

A vibrant underwater photograph of a coral reef. The scene is filled with various types of coral, including branching and table corals, in shades of orange, yellow, and purple. Small, colorful fish are swimming around the coral. Sunlight filters down from the surface, creating a bright, shimmering effect on the water.

Briefing pack for the appointment of

A Non-Executive Director for the Marine Management Organisation

CLOSING DATE: 27 AUGUST 2026

REFERENCE: 9310



Defra Mission Statement	3
Ministerial Message to Candidates	4
About the Marine Management Organisation	5
The Role	6
Terms of Appointment	8
Essential Criteria	9
Additional Criteria	10
The Timeline	11
The Recruitment Process	12
Conflicts of interest, complaints, data protection & ineligibility	13
Annex A – 7 Principles of Public Life	14
Annex B – 12 Principles of Governance for all Public Body NEDs	15
Annex C – Marine Management Organisation Board	16



Contents

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.

Dear candidate,

Thank you for your interest in becoming a board member of the Marine Management Organisation (MMO).

The Government has an ambitious vision for clean, health, safe, productive and biologically diverse oceans and seas. As the Government's principal body for managing the seas around England, the MMO plays a vital role in helping us meet our aspirations.

The MMO's agenda is wide-ranging and complex. It plays a fundamental role in enabling sustainable fishing activities and protecting the marine environment in UK waters to fulfil commitments under the Fisheries Act, Joint Fisheries Statement, and Environment Act.

Alongside this, the MMO is critical to our marine planning and licensing regime, enabling the sustainable development of the marine space by balancing economic, environmental and social needs. As England's principal marine regulator, the MMO works across a broad remit to assure, guide, and enable the responsible use of our seas, protecting and enhancing our precious marine environment for the benefit of generations to come.

The MMO Board is critical to the organisation's success. We are looking for talented and driven individuals who can provide the active direction and leadership the MMO needs, working collaboratively and creatively with a wide range of stakeholders and partners within the Defra group and beyond.

In line with most public sector organisations, the MMO needs to modernise its delivery, finding innovative ways of improving services and outcomes while becoming more efficient. All government bodies need to be at the forefront of supporting economic growth and the MMO needs to demonstrate how this can be done while also supporting nature to recover. The recommendations from the Corry Review of environmental regulation set out a plan for making this happen.

If you are interested in taking on this role, I strongly encourage you to apply; Defra welcomes applications from talented individuals from all backgrounds and looks favourably on those who can bring diverse perspectives, skills and lived experience to the MMO Board.

Stephen Morgan MP
Minister of State for Food Security and Rural Affairs



Ministerial message to candidates

MMO's purpose is to protect and enhance our precious marine environment and support UK economic growth by enabling sustainable marine activities and development.

MMO are responsible for:

- Managing and monitoring fishing fleet sizes and quotas for catches
- Ensuring compliance with fisheries regulations, such as fishing vessel licences, time at sea and quotas for fish and seafood
- Managing funding programmes for fisheries activities
- Planning and licencing for marine developments, deposits and dredging that may have an environmental or social impact
- Making marine conservation byelaws
- Dealing with marine pollution emergencies, including oil spills
- Helping to prevent illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing worldwide
- Producing marine plans to include all marine activities, including those we don't directly regulate.



About the Marine Management Organisation

The Board of the MMO has collective responsibility for the overall performance and success of the organisation, for ensuring it carries out its statutory duties and delivers its priorities as agreed with the Secretary of State. The Board is also responsible for holding the Chief Executive to account, ensuring that the MMO is properly and effectively managed, and provides stewardship for the public funds entrusted to it. More specifically, and in pursuit of its wider corporate responsibilities, the Board is responsible for:

