



# Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) and Chair for the Commission for Local Administration in England (CLAE)

## Information Pack for Candidates

**Closing Date: 11.00pm on 19 March 2023**





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Department for Levelling Up,  
Housing & Communities

# Welcome



**Lee Rowley MP**  
**Parliamentary-  
Under Secretary  
of State for  
Local  
Government and  
Building Safety**

Dear Candidate

I am seeking to appoint an outstanding individual as the new Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) and Chair for the Commission for Local Administration in England (CLAE).

Through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill the Government is transferring more power, autonomy and responsibility to local government. This makes it increasingly vital that local citizens have an effective right of redress where services do not meet the standards that the public rightly expect and deserve.

The LGSCO is the cornerstone of this redress framework, investigating complaints from members of the public regarding possible personal injustice arising from maladministration by local authorities and social care providers. In essence their job is to “put things right when they have gone wrong” for ordinary people.

The organisation conducts ~3500 detailed investigations a year, two thirds of which uphold the complaint and make recommendations to offer remedy. In many cases, recommendations are made for systemic change, making public services better for everyone.

Further information about the LGSCO, the role of the Ombudsman and the skills and qualities we are looking for is set out below. If you have further questions about any aspect of the role or the application process, please contact [PublicAppointments@levellingup.gov.uk](mailto:PublicAppointments@levellingup.gov.uk).

If you believe you have the experience and skills we are seeking, I would like to encourage you to consider applying at this exciting and challenging time.

# The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman / Commission for Local Administration in England

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) is charged by Parliament with the investigation of complaints from members of the public who have suffered personal injustice arising from maladministration by local authorities and adult social care providers. The service is free, independent and impartial, and delivers both personal redress for members of the public and recommendations for improvements to public services. The LGSCO also has an important role in providing advice and guidance on good administrative practice.

The founding legislation created the Commission for Local Administration in England (CLAE) as the host body for the LGSCO scheme and provided that the Secretary of State should designate a Local Commissioner as the Chair of the Commission. The Chair is more commonly known as the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman. The Commission consists of the Chair, the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman as an ex-officio member, and three (temporarily four) advisory members. Appointments to the office of Local Commissioner are made by His Majesty the King on the recommendation of the Secretary of State.

Further information on the work of the LGSCO and CLAE can be found at: <http://www.lgo.org.uk/>.

## Role Description and Key Responsibilities

The Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman is a prominent figure, often dealing with controversial and sensitive issues in a high profile and politically charged environment. The successful candidate must command and retain the confidence of the public, local government and Parliament while delivering an effective and impartial redress service to the satisfaction of a range of stakeholders. They must be committed to the highest levels of conduct, integrity and objectivity, equality of opportunity, and the purpose and values of the Commission. The successful candidate must be adaptable, flexible and resilient, comfortable in a change culture with both mature and balanced judgement.

The successful candidate will take up the mantle of strategic, intellectual and cultural leadership for the LGSCO; ensuring high performance and service standards through organisational leadership and public accountability, providing personal authority and oversight over all jurisdictional matters relating to investigations, and promoting a confident vision and robust values appropriate for an open and accountable public body. They will also act as the principal ambassador for the LGSCO, promoting a positive reputation and authoritatively articulating the LGSCO's policy position at the highest level of public and Parliamentary scrutiny.

The statutory authority to investigate complaints is vested in the Ombudsman personally and delivered in practice by LGSCO staff acting under delegated authority. All matters relating to the conduct of investigations, the exercise of statutory discretion, the determination of the outcome of complaints, the recommendation of remedies, and the publication of casework outcomes, reports and advice are determined by, or on behalf of, the Ombudsman. Decisions on individual complaints can only be challenged through Judicial Review.

## Role Description and Key Responsibilities

In the exercise of these quasi-judicial functions the Ombudsman is independent of central and local government and accountable to Parliament. This accountability is primarily exercised by the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Select Committee and the Ombudsman will be expected to attend Committee hearings as required.

The Chair of the Commission is accountable to the Secretary of State in their role as Chair but not in the exercise of their personal authority as Ombudsman. The Chair is responsible for ensuring that the Commission fulfils its statutory purpose, delivers to agreed corporate and business plan priorities and that its affairs are conducted with probity. In particular, this means ensuring high standards of corporate governance are demonstrated at all times and that effective arrangements are in place to provide assurance on risk management, governance and internal control.

Full details of the responsibilities of the Commission and the personal responsibilities of the Chair are set out in the Commission's [Framework Document](#) with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities.

