
Children's Commissioner's Audit and Risk Committee**Briefing Pack for Applicants**

Closing Date: 23:59hrs 06 July 2022

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Children's Commissioner's message to candidates

This is my second year as Children's Commissioner, since starting in the role in March 2021 every single day has been critical for children. As we deal with the realities of a global pandemic, I believe it is vital we put children at the heart of our recovery. I'm truly honoured to spend my tenure championing the voices, needs and aspirations of young people at this crucial time.

My office is funded by public money and is required to adhere to high standards over how and what we spend money on when procuring goods and services. With this in mind, I am seeking to appoint two new members of my Audit and Risk Committee (ARC), which provides a means of independent assurance and objective review of financial systems, financial information, information data security, risk management systems, governance arrangements and internal control mechanisms. The ARC ensures that assets are safeguarded, the risk of illegal or improper acts is reduced and confidence in the objectivity and fairness of financial reporting is increased.

I remain optimistic for this generation, because they have shown me that they refuse to be held back by adversity. All children deserve to play every day, learn without limits, explore and enjoy new activities safely, and feel the warmth of their communities. As adults, we are responsible for the next phase of regeneration and recovery – now it's time to usher in an era of transformation together, to help deliver the future they want and deserve, to ensure children's needs and voices are at the very heart of that vision.

Yours sincerely,



Dame Rachel de Souza

Children's Commissioner

About the Children's Commissioner's Office

The Children's Commissioner for England sits at the heart of Government, delivering for children, and championing their voices and needs. This includes a particular responsibility towards children who rely on the state for their safety or protection.

The Children's Commissioner is a unique statutory role with powers to help bring about long-term change and improvements for children. Her messages to policy and decision makers, leaders of industry, charities and sometimes parents provide insight, evidence and challenge to us all to provide the best support possible for children as they grow up.

The Commissioner is a Corporation Sole, which means that all legal powers rest with her, and is responsible for all decision-making and governance and as the accounting officer has personal responsibility for maintaining a sound system of governance, internal control and risk management whilst safeguarding public funds.

The Commissioner is the Accounting Officer and has personal responsibility for maintaining a sound system of governance, internal control and risk management whilst safeguarding public funds and the sponsoring department's assets.

The Office of the Children's Commissioner is an executive non-departmental public body [NDPB] of, and grant-in-aid funded by, the Department for Education.

To support the Commissioner as a Corporation Sole, an Audit and Risk Committee was established to provide a means of independent assurance and objective review of financial systems, financial information, information data security, risk management systems, governance arrangements and internal control mechanisms.

The Commissioner is now inviting applications from exceptional individuals with a wide breadth of experience to join her Audit and Risk Committee.

Candidates should have an interest in issues affecting children, particularly the most vulnerable, and be interested in the work of the Commissioner's office. At least one successful candidate must have a background in HR.

Essential criteria

The successful candidates will be able to demonstrate:

- track record of operating at a senior level in a high-profile organisation
- understanding of the role of an Audit and Risk Committee
- knowledge of corporate governance arrangements
- ability to challenge rigorously and debate constructively
- strong communication and inter-personal skills
- genuine interest in the work of the Children's Commissioner
- extensive experience of governance, strategic planning and performance management.
- senior experience in either an educational or a children's social care setting
- extensive experience of either audit and/or HR, including a knowledge of relevant government protocols
- an HR and/or risk management qualification

We particularly welcome applications from candidates from under-represented groups, including those based on race, gender and disability.

The successful candidates must abide by The Nolan principles – The seven principles of public life (Annex C).

Time commitment and term of office

Meetings are held four times a year with members attending brief pre- and post-meeting private discussions. An additional meeting is generally scheduled in June to consider the Commissioner's Annual Report and Accounts, when the Head of Internal Audit and National Audit Office representative are invited to join the pre-meet.

Members may be contacted between meetings via email or telephone, on a limited basis and only as strictly necessary.

