

SOLICITOR AND ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION (ADR) PROVIDER MEMBERS

CIVIL JUSTICE COUNCIL (CJC)


CANDIDATE INFORMATION PACK

Reference number: CJC (2) 2014

Closing date for the post is: noon on Wednesday 5 March
2014

Applications should be submitted via: PublicAppointmentsTeam@justice.gsi.gov.uk

If you require an alternative formatted version of this application form, please contact:
Stewart Mead on 020 3334 6273 (or at the following e-mail address:
PublicAppointmentsTeam@justice.gsi.gov.uk) to discuss your requirements.

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Overview

We are looking at a Solicitor and an Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) provider.

The initial appointment is for a period of three years.

Indicative timetable of the process

Advert date: **Week commencing 17 February 2014**

Closing date: **noon on Wednesday 5 March 2014**

Sifting complete by: **end of week commencing 10 March 2014**

Interviews held: **Week commencing 24 March 2014**

Provisional appointment start date: **1 May 2014**

Background to the Organisation

Structure of the Council

The Council is currently composed of 16 members. Council members hail from a diverse range of backgrounds. The Civil Procedure Act 1997, which established the Civil Justice Council, made provision for the types of members which must be represented on it. They include the following:

- Judges;
- Legal practitioners;
- Civil servants concerned with the administration of the courts;
- Consumer affairs experts;
- Lay advice sector representatives; and
- Persons able to represent the interests of particular kinds of litigants (for example, businesses or employees).

The Civil Justice Council

The Civil Justice Council is an advisory non-departmental public body established by the Civil Procedure Act 1997 whose function is to oversee the civil justice system and to recommend reforms to government. The Council is funded by the Ministry of Justice. Since 1 October 2010, it has been sponsored by the Judicial Office - the body of civil servants set up to support the judiciary following the introduction of the Constitutional Reform Act 2005.

Further information about the Civil Justice Council can be found at www.judiciary.gov.uk/about-the-judiciary/advisory-bodies/cjc.

Role of Council Members

Members of the Council have collective responsibility for the operation of this body. As with all members of advisory bodies, they must:

- Engage fully in collective consideration of the issues, taking into account the full range of relevant factors, including any guidance issued by the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) or by the Secretary of State for Justice;
- Ensure that its responsibilities under the Freedom of Information Act (including prompt responses to public requests for information) are discharged and agree an Annual Report;
- Respond appropriately to complaints, if necessary with reference to the MoJ;
- Ensure that the Council does not exceed its powers or functions.

As a Member of the Civil Justice Council you will:

- Participate in quarterly Council meetings using your experience and expertise;
- Monitor the progress of the Council's Business Plan and the operation of its working parties;
- Consider draft proposals for civil justice reform and consultation responses submitted by its working parties;
- Chair or sit on time-limited working parties as required depending on your availability;
- Act as ambassadors for the Council where appropriate.

Essential Criteria

- An ability to contribute at a strategic level and an analytical ability in dealing with complex issues, and contribute to a strategic board/committee and experience as a team-player.
- A demonstrable commitment to valuing diversity, effective interpersonal and communications skills including demonstrable engagement with key consumer representative/advice sector stakeholders.
- Availability and willingness to give sufficient time to prepare for, and attend, four meetings per year and to participate fully in the work of the Civil Justice Council.

Desirable Criteria

- Availability to serve on a Civil Justice Council Working Party as necessary. A Working Party is an ad-hoc time-limited group of Council Members formed to consider a particular civil justice issue or, for example, to draft a response to a relevant public consultation.

Diversity and equality of opportunity

We welcome applications from candidates regardless of ethnicity, religion or belief, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability, gender identity. We particularly welcome applications from woman, from those who have not previously held a public appointment and from those currently working in, or with experience of, the private sector.

We recognise flexible working practices, but members need to be able to attend quarterly meetings, mostly held in the Royal Courts of Justice, London, generally on Thursdays in January, April, July and October.

Guaranteed Interview Scheme for Disabled Applicants

The Ministry of Justice operates a guaranteed interview scheme for disabled people. The Equality Act 2010 defines a person as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment and the impairment has a substantial and long term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Under the Guaranteed Interview Scheme a disabled candidate will be selected for interview if they meet the minimum criteria for the role. If you wish to apply for consideration under the scheme, please complete the declaration form. In addition, if you require any special arrangements, if invited to the interview, please let us know so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

Diversity Monitoring Form

The Diversity Monitoring Form is for monitoring purposes only. By collecting and analysing the data of those applying and obtaining an appointment, we can improve our diversity strategy. This form is not part of the selection process and will be treated in confidence. It will be kept separate from your application and not be seen by the selection panel.

On appointment

Remuneration and allowances

- The role is unremunerated and will require a commitment of approximately 8 day(s) per year.
- Reasonable standard travel expenses will be payable in line with the Ministry of Justice's Travel and Subsistence policy.

Appointment and tenure of office

- The appointment will be made by the Lord Chancellor for an initial period of up to three years and may be renewable assuming satisfactory appraisal of performance.
- Re-appointment can be recommended at the end of the period of office for a further term of up to five years, at the discretion of Ministers. Any re-appointment is subject to satisfactory annual appraisals of performance during the first term in the post. If re-appointed, the total time served in post will not exceed 10 years.
- All members are required to adhere to the Civil Justice Council code of practice and rules of conduct as stated in Appendix 1.

Performance appraisal

The Members will be assessed at least once a year against their performance for each year of their appointment, which will be carried out by the Chair.

