



Briefing pack for the appointment of

# 2x Independent Non-Executive Directors to the Seafish Board

**CLOSING DATE: 13 January 2026**

**REFERENCE: APPT13-25**



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Defra Group leads on the fundamentals: the food we eat, the water we drink, the air we breathe. It encompasses food, environment, biosecurity, trade and more. Defra is a policy, growth, science, delivery and international department.

Defra's work is fundamental to delivering the government's five missions – by building economic resilience through better flood defences, protecting against biosecurity risk, climate adaptation and nature-based solutions; creating jobs and attracting investment in our water and waste sectors; working with our sectors, such as food and drink; and ensuring that all missions are rural-proofed.

To achieve these goals, we are committed to appointing high-calibre individuals from diverse backgrounds to the boards of our public bodies. By drawing on a wide range of skills, knowledge, and experiences, we can make our work more effective, resilient, and accountable to the public.

### Equal Opportunities and Diversity

The UK government is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and ensuring that no one experiences unfair discrimination or harassment on the grounds of race, ethnicity, national origin, colour, sex, gender identity, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, or age.

We actively encourage applications from individuals of all backgrounds and are committed to fostering diversity in public appointments. All appointments are made on merit, following a fair and open competition process regulated by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

### Disability Commitment

We are dedicated to supporting candidates with disabilities and are proud to hold Disability Confident Leader status. We guarantee an interview for any applicant with a disability whose application meets the minimum criteria for the post.

To ensure an inclusive process, we are committed to making reasonable adjustments where possible for candidates with disabilities. If you require any adjustments to support your application, please refer to the 'How to Apply and Submit Your Application' section below. Further information about the Disability Confident Leader scheme is available via the Disability Confident logo displayed above.

The Sea Fish Industry Authority (known as Seafish) is a UK-wide, industry focussed levy-funded body jointly sponsored by:

- Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra)
- Scottish Government
- Welsh Assembly
- Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs of Northern Ireland (DAERA)

Seafish is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) of Defra, which acts on behalf of the other fisheries administrations as primary sponsor for matters relating to corporate governance.

Seafish carries out a wide range of activities aiming to promote the consumption of seafood, enhance the reputation of the industry and support the collection of data and provision of information, evidence and advice for decision-making in the supply chain. It offers regulatory guidance and services to all parts of the seafood industry, including catching and aquaculture, processors, importers, exporters and distributors of seafood, as well as restaurants and retailers.

Over the next five years, Seafish faces a range of challenges that will require strong governance and strategic oversight. Securing the organisation's long-term financial sustainability is essential. Seafish must also ensure it continues to be relevant and deliver impact within a shifting political landscape, being able to demonstrate value across all four UK nations.

The wider operating environment presents further challenges. Domestic seafood consumption is in long-term decline, and the UK seafood industry must adapt to changing consumer behaviour, rising costs, and global trade disruptions linked to climate change and geopolitical instability. Seafish plays a vital role in supporting the industry's resilience through these times of change, helping businesses respond to labour shortages, regulatory changes and environmental challenges, while retaining stakeholder confidence and championing the industry's reputation. Investment in data, innovation and evidence-based insight will be crucial to meeting these challenges and ensuring the UK seafood industry can adapt and thrive.

# About the Sea Fish Industry Authority

The UK Fisheries Administrations are appointing two independent non-executive members to the Seafish board to provide the organisation with strategic direction and leadership.

Meeting on a quarterly basis, the board ensures that Seafish is managed properly and effectively by providing strategic leadership, direction, support, and guidance. The Seafish board currently consists of eight non-executive members. All appointments to the board are joint Ministerial appointments made by England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. The board comprises a mixture of independent and industry members, with both an independent Chair and Deputy Chair. The posts we are recruiting for are 'independent' positions and thus open only to those who have no financial or commercial interests in the seafood industry.

Both roles are for independent members, but one of the roles will be asked to Chair the Seafish Board's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC).

For further information about Seafish, visit the Seafish website: <http://www.seafish.org/>

### Candidates for both roles will be expected to:

- Provide strategic direction and leadership to the organisation which balances the priorities of the seafood industry in the UK as a whole;
- Drive performance and hold the Executive to account against strategic and corporate plans;
- Ensure propriety, regularity, economy, efficiency and effectiveness in the operation of Seafish and provide stewardship for the public funds entrusted to the organisation;
- Ensure that Seafish discharges its statutory duties within the framework specified by Ministers; and
- Work co-operatively and build relationships with the Executive, Government and other key stakeholders and represent the organisation at a senior level.

### Candidates applying for the role of ARAC Chair will:

- Lead on advising the Seafish Board on matters of financial accountability, control and risk affecting the organisation and contribute to the Seafish Board's corporate role and responsibilities as set out in the Seafish Board Terms of Reference;
- Lead on annual internal and external audit plans and implementation;
- Report to the Board on the Annual Report and Accounts of Seafish and the Accounting Officer's Governance Statement; and
- Support and constructively challenge the Accounting Officer of Seafish to deliver targets and value for money, and in operating and continuously improving the system of internal controls and risk management.

