around 15-20 days per year to Committee business.

Term of appointment

Committee members will usually be appointed for a term of four years, which may be renewed once (eight years in total). Members will be appointed for no more than two terms, although extensions in line with the Governance Code for Public Appointments may be sought under exceptional circumstances.

Remuneration and expenses

Animal Sentience Committee members are entitled to an attendance fee of up to £300 per day for meetings and for time spent on Animal Sentience Committee business not associated with a particular meeting, e.g. for research or drafting work. Reasonable travel and subsistence expenses will also be covered in line with current Defra policy. Details will be provided on appointment.

Animal Sentience Committee Chair (1x vacancy)

Responsibilities

The Chair has responsibility for providing effective leadership and is the public face of the Animal Sentience Committee. Typical responsibilities will include working with Government policy teams, Committee members and external stakeholders to produce expert reports, leading Committee meetings and representing the Committee at external events. The Chair is accountable for:

- Leading collective consideration of the issues, taking account of the full range of relevant evidence.
- Ensuring that the Committee works within its statutory remit.
- Ensuring that the Committee's policy on transparency is adhered to.

In detail, this means the Chair is responsible for:

- The operation and output of the Committee, including assessing the workload and ensuring that the volume of work does not compromise the rigour of the discussion.
- Ensuring that the Committee meets at appropriate intervals, and that the minutes of meetings and any advice to Departments accurately record the decisions taken.
- Ensuring that the Committee makes best use of its available funding, in line with its work plan.
- Ensuring that every member has the opportunity to be heard and that no view is ignored or overlooked, using, where appropriate, a structured process which ensures that all views are captured and explored.
- Embedding a culture of inclusion and equal opportunity for all, where the diversity of individuals' backgrounds and experiences are valued and respected.
- Ensuring that any significant diversity of opinion among the members is fully explored and discussed and, if it cannot be reconciled, is accurately reflected in the advice.
- Providing final quality assurance and signing off all Animal Sentience Committee reports.
- Meeting with Defra Ministers and reporting the views of the Committee to Defra and other Government Departments.
- Ensuring that new members are briefed on appointment and their training needs considered.
- Developing and maintaining strategic relationships with decision-makers and opinion-formers, e.g. sector groups, welfare groups and the research community.
- Responding appropriately to complaints, if necessary, with reference to the sponsor departments.
- Overseeing liaison between the Committee and other affiliates of the AWCE and other Government Committees, e.g. AWC, Animal Health and Welfare Board for England, Zoos Expert Committee.
- Conducting investigations and assessments into how Departments have taken evidence into account.
- Issuing selection judgement and auditing the outcomes of any reports conducted by the Committee.

Skills and experience required

Alongside the essential criteria listed for being an Animal Sentience Committee member, we are looking for a Chair with a range of skills and experience, including, but not limited to:

- Practical knowledge and experience chairing meetings/committees with good prioritisation skills.
- Strong and progressive leadership skills.
- The ability to understand and value different perspectives and to build productive working relationships both within and outside the Committee.
- Good communication skills with experience of playing a leading role in informing the strategic direction of organisations in an expert veterinary or scientific advisory capacity and making sure that expertise is heard and respected by the people shaping the policies.
- Confidence in engaging publicly.
- Experience of working with Government Ministers.
- Experience of working with stakeholders in an open, honest and transparent manner.
- Expertise in the policy decision making process.
- Experience of leading a new committee in its development and evolution, ensuring it is established and functioning in line with the Animal Sentience Committee's purpose as set out in the Animal Welfare (Sentience) Act 2022 and operates effectively and efficiently.
- Ability to understand, influence, and lead within a complex political or administrative system, corporate or public body, while remaining objective and evidence led.

Time commitment

The Chair of the Committee will work on a part-time basis, dedicating at least 20 days per year to Committee business.

Term of appointment

The Chair of the Committee will usually be appointed for a term of four years, which may be renewed once (eight years in total). The Chair will be appointed for no more than two terms, although extensions in line with the Governance Code for Public Appointments may be sought under exceptional circumstances.

Remuneration and expenses

The Chair of the Committee is entitled to an attendance fee of up to £500 per day for meetings and for time spent on Animal Sentience Committee business not associated with a particular meeting, e.g. for research or drafting work. Reasonable travel and subsistence expenses will also be covered in line with current Defra policy. Details will be provided on appointment.

The recruitment process

The closing date for applications is 12pm (midday) on Monday, 6th June 2022. We expect to have shortlisted candidates for interview the week commencing 13th June 2022, with panel interviews expected to start during the week commencing 27th June 2022.

The Assessment Panel will consist of Gareth Baynham-Hughes (Director of Animal and Plant Health and Welfare at Defra and SRO for the AWC and Animal Sentience Committee) and senior officials from Defra and the Devolved Administrations. Applications will be assessed against the criteria detailed in this pack in deciding whom to invite for interview.

Interviews will take place virtually, via Microsoft Teams. Further details about the format of interviews will be provided to candidates in advance.

A final decision on the appointments 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 750 words**, setting out how you meet the essential and desirable criteria (skills, knowledge and experience) for this role – please 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.

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

If you have any questions about the appointments process, or to arrange an informal discussion about the role, please contact: awcsecretariat@defra.gov.uk and sentiencesecretariat@defra.gov.uk.

Completed applications should be emailed to awcsecretariat@defra.gov.uk and sentiencesecretariat@defra.gov.uk by 12pm (midday) on Monday, 6th June.

Conflicts of interest/Due diligence

If you have any interests that might be relevant to the work of the AWC or Animal Sentience Committee, 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 at publicappts@defra.gov.uk.

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: 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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