

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) Board Recruitment

Advisory Assessment Panel

Long list sift report

Date: 10 May 2021

Time: 14:00-15:30

Location: MS
Teams

Attendees

Advisory Assessment Panel:
Welsh Government Official, Welsh Government (Panel Chair)
Chair, Natural Resources Wales
Independent Panel Member
Welsh Government Official, Welsh Government

Supported by:
Gatenby Sanderson Officials

Notetakers:
Welsh Government Officials

Welcome and introductions

1. Welsh Government Official welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for their time. The Panel members commented positively on the number and strength of the applications submitted.

Notes of the planning meeting

2. The Panel agreed the notes of the planning meeting held on 21 April.

Declarations of knowledge

3. All panel members declared where they have knowledge of any of the candidates. The declarations made were not considered to cause a conflict for Panel members. Unless stated, the following is a list of those professional contacts:
 - Welsh Government Official – Candidate names redacted.
 - Chair of NRW – Candidate names redacted
 - Gatenby Sanderson Official – Candidate names redacted
 - Welsh Government Official - Candidate names redacted

4. The Chair of NRW asked that it be noted he welcomed Candidate name redacted previous contributions and discussions with NRW and that this was not a factor in considering his suitability for the role.

Long list exercise

5. The Panel agreed that there should be no more than 10 candidates long listed for each role (with a maximum of 30 candidates in total across all three roles), in order for Gatenby Sanderson to have time to carry out preliminary conversations with applicants. Candidates presented a wide range of different skill sets with some very credible applications for board members. However, the Panel agreed that some applications may be considered a better fit for different roles to the ones they may have applied for.
6. Gatenby Sanderson gave an overview of the sifting process for Role 2, the Sub Committee Chair. This role requires good solid credentials as a Board member, with a background of operating as a Chair and having worked at a level of scale where it can be linked to performance. Some potential candidates declined to apply because of the time commitment required. Some candidates were stronger in reputation and discussion than on paper.
7. The Chair of NRW advised that this was an opportunity to refocus the Committee with different experiences and people with a passion for the agenda.
8. Gatenby Sanderson gave an overview of the sifting process for Roles 1 and 3. A broad interpretation of the criteria was used to ensure a diverse range of applicants. Whilst not ethnically diverse there was a good spread across the nation and backgrounds with connections to land, environmental and energy consultants, etc.
9. The Chair of NRW agreed with Gatenby Sanderson's interpretation of the search and criteria.
10. The Panel carried out a long list exercise on 10 May 2021, for the roles of:
 - Chair for the Finance Sub Committee with private and/or commercial sector background (Role 2); and
 - Two members with a background in environment, landscape or land management, one Welsh essential (Roles 1 and 3).
11. The Panel was supported by a recruitment agency, Gatenby Sanderson, who supplied the panel with a sift report for each of the roles in advance of the meeting. The candidates were assessed in three categories:
 - A. Those who meet the criteria and whom Gatenby Sanderson recommend the panel consider to take forward;
 - B. Those who are marginal against the criteria

C. Those who do not meet the criteria.

12. All candidates were considered by the panel. As a result, the Panel agreed to long list 29 applications. This included some applications within the B and C categories who the panel felt had met the criteria. Annex 1 gives the details of all applications, with feedback and agreed status.
13. Welsh Government Official reviewed the list of six people who had applied under the Positive about Disability Scheme. She confirmed one applicant is within the long list. Four others were not considered by the panel as showing evidence of meeting the minimum criteria. The panel asked Welsh Government Official to take advice from the Public Appointments Team about the sixth applicant. It was subsequently confirmed the applicant had not met the minimum criteria.
14. It was agreed Gatenby Sanderson would contact the 29 applicants to schedule preliminary interviews within the next two weeks. Welsh Government Official agreed to confirm to Gatenby Sanderson Official the names of those applicants who wished to correspond in Welsh.
15. It should be noted, that following the long list meeting, two of the applicants who had been put forward withdrew their applications. The Panel were advised of this immediately.