### Remuneration

£5,670 Board  
NED  
£9,450 ARAC  
Chair

### Time commitment

Board NED: 1.5 days  
per month  
ARAC Chair: 2.5  
days per month

### Term length

Initial appointment  
for 3 years

### Location

Board meets at  
various locations  
across the UK

# Terms of Appointment

## Essential criteria and expertise

### **Candidates must be able to demonstrate the following essential criteria:**

- A proven ability to build an effective executive and non-executive team culture, bring constructive challenge and create consensus around practical solutions both within the Board and wider organisation;
- Significant business acumen and experience in working with complex organisations and driving change, including a proven track record at Board or equivalent level in the private, public or voluntary sector;
- A collaborative style with the ability to effectively engage and contribute to Board discussions, and inspire the confidence of Ministers, fellow Board Members, Executive Directors, employees and stakeholders in all sectors.

### **We are specifically seeking candidates with expertise in the following roles:**

- **Role 1 – Independent Board Member and ARAC Chair** – Proven expertise in financial and risk management, audit, and governance with experience sitting on and/or Chairing an Audit and Risk Assurance Committee or similar.
- **Role 2 – Independent Board Member** – Experience managing strategic communications with sound judgement, discretion, and political awareness.



## How to apply

To apply you will need to [create an account](#) or [sign in](#) to “Apply for Public Appointment Service” gov.uk by the deadline of 13 January 2026. Once logged onto your account, click on ‘apply for this role’ and follow the on-screen instructions.

To apply, all candidates are required to submit:

- A CV of no more than two sides of A4 with education, professional qualifications, and employment history and the names and contact details for two referees
- A statement of suitability should give evidence of the strength and depth of your ability to meet the essential criteria for this role. Please provide specific examples to demonstrate how you meet each of the criteria (max two pages please).
- Diversity information
- Information relating to any outside interests or reputational issues

For further information please email: [publicappts@defra.gov.uk](mailto:publicappts@defra.gov.uk)



## Advisory Assessment Panel

- **Rachel Muckle** – Defra Deputy Director, Panel Chair
- **Alice Biggins** – Scottish Government Deputy Director
- **Mike Sheldon** – Seafish Chair, Seafish Representative
- **Camilla Poulton** – Board Member for Independent Monitoring Boards, Independent Panel Member

Ministers are assisted in their decision making by Panels.

In undertaking their assessment of candidates the role of the Panel is to decide, objectively, who meets the published selection criteria for the role, in other words, who is appointable to the role.

The names of all appointable candidates must be submitted to Ministers. It is then for Ministers to determine merit and make the final appointment.

## Conflicts of Interest and Due Diligence

If you have any interests that might be relevant to the work of the Marine Management Organisation, 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.

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.

## Complaints

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 seen at:

- <http://publicappointmentscommissioner.independent.gov.uk/>
- [Governance Code on Public Appointments](#)

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/complaints>

## 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](mailto:publicappts@defra.gov.uk).

## Ineligibility Criteria

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 restriction order;
- you fail to declare any conflict of interest.

### **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.

### 1. Expertise

- Consider and act in the best interests of your organisation and its objectives; delivering the outcomes expected by your sponsor department, ministers and ultimately the public.
- Consider the broader mission and duties of your sponsoring Secretary of State, his or her Department and the Government.
- Ensure compliance with statutory duties and the organisation's Framework Document and act within its powers.
- Exercise reasonable care, skill, and diligence in the exercise of their authority and judgement.

### 2. Scrutiny and challenge

- Maintain independence from the executive to allow scrutiny of management and in meetings agree goals and objectives and monitor performance and the reporting of performance so that the public who use your organisation receive a high-quality service.
- Satisfy yourself on the integrity of budget setting to deliver objectives and financial information and reporting against budgets, and that financial controls and systems of risk management are robust and defensible. Meet the requirements of Managing Public Money, including supporting the Accounting Officer in fulfilling their duties to provide propriety and value for money in the use of public funds.
- Champion high standards of risk management by ensuring your organisation has effective risk reporting, controls and governance, risk expertise and risk tolerances to effectively manage risk.
- Represent your organisation to the department and to Ministers, as well as ensuring Ministers' views are considered by the executive team of the organisation, as appropriate.

### 3. Support

- Support the board in succession planning and be prepared to put yourself up for re-appointment, as well as promoting the need for a diverse board.
- Participate in and promote regular reviews of your organisation, as well as the board's own effectiveness, with particular focus on the organisation's purposes and its efficiency in meeting these purposes. Engage in the appraisal process, including self-reflection on your own abilities.
- Listen carefully to, ask appropriate questions of and support management to encourage discussion in a manner that promotes a culture where all perspectives are listened to, while fulfilling the individual Director's duties and responsibilities and respecting and valuing the expertise of the executive team.
- Promote the success of the entity having regard to the interests of all members and stakeholders, and all risks



Department  
for Environment  
Food & Rural Affairs