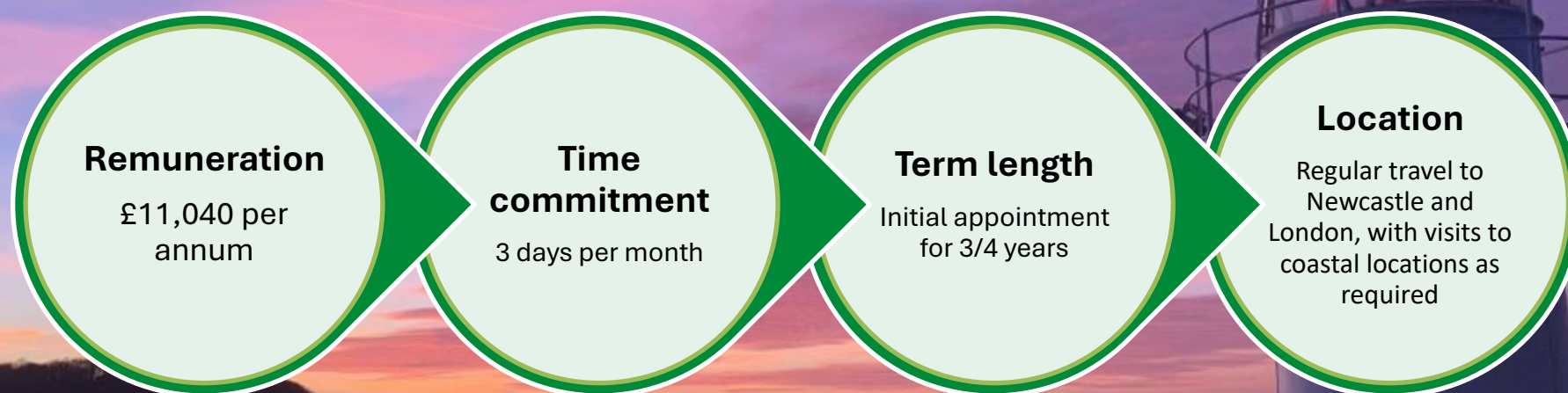
- Establishing and taking forward the strategic aims and objectives of the MMO consistent with its overall strategic direction and within the policy and resources framework determined by the Secretary of State
- Demonstrating high standards of corporate governance at all times, operating within the limits of its statutory authority and any delegated authority agreed through the sponsor department, and in accordance with any other conditions relating to the use of public funds (including taking into account guidance issued by the sponsor department)
- Ensuring effective arrangements are in place to provide assurance on operational and strategic risk management, governance, and internal control, such as setting up an Audit Committee to provide independent advice; and
- Supporting the Chair in working with the CEO and Executive team to ensure effective leadership of the organisation whilst driving forward reforms to enable more efficient and effective outcome delivery.

Individual Board members

In addition to fulfilling their collective role, individual Board Members shall:

- Act in the public interest and always uphold the seven principles of public life: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty, and leadership;
- Comply at all times with the Code of Practice adopted by the MMO and act in accordance with Treasury and Cabinet Office rules relating to the use of public funds and conflicts of interest;
- Not misuse information gained in the course of their public service for personal gain nor for political profit, nor seek to use the opportunity of public service to promote their private interests or those of connected persons or organisations;
- Comply with the Board's rules on the acceptance of gifts, hospitality, and of business appointments; and
- Act in good faith and in the best interests of the MMO.





Terms of Appointment



We are looking to attract dynamic candidates from a range of diverse backgrounds who can demonstrate the following essential criteria:

- A clear understanding of the work, priorities and challenges of the organisation and the context within which it operates.
- Strong relationship-building skills, with the ability to develop and maintain effective stakeholder relationships, including with Ministers, Senior Government officials and external stakeholders.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills with the ability to listen, accept challenge and constructively challenge others in discussions with clarity and respect
- Effective decision-making skills at the strategic level, with the ability to critically analyse a wide range of information to make clear, objective, evidence-based recommendations to support the delivery of organisational objectives.
- Ability to work closely with the executive, board and other key stakeholders, providing support, constructive challenge and assurance as appropriate.

Essential Criteria

This recruitment will seek to fill one vacancy on the Board. Applications are welcomed from a diverse range of backgrounds and candidates are encouraged to apply if they meet the essential criteria above and can bring new skills and expertise to the Board.

We are particularly interested in candidates with experience in the following area:

- **Fisheries and/or marine:** Demonstrable understanding of the fishing, fisheries and seafood sectors, and the coastal and marine communities connected to them, including relevant policy, regulation and stakeholder interests, with the ability to apply this knowledge effectively to Board-level discussions, strategic oversight and governance.

Additional criteria



The Timeline

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 **midday on Thursday 27 August 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 (up to two sides of A4) 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.
- equality information
- information relating to any outside interests or reputational issues

For further information please email:

publicappts@defra.gov.uk



Advisory Assessment Panel

- **Rachel Muckle** – Deputy Director in Defra Marine and Fisheries, as the panel Chair
- **Les Philpott** – Chair of the MMO, as the panel MMO representative
- **2x Independent Panel members** tbc

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.

The Recruitment Process

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.

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.

Annex A – The Seven Principles of Public Life

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



Les Philpott



Tony Delahunty



Laura Dance



Mark Ripley



Peter Judge



Professor Dame
Judith Petts



Rob Wilson



Terry Jones



Department
for Environment
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