



Press Recognition Panel
Mappin House
4 Winsley Street
London W1W 8HF

Mr Peter J Lawrence OBE
Chief Executive, Civil Service Commission
1 Horse Guards Road
London
SW1A 2HQ

By email only

23 May 2022

Dear Peter,

Press Recognition Panel Board Member recruitment

I am writing to confirm that the PRP's recruitment process for the search and selection of two Board members has now concluded and two candidates have been selected for appointment. The purpose of this letter is to seek your assurance, in accordance with Article 4.2, Schedule 1 of the Royal Charter on Self-Regulation of the Press, that the process followed in the selection of the members was fair, open and merit based.

As you are aware, we appointed Green Park Interim and Executive Ltd in September 2021 for the executive search and selection of two new Board members. Green Park conducted a thorough and robust recruitment process that captured a diverse spectrum of candidates. The Green Park bespoke microsite, providing details of the role, person specification (attached at Annex A), ineligibility criteria and application process, went live on 8 March 2022 and closed on 11 April 2022. Green Park implemented a targeted online social media recruitment campaign to reach the widest possible diverse audience. We published the advert on our website and promoted it on the PRP's Twitter and LinkedIn accounts, too.

The Interview Panel throughout the process consisted of current Chair of the PRP and chairing the Panel, David Wolfe; Board member, Kathryn Cearn; and advised by Gerard Lemos as Chair Designate and Julie Ferguson as the Independent Member to the Nominations Committee. Chief Executive of the PRP, Susie Uppal, was in attendance as Secretary, in accordance with para 14 of the Nominations Committee terms of reference.

The Interview Panel met on 12 April 2022 to discuss the longlist of applications carefully considering the applications against the person specification and ineligibility

criteria. The Interview Panel decided which candidates should be interviewed by Green Park. The shortlisting exercise took place on 3 May 2022 and the Interview Panel selected eight candidates for final interview. The candidates were selected based upon the Interview Panel's independent and objective assessment of the applicants' merit against the criteria. Following the Shortlist meeting, the list of questions and the domestics for interviews were agreed. On 6 May 2022 the Interview Panel were provided with a form detailing the questions, the person specification and the Final Panel pack (as prepared by Green Park).

The final interviews were held at Mappin House on 9 and 10 May 2022. The Interview Panel met with six candidates on 9 May 2022 and two candidates on 10 May 2022. Each candidate was asked nine questions (including one prediscovered question) along with any necessary follow up questions to clarify their answers. Any potential conflicts of interest were discussed with the candidates and the Interview Panel met again on 12 May to finalise their recommendations to the PRP Board.

The Panel were pleased with the range and quality of candidates produced by Green Park. As required by Article 7 of the Charter, the responsibility for selecting and making the appointment lies with the serving Members of the Board. Following the interview process the Board was contacted to discuss the conclusion of the recruitment process and consider the Selection Panel's recommendation.

The Board agreed that the process had been fair and open with merit-based decisions made objectively at each stage. The Board discussed and agreed to invite Suzanne Rab and Zahera Harb to be members of the Board with effect from 1 September 2022 (to allow for induction and handovers). Both meet the criteria for the roles and are excellent candidates who displayed a keen awareness of the work of the PRP and the landscape in which we operate. The recommendation paper and discussion concerning the final candidates remains confidential; however, the PRP's published minutes will include the Board's decision.

I trust the above provides sufficient detail to enable satisfactory consideration of the recruitment process. Please do let me know if further supporting paperwork or a conversation would be helpful.

My letter and your response will be published on the PRP website in accordance with our policy on openness and transparency. I look forward to your early response.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susie Uppal', with a small flourish at the end.

Susie Uppal
Chief Executive, Press Recognition Panel

THE ROLE

The key responsibilities of the Board are as follows:

- Setting and implementing the PRP's strategy and forward programme of work.
- Making decisions to recognise or withdraw recognition from a Regulator in accordance with the Scheme of Recognition.
- Making decisions to undertake an ad hoc review in accordance with the Scheme of Recognition.
- Making proposed amendments to the Royal Charter (which must be ratified by a resolution that has been passed unanimously by all Members of the Board).
- Agreeing the Scheme for charging fees to Regulators.
- Approving reports relating to any success or failure of the recognition system.
- Approving the annual report and financial statements about the activities of the PRP – including whether it has granted recognition to, or withdrawn it from a Regulator – prior to the laying of the report before Parliament and the Scottish Parliament.
- Surrendering of the Royal Charter, and subsequently winding up and otherwise dealing with the affairs of the PRP in a manner which the Board considers fit.
- Reviewing governance arrangements to ensure that they remain fit for purpose and effective.

The Board is supported by a Chief Executive, Susie Uppal, and a small Executive team. The Board are provided with thorough financial and operational advice to enable it to review and assess performance against the PRP's strategy, objectives and budget. The Board retain oversight of the capability and capacity of the PRP to meet its statutory obligations.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The Person

We are seeking two Panel Members with relevant experience and skills to join the Panel.

Essential criteria

- Senior level experience in the public, private or voluntary sector;
- An understanding of the context within which a regulator operates;
- Clarity and rigour of thought, with strong analytical skills and the capacity to examine issues and reach judgements in an impartial way on the basis of the relevant evidence;
- A participative approach to decision making; and
- Effective communication skills, with the ability to convey complex issues clearly and compellingly.

And, one or more of the following;

- Legal qualifications and skills;
- An understanding of the legal framework within which the Board must operate;
- Knowledge or experience within the media or in news publishing, which might have been built in digital or social media;
- Experience of public policy;
- Experience of consumer rights;
- An understanding of the national and regional environments within Great Britain that are relevant to the work of a Regulator.

Successful candidates will also need to demonstrate a reputation for personal integrity, professional conduct and credibility, with an exceptional sense of propriety and regard for the Seven Principles of Public Life.