



Government
Legal Department



Gatenby
Sanderson

Appointment of Lead NED/Chair of Government Legal Department Board

Briefing pack for applicants

The closing date for the receipt of applications for this role
is 17.00pm on Friday 20 October 2023

GS Ref: GSe102805



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About the Government Legal Department

The Government Legal Department (GLD) is the largest provider of legal services across government, working with all the main Civil Service departments. We are a non-Ministerial department sponsored by the Attorney General's Office / the Law Officers for England and Wales.

Our core mission is as simple as it is profound: *we help the Government to govern well, within the rule of law*. To do that we provide legal services in relation to matters of the highest importance to the UK. These are matters that are frequently scrutinised in Parliament, the Courts and by the media, including expert advisory, litigation, commercial and employment law services; and advising on Ministers' policy, giving effect to it through secondary legislation we draft on their behalf and instructing Parliamentary Counsel to draft Bills which we take through Parliament to Royal Assent.

GLD is a vibrant, dynamic, and diverse community of lawyers and wider professionals. The Department has almost 3,000 employees, around 2,000 of whom are solicitors or barristers. We have advisory teams working at the very highest levels of government as the primary legal advisers for Ministers and senior officials on the most significant issues of the day. From the cost-of-living crisis to the coronation, from national security to transportation, from healthcare to human rights, we provide the legal advice which underpins the government response, often working in concert with private sector legal providers. Our expert legal teams operate at the cutting-edge of contemporary legal practice and are acclaimed across the profession for their expertise, regularly winning and being shortlisted for awards including those presented by the Bar Council, The Lawyer, and the Financial Times.

In addition to this, as Civil Servants, we are steeped in the values and culture of the UK Civil Service and dedicated to the finest traditions of public service as can be seen in the fact that we are driving the work of all current public inquiries which are some of the most significant in recent years (the UK Covid-19 Inquiry, the Grenfell Tower Inquiry, the Infected Blood Inquiry). Our vision is to be an outstanding legal organisation committed to the highest standards of service and professionalism. We're at a pivotal moment as an organisation, as we refresh our strategy to equip us to tackle future challenges in line with [the government reform programme](#).

We are a unique legal organisation, combining the practice of law with the running of a Government department and we want to make sure that GLD is a brilliant place to work, where we can all thrive and fulfil our potential.

We invite you to join us in our crucially important work of upholding the law, advising Government, and serving the nation.

The Role and Person Specification

The role

Following a comprehensive review of our governance arrangements, including our relationship with the Attorney General's Office, and the redefining of the role of NEDs within the Department, we are now looking for a highly experienced person to be our inaugural Lead NED and Chair of the GLD Board. The creation of this role reflects our determination to attain the highest standards of professionalism in our work and is in keeping with best practice in corporate governance.

As our inaugural Lead NED/Chair, the successful candidate will need to work with the Permanent Secretary and the other members of the Board to ensure that the Board develops a way of working that meets our governance ambitions and so there is scope to influence right from the outset.

Key responsibilities

Chairing the Board

- As Chair of the GLD Board, sharing responsibility with the Permanent Secretary for driving the high performance of the Board, setting out a clear vision for the leadership of GLD.
- Shaping the Board and ensure that it gives clear strategic direction to the organisation through effective agenda planning and use of Board time.
- Promoting a culture of equality, diversity, and inclusion on the Board as well as more widely throughout GLD.
- Promoting and exercising the highest standards of corporate governance.

GLD's departmental Strategy and objectives

- Work with the Permanent Secretary and the Board to set and develop GLD's key objectives and targets and support the delivery of a portfolio of Departmental priorities.
- Work with the Board to deliver the GLD Strategy and hold the Executive to account for its delivery.

Advising, guiding and performance managing fellow Board members

- Provide GLD with an external perspective, guidance, and constructive challenge on key issues for the Department, including but not limited to the departmental strategies, the Business Plan, its Principal Risks, its structure, and the performance of the organisation.
- Support, advise, and provide constructive challenge to the Permanent Secretary,

and hold the Executive Team to account for the management, delivery, performance and financial reporting provided to the Board.

- Be responsible for the performance management, development, and objective setting for the other GLD NEDs, as well as the Board's collective development.
- Report to the Cabinet Secretary on the leadership performance of the Permanent Secretary, including mid-year and end-of-year appraisals.