Location

Meetings of the Council will be held at the Royal Courts of Justice in London. Some travel may be required.

Commitment

Members will be expected to commit four days each year to attend meetings, which are held in London, and will be expected to read and consider papers outside meetings. Meetings will be fixed well in advance as much as is possible.

Standards in public life, political activity, eligibility and conflicts of interests

Standards in public life

Candidates must also confirm that they understand the standards of probity required of public appointees outlined in the "Seven Principles of Public Life" drawn up by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (see Appendix 1).

Public bodies are expected to maintain a register of members' interests to avoid any danger of member being influenced - or appearing to be influenced - by their private interests in the exercise of their public duties. Candidates invited to interview will be questioned about any real or perceived conflicts of interest. These do not constitute an automatic bar to appointment, but they must be manageable.

Political Activity

Members of the CJC will need to show political impartiality during their time on the CJC and must declare any party political activity they undertake in the period of their appointment.

Due to the nature of the CJC it is not appropriate for members of the CJC to occupy paid party political posts or hold sensitive, senior or prominent positions in any political organisation. Nomination for election to political office, for example the House of Commons, the Northern Ireland Assembly, Scottish Parliament, the European Parliament, is not considered compatible with membership of CJC.

Subject to the foregoing, members are free to engage in political activities, provided that they are conscious of their general responsibilities and standards for public life and exercise proper discretion.

Conflict of Interests

You will be required to declare any conflict of interest that arises in the course of CJC business and must declare any relevant business interests, positions of authority or other connections with commercial, public or voluntary bodies. Any actual or perceived conflicts of interest will be fully explored by the panel at short listing or interview stage.

More generally, there are five issues most frequently encountered that could lead to real, or apparent, conflicts of interest:

- Financial interests or share ownership –for example, holding shares in a firm that is considering applying or has licensed body status in relation to Alternative Business Structures could be a particular area of concern
- Expertise or activity in particular areas, that whilst not precluding appointment may be perceived by the public as a conflict of interest –for example, it is especially important that associations with legal firms are explored fully
- Membership of some societies or organisations –for example, dealings with the legal and financial sectors will need to be explored fully
- Rewards for past or future contributions or favours
- The activities, associations and employment of relatives or partners.

Further advice about conflicts of interest can be obtained by contacting: Stewart Mead (020 3334 6273) or by e-mail request through PublicAppointmentsTeam@justice.gsi.gov.uk

The Political Activity Declaration will be kept separate from your application and will only be seen by the selection panel prior to interview. However, it is appreciated that such activities may have given you relevant skills, including experience gained from committee work, collective decision making, resolving conflict and public speaking. If, therefore, you have had such experience and you consider it relevant to your application for this post, you should include it separately in the main body of your application.

How to Apply

All applicants are required to provide a CV and supporting letter of no more than two sides, that evidences how you meet all the essential criteria.

Please provide examples of where your knowledge and experience matches the essential criteria required for the role. Your supporting letter should provide specific and detailed examples to demonstrate how you meet the essential criteria (including what you did to achieve a specific result).

You should also complete the separate disclosure forms providing any political activity, conflicts of interest, public appointments currently held and referees.

Please note that applications may be passed, in confidence, to the Commissioner for Public Appointments and the Commissioner's auditors for the purposes of complaints investigation and audit (8.2 of the OCPA Code of Practice refers).

The Closing date for applications is noon on Tuesday, 15 October 2013.

Applications should be sent to: PublicAppointmentsTeam@justice.gsi.gov.uk

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>.

How we will handle your application

The selection panel for the Solicitor member will include:

- Peter Farr, Judicial Office, Secretary to the Civil Justice Council (Panel Chair);
- Craig Budsworth, CJC Member;
- Independent Panel Member – to be confirmed.

The selection panel for the ADR member will include:

- Peter Farr, Judicial Office, Secretary to the Civil Justice Council (Panel Chair);
- John Usher, CJC member.
- Graham Massie, Independent Panel Member;

We will deal with your application as quickly as possible (timings below are indicative).

- Once you have submitted your application, its receipt will be acknowledged;
- Your application will be assessed against the essential criteria and experience for the post. It is important that you provide as much detail as possible within the limit constraints of two sides;
- By mid March the panel will aim to have decided the candidates who will be invited for interview, taking account of the evidence provided on your application. You will be advised of the outcome of your application by e-mail from the Public Appointments Team;
- Interviews are currently intended to take place week commencing 24 March 2014 .Travel expenses will not be payable for attending interviews;
- If invited to interview, the panel will explore with you your experience and expertise to find whether you meet the essential criteria;
- If, in the view of the panel you have the skills for the post and are appointable, your name will be amongst those recommended to Ministers who will decide on the appointment;
- If your application is unsuccessful you will be contacted by the Public Appointments Team.

Complaints Process

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

Mike Gibbs
Ministry of Justice
Head of the Public Appointments Team
ALB Governance Division
10th Floor, 10.10
102 Petty France
London, SW1H 9AJ

E-mail address: PublicAppointmentsTeam@justice.gsi.gov.uk

Your complaint will be acknowledged within 2 working days of receipt and answered as quickly and clearly as possible; at the most within 20 working days of receipt. If this deadline cannot be met we will inform you why this is the case and when you can expect a reply.

Taking it further

If, after receiving a comprehensive response, you are still concerned, you can write to the address below:

Commissioner for Public Appointments, and Civil Service Commission
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 and his Code of Practice is available from <http://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk/>

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 <http://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk/contact-us/>
Alternatively please contact the Commissioner's office on 020 7271 0831 for a printed copy.

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.