# LGSCO Selection Criteria

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

## Essential Criteria:

- Ability to operate in a quasi-judicial environment with the ability to analyse complex issues quickly and with a track record of reaching sound and balanced judgements.
- Experience of strong strategic leadership skills with the ability to chair and manage a medium size organisation, ideally within a statutory framework and with a proven ability to deliver within complex governance arrangements.
- A track record of a performance orientated approach to management founded on sound financial management, delivering value for money and effective risk management.
- Evidence of strong change management skills, including a proven capacity to manage organisational transition and transformation.
- A professional background that will inspire confidence in the local government sector and the public in the candidate's ability to ensure fair, robust and independent investigations.
- Excellent communication skills, including a proven capacity to establish credibility and build working relationships with stakeholders, conflict resolution and media handling under public and political scrutiny.

## Desirable Criteria:

- Understanding or experience of the policy and political context within which the organisation operates, including working within the local government or social care sectors in a leadership capacity or in managing service delivery.
- Experience of leadership in a customer service, redress or complaints handling environment and a track record of achieving improvements.

# Outline Terms and Conditions

**Remuneration:** £149,459 per annum. This remuneration is treated as employment income and will be subject to tax and National Insurance contributions, both of which will be deducted at source under PAYE before you are paid.

**Time Commitment:** This is a full-time role.

**Term:** Appointments are made by Ministers for a period of up to 7 years, with no option of reappointment.

**Location:** LGSCO staff have a hybrid working pattern, working flexibly from home and from the three LGSCO offices in Coventry, York and London. The successful candidate will be expected to adopt the same pattern of work, working some of the time from home, but also being present occasionally at each of the three offices. Travel for engagement with external stakeholders across England will also be requirement.

**Expenses and Subsistence:** Reasonable travel and subsistence expenses incurred on LGSCO business will be reimbursed in accordance with LGSCO policies.

**Employment Status:** As this is a statutory office appointment you will not be an employee of the Crown or the Commission for Local Administration in England (CLAE) or Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) organisations.

**Conduct:** The Ombudsman will be expected to act in accordance with:

- 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;
- The Seven Principles of Public Life.

**Nationality:** You must have a right to work in the UK, there must be no employment restrictions, or limit on your permitted stay in the UK.

**Eligibility:** The Local Government Act 1974 disqualifies a person from appointment if they are a member of, or disqualified from election to, a local authority. The successful candidate will also be disqualified from employment by a local authority for three years after their term of office ends.

Should the CLAE be dissolved, restructured or wound up during the period of your appointment, your appointment would cease with effect from that dissolution, restructuring or winding up or such other date as is specified in any relevant legislation. There may be opportunities to apply for positions at any new organisation, but it is not possible to give any assurances at this stage about the availability or nature of those opportunities.

## How to Apply

Please submit the required documentation **listed at 1-3 below** to [PublicAppointments@levellingup.gov.uk](mailto:PublicAppointments@levellingup.gov.uk) by **11.00 pm on 19 March 2023**. **If not provided your application will not be taken forward. Late applications will not be considered.**

Please ensure you include **'LGSCO'** as the subject line of your email.

- 1. Curriculum Vitae** (*maximum 2 pages*). Include your education, professional qualifications and full employment history.
- 2. An accompanying Supporting Letter** (*maximum 2 pages*). Please tailor setting out your suitability for the role(s) and how you meet the Selection Criteria. We suggest you use specific examples to demonstrate how you meet the Criteria. If you can offer the experience in more than one of the areas referenced above, there is no need to submit more than one supporting letter against the criteria - just clearly reference and example those Criteria in a single supporting letter.
- 3. Application and Diversity Information Form.** This is an online form you must complete here. You should declare any potential issues including conflicts of interest (perceived, potential or actual), this includes your personal or professional history that could, if you were appointed, be misconstrued, cause embarrassment to the LGSCO, DLUHC or HM Government, or cause public confidence in the appointment to be jeopardised. 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' will be carried out as part of the assessment process if you are called to interview and will be shared with the Panel and Ministers, this will include searches on social media, blogs and/or other publicly available information. Diversity data will be treated in confidence and is used for data gathering information only and will not affect your application. Please complete the Disability Confident section if relevant.

You will receive an automated acknowledgement of your application.

## Assessment Process: Overview

Public appointments are made on the basis of merit, in accordance with the Cabinet Office Governance Code on Public Appointments. The decision on who to appoint is made by Ministers, who receive advice from the Advisory Assessment Panel on the suitability of candidates against the published selection criteria.

The timeline provided is indicative and could be subject to change. If you are unable to meet these timeframes, please let us know by contacting [PublicAppointments@levellingup.gov.uk](mailto:PublicAppointments@levellingup.gov.uk).