Stakeholder engagement across government, the Civil Service and beyond

- Represent the work and views of GLD to key external stakeholders (where applicable). Play a critical role as an ambassador for GLD, engaging with key stakeholders across Government – including at Ministerial level, the legal profession and wider stakeholder community as an advocate for the Department, to highlight the importance of its work, the quality of the legal services it delivers and further raise its profile.
- Work with the Government Lead Non-Executive Director to learn from the experiences of other departments and share this with the GLD Board. This includes leading the Department's team of Non-Executives ensuring that they can fulfil their roles effectively.
- Support the Law Officers as Ministers accountable to Parliament for the work of GLD.

Person specification

Essential criteria

- Experience of being a Lead NED and/or Chair of a Board in a high performing and complex delivery-focused organisation, with the ability to deliver effective strategic direction and drive a long-term organisational vision.
- A collaborative and inclusive style with the ability to develop an effective and constructive relationship with the Permanent Secretary, other Executive and Non-Executive Board members and other key external stakeholders and influencers.
- Experience of leading an organisation through major change that might include digital, business efficiency, commercial and people change strategies, whilst maintaining high standards of delivery.
- Evidence of instilling a culture which promotes diversity and inclusion.
- Strong understanding of governance, finance, risk management, internal control assurance and compliance.
- An understanding of government and public sector governance requirements and

the way of working; or the ability to quickly gain this understanding. Direct experience of the public sector is not required.

Desirable criteria

- Experience of the legal sector would be an advantage but is not essential.

Terms of appointment

Role title

Lead Non-Executive Director and Chair of the GLD Board

Time commitment

The expected time commitment is circa 15 days per annum (+/- 5 days)

Remuneration

The fee for this role will be £20,000 per annum for the expected time commitment, plus reasonable travel and subsistence costs necessarily incurred on GLD business, at rates set by GLD.

NB: Expenses incurred by candidates during the recruitment process will not be reimbursed.

As this post is a public appointment, Non-Executive Directors are neither employees of the Crown, nor of GLD.

Please note that successful candidates cannot be remunerated for this role if they are employees of organisations whose funds are derived from Votes of Parliament (for example, Government Departments, UK Atomic Energy Authority, British Broadcasting Corporation, Research Councils, UKRI and other Non-Departmental Public Bodies). This includes all civil servants (full-time or part-time).

Length of term

Initial appointment term of three years which may be extended by agreement.

Maximum appointment term of six years.

Start date

Candidates must be able to start in post by late January 2024 to enable induction in February 2024 and a first Board meeting attendance in March 2024.

Location

The work will take place primarily at our London office but some travel including to our regional offices in Bristol, Leeds and Manchester may be required.

You must inform GLD if you have any **conflict of interest** that might affect your ability to undertake this role. You should disclose information on any relevant business interest, public appointment or position of authority, including other connection with commercial, public or voluntary bodies on the Disclosure Form.

Overview of the recruitment process

Application:

To apply for this post please submit the following documents no later than 17.00pm Friday 20 October 2023. All applications must be submitted via the following link: <http://www.gatenbysanderson.com/job/GSe102805>

- A CV setting out your career history, with key responsibilities and achievements. Please ensure you have provided reasons for any gaps within the last two years.
- A supporting statement (no longer than two pages) explaining how you consider your personal skills, qualities and experience provide evidence of your suitability for the role, **with particular reference to the essential criteria in the person specification** and your motivation for applying.
- A **completed Disclosure Form** declaring potential conflicts of interest and conduct matters.
- Candidates applying under the Disability Confident Scheme who meet the minimum selection criteria in the job specification are guaranteed an interview. Please complete the relevant parts in the application system if applying under this scheme.

As part of the online application process, you will be asked a number of diversity-related questions. If you do not wish to provide a declaration on any of the particular characteristics, you will have the option to select 'prefer not to say'. The information you provide when submitting your application will help us monitor our progress towards the Diversity and Inclusion objectives. You will also be required to provide the details for two potential referees. References will be requested for those candidates invited to interview.

Failure to submit all documents will mean the panel only have limited information on which to assess your application against the criteria in the person specification. Please ensure that all documents contain your full name. Your application will be acknowledged by GatenbySanderson's online system. Should you encounter any issues with your online application please get in touch with mary.dempsey@gatenbysanderson.com.