Meetings are scheduled one year in advance and dates will only change in exceptional circumstances. Attendance is recorded and published as part of the annual reporting cycle.

It is anticipated that the successful candidate will attend the ARC meeting on 21 September 2022.

Meetings take place at the Children's Commissioner's office, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London, SW1P 3BT.

The initial term of office is three years, subject to performance. Members are not employees of the Children's Commissioner's Office. The Children's Commissioner has discretion to renew the appointment at the end of the first term of office, subject to consistently good performance. There should therefore be no assumption of automatic reappointment.

Remuneration and expenses

Audit and Risk Committee members do not receive a fee however are eligible to claim reasonable expenses for travel and subsistence costs necessarily incurred on the Children's Commissioner's business.

The recruitment process

The closing date for applications is 23:59hrs on Wednesday 06 July 2022. Interviews are expected to take place on Monday 18 July 2022 in the Children's Commissioner's Office, Sanctuary Buildings, Great Smith Street, London SW1P 3BT.

Further details about the format will be provided to you in advance.

It is essential that your statement of suitability gives full but concise information relevant to the appointment, clearly demonstrating how you meet each of the essential criteria.

The Recruitment Panel will consist of Dame Rachel De Souza, Children's Commissioner for England and David Clarke, Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee.

The Panel will assess each application against the essential criteria and decide who to invite for final interview.

How to apply and submit your application

To apply, please send the following to OCC.Recruitment@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk by the deadline of 23:59hrs on Wednesday 06 July 2022:

- a CV of not more than two A4 sides

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- a supporting statement of not more than two A4 sides, setting out how you meet the essential criteria – ensure you refer to the guidance in this document
 - Equality and diversity monitoring form
 - Registration of Interests form (please note the section on conflicts of interest and due diligence below).

To arrange an informal discussion about the role please contact:

Christine.Burgess@childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

Conflicts of interest and due diligence

- If you have any interests that might be relevant to the work of the Office, 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 them, 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 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 publically available information. This information may be made available to the Panel and they may wish to explore issues with you should you be invited to interview.

Ineligibility criteria

You cannot be considered for a public appointment if:

- you become bankrupt or make an arrangement with creditors

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- your estate has been sequestrated in Scotland or you enter into a debt arrangement programme under Part 1 of the Debt Arrangement and Attachment (Scotland) Act 2002 (asp 17) as the debtor or have, under Scots law, granted a trust deed for creditors
 - you are disqualified from acting as a company director under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986

The Commissioner for Public Appointments

This appointment is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments, to ensure that it is made on merit after fair and open competition. More information about the role of the Commissioner and the Governance Code on Public Appointments can be found at:

<http://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk/>

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/578498/governance_code_on_public_appointments_16_12_2016.pdf

For full details of the complaints process for public appointments, please click on the following link which will take you to the Commissioner for Public Appointments website:

<https://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk/regulating-appointments/investigating-complaints/>

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

Data protection

The Children's Commissioner 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 our Privacy Notice, accessible through the Children's Commissioner's website (<https://childrenscommissioner.gov.uk>)

Equal Opportunities

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

We are committed to equality of opportunity. We aim to promote equal opportunity 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.

We positively welcome applicants from all backgrounds. All public appointments are made on merit following a fair and open competition as regulated by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

We guarantee to interview anyone with a disability whose application meets the minimum criteria for the post. By 'minimum criteria' we mean that you must provide us with evidence in your application which demonstrates that you generally meet the level of competence required for each criterion, as well as meeting any of the qualifications, skills or experience defined as essential.

Annex A: Terms of Reference



ARC Terms of
Reference - May 2022

Annex B: The Nolan Principles – 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.

Annex C: Current membership of the Committee

The Audit and Risk Committee comprises of a chair and four members

- David Clarke, Chair
- James Norton
- Richard Smith
- George Stylianides
- Micon Metcalfe
- Harry Buscall