The Advisory Assessment Panel will be:

- Panel Chair and DLUHC Representative – Catherine Frances
- Senior Independent Panel Member – Eileen Mortby
- Sector Representative – Mark Lloyd
- Sector Representative – Michelle Morris

This post is subject to a Select Committee Pre-Appointment Hearing. The preferred candidate will be required to attend a pre-appointment hearing with the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee. The hearing will take place before a candidate is appointed.

Due to the high volume of applications we receive, we only provide feedback to candidates who reach the interview stage and will only be provided once the campaign has concluded.

## Assessment Process: Indicative Timeline

The timeline provided is indicative and could be subject to change, potentially at short notice. If you are unable to meet these timeframes, please let us know by contacting [PublicAppointments@levellingup.gov.uk](mailto:PublicAppointments@levellingup.gov.uk).



Closing date: 19 March 2023



Shortlisting: w/c 10 April 2023 (TBC)



Panel interviews: May 2023 (TBC). Interviews will be conducted remotely. Copies of passports will need to be provided prior to interview in order to check candidates' identity. Should face to face interviews resume, please let us know if you have any accessibility issues.



The Minister may choose to meet with candidates before making a decision.  
Provisional Select Committee hearing date: June 2023 (TBC)



Provisional start date: July/August 2023 (TBC)

Please note: 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.

## Diversity and Equal Opportunities

DLUHC is committed to the principle of Public Appointments on merit with independent assessment, openness and fairness of the process and providing equal opportunities. Applications are welcome from all, we particularly encourage applications from women, people from ethnic background, people with disabilities and other under-represented groups.

We are very interested in receiving applications from those based outside the London/South-East area. This position requires the postholder to undertake some travel across the UK and to work unsocial hours on occasion (including some weekend and overnight stays).

If you believe you have the experience and qualities we are seeking, we look forward to receiving your application.

### 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 wish to apply under this scheme, please complete the declaration in the on-line application form. It is not necessary to state your disability.

### 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@levellingup.gov.uk](mailto:PublicAppointments@levellingup.gov.uk). You do not need to apply under the Disability Confident Scheme to ask for a reasonable adjustment.

## Further Information

### Contact

For further information about the roles or application process please contact [PublicAppointments@levellingup.gov.uk](mailto:PublicAppointments@levellingup.gov.uk). Please put '**LGSCO**' 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@levellingup.gov.uk](mailto:PublicAppointments@levellingup.gov.uk).

### Complaints

If you feel this competition has not been conducted fairly and you wish to make a complaint, you should initially contact the Appointments Team at [PublicAppointments@levellingup.gov.uk](mailto:PublicAppointments@levellingup.gov.uk).

If after investigation by the Department you remain dissatisfied, you may take your complaint to the Commissioner for Public Appointments at [publicappointments@csc.gov.uk](mailto:publicappointments@csc.gov.uk) 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/>

## GDPR

We will process your application in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations and Data Protection Act 2018. Your data will be held securely and processed for the purpose of the recruitment process. Access will be restricted to those dealing with your application or involved in the recruitment process, this will include Ministers and Special Advisers.

Data may also be shared with Cabinet Office, in order to comply with the Public Appointments Governance Code, article 3.1 of the Public Appointments Order in Council 2019. Data may also be shared with Cabinet Office and The Commissioner for Public Appointments in order to meet the public equality duty as set out in the Equality Act, s149. The Commissioner may also request access as part of a complaint investigation or review of the recruitment process.

Your data will be stored for 2 years, if appointed your data will be stored for the duration of your tenure and may be shared with the organisation that you are appointed too, unless specifically requested otherwise. Should you wish your data to be removed from our records, please contact [PublicAppointments@levellingup.gov.uk](mailto:PublicAppointments@levellingup.gov.uk).

### **Complaints:**

If you consider that your personal data has been misused or mishandled, you may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner who can be contacted at:

Information Commissioners Office  
Wycliffe House  
Water Lane  
Wilmslow  
SK9 5AF

0303 123 1113 email: [casework@ico.org.uk](mailto:casework@ico.org.uk).

The data controller for Public Appointments is joint between DLUHC, OCPA and the Cabinet Office

## Seven Principles of Public Life

In 1995 the Committee on Standards in Public Life defined seven principles which should underpin all who serve the public. It is important that members of public bodies maintain the confidence of Parliament and the public. Consistent with the Governance Code, applicants will be assessed on merit, and all candidates will need to uphold the standards of conduct set out in these principles that will be tested during the selection process. Failure to disclose such information could result in an appointment either not being made or being terminated. Should you wish to speak to someone concerning a potential conflict of interest or other issues please contact a member of the Public Appointments team at [PublicAppointments@levellingup.gov.uk](mailto:PublicAppointments@levellingup.gov.uk) in the first instance.

**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 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 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 doing so.

**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.