For a confidential discussion about the role to help you determine your suitability for application and/or to answer any questions you might have, please contact one of our recruitment advisors at GatenbySanderson:

- Russell Brandon, russell.brandon@gatenbysanderson.com
- Julie Myers, julie.myers@gatenbysanderson.com

If you have any questions about the appointments process, you need a change to be made so that you can make your application, or require additional assistance to support you in your application, please email mary.dempsey@gatenbysanderson.com

Reasonable Adjustments

If a person with disabilities is put at a substantial disadvantage compared to a non-disabled person, we have a duty to make reasonable changes to our processes. If you need a change to be made so that you can make your application, you should contact mary.dempsey@gatenbysanderson.com as soon as possible before the closing date to discuss your needs e.g. to tell us what changes or help you might need further on in the recruitment process. For instance, you may need this pack in an alternative format, wheelchair access at interview, or if you're deaf, a Language Service Professional.

Conflicts of Interest

Candidates must note the **requirement to complete a Disclosure Form**, in order to declare any political activity, business or financial interests; directorships; significant shareholdings; other connections with commercial, public or voluntary bodies; or any other interests which you/your spouse/partner or immediate family have which might conflict, be perceived to conflict or could be misconstrued or cause embarrassment to GLD if you are appointed. This should include any other matters which may mean you may not be able to meet the requirements of [Code of Conduct for Board members of Public Bodies](#). Any conflicts of interest or other matters detailed here will not prevent you going forward to interview but may, if appropriate, be explored with you during your interview to establish how you would address the issue(s) should you be successful in your application.

The Panel

The selection panel will be chaired by Susanna McGibbon, Treasury Solicitor and Permanent Secretary and additional panel members will be confirmed to those invited to interview.

Longlist

- You will receive an acknowledgment of your application through the online process.
- The panel will then assess all applications to select those demonstrating the best fit with the role by considering the evidence you have provided against the

criteria set out in the 'Essential Characteristics' section. Failure to address any or all of these may affect your application.

- The timeline later in this pack indicates the date by which decisions are expected to be made, and all longlisted candidates will be advised of the outcome as soon as possible thereafter. Candidates selected for longlisting will be invited for a discussion with GatenbySanderson to further explore their skills and experience.

Shortlist

- The panel will review interview reports on longlisted candidates and select the shortlist.
- The timeline later in this pack indicates the date by which decisions are expected to be made and shortlisted candidates will be advised of the outcome as soon as possible thereafter.

Interview

- Shortlisted candidates may have the opportunity for an informal discussion with the Permanent Secretary prior to interview.
- Shortlisted candidates will be asked to attend a panel interview in order to have a more in-depth discussion of your previous experience and professional competence in relation to the essential criteria. Interviews are expected to take place in person, to be determined nearer to the interview date. You may be required to prepare a short presentation. Full details will be provided to candidates invited to interview.

Due Diligence

Please note that due diligence will be carried out on shortlisted candidates. Candidates should expect this to include searches of previous public statements and social media, blogs or any other publicly available information. Prior to interview, you will be asked to provide details of two professional referees together with a brief statement of the capacity and over what period of time they have known you.

Offer

- Regardless of the outcome, we will notify all candidates as soon as possible after the final interview.
- If successful you must hold, or be willing to obtain, security clearance initially to BPSS level and a willingness to move to Security Check (SC) level whilst in post, if necessary. More information about the vetting process can be found [here](#).
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Expected timeline

We will try and offer as much flexibility as we can, but it may not be possible to offer alternative dates for assessments or interviews. You are therefore asked to note the below timetable, exercising flexibility through the recruitment and selection process, in order to meet the dates given. Please note that these dates may be subject to change.

The anticipated timetable is as follows:

- Close: 17.00pm Friday 20 October 2023
- Long list meeting: w/c 30 October 2023
- Preliminary interviews with GatenbySanderson: w/c 6 & 13 November 2023
- Shortlisting: w/c 20 November 2023
- Panel interviews: w/c 11 December 2023

Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for appointment, **you must have the right to work in the UK.**

You **cannot** be considered for a public appointment if:

- you become bankrupt or make an arrangement with creditors;
- 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;
- you have been convicted of a criminal offence, the conviction not being spent for the purposes of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (c. 53);
- you become subject to a debt relief order or a bankruptcy restrictions order;
- you have been disqualified as a charity trustee;
- you fail to declare any conflict of interest.

Data protection

Government Legal Department 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.

Annex A: The seven principles of public life

You will be expected to operate in accordance with 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.