

Finance Committee
**Pre Appointment Hearing –
Preferred Candidate for Welsh
Revenue Authority Chair**

February 2017



National Assembly for Wales
Finance Committee

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To carry out the functions of the responsible committee set out in Standing Order 19; the functions of the responsible committee set out in Standing Orders 18.10 and 18.11; and consider any other matter relating to the Welsh Consolidated Fund.

Current Committee membership:



Simon Thomas AM (Chair)
Plaid Cymru
Mid and West Wales



Mike Hedges AM
Welsh Labour
Swansea East



Steffan Lewis AM
Plaid Cymru
South Wales East



Eluned Morgan AM
Welsh Labour
Mid and West Wales



Nick Ramsay AM
Welsh Conservative
Monmouth



Mark Reckless AM
UKIP Wales
South Wales East



David Rees AM
Welsh Labour
Aberavon



Contents

Chair's foreword	5
Summary	6
01. Background.....	7
02. Requirements of the Post	9
03. The Preferred Candidate	11
Annex.....	12

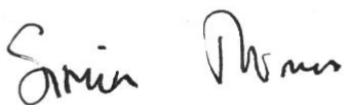
Chair's foreword

On 16 February 2017 the Finance Committee held a pre-appointment hearing with Kathryn Bishop, the Government's preferred candidate for the position of Chair of the Welsh Revenue Authority.

The Committee welcomed the opportunity to have this hearing, and is grateful to the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government for his commitment to ensuring that the Committee had the opportunity to undertake this hearing. I firmly believe that pre appointment hearings increase the accountability of public appointments and contribute to ensuring that high standards are maintained. Whilst appreciating the opportunity as a Committee we believe there are improvements which could be made to this process and I will liaise with the Cabinet Secretary and the Llywydd to take this forward.

When conducting this pre-appointment hearing Members of the Committee were keen to question the candidate on their previous experience and their aspirations for driving forward the successful establishment of the WRA, an area which has previously been a concern of the Committee.

On the basis of the evidence provided at the hearing, the Committee has concluded that the preferred candidate is a suitable candidate for this post, and I look forward to working with Ms Bishop in the future.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon Thomas'.

Simon Thomas AM
Chair

Summary

On 16 February 2017 the Finance Committee held a pre-appointment hearing with Kathryn Bishop, the Government's preferred candidate for the post of Chair, Welsh Revenue Authority. On the basis of the evidence provided at this hearing, a majority of the committee concluded that Ms Bishop is a suitable candidate for the post.

One member did not concur, expressing reservations that Ms Bishop had not demonstrated sufficiently any relevant lessons she had learnt from her non-executive role at the UK Border Agency 2010-12, at a time of reported failures of governance.

01. Background

The Welsh Revenue Authority

1. The Tax Collection and Management (Wales) Act was passed by the Assembly on 8 March 2016 and received Royal Assent on 25 April 2016. Part 2 of the Act establishes the Welsh Revenue Authority (WRA) and makes provision for membership of the WRA Board (the Board).
2. Under section 2 of the Act, the WRA is to be established as a corporate body with its own legal personality. It will be a Crown body with the status of a non-ministerial department, as distinct from the status of a Welsh Government sponsored body.¹
3. Section 3 of the Act sets out the membership of the board including the appointment of non-executive members elected by Welsh Ministers to include the Chair. Section 4 sets out offices that would disqualify a person from being appointed as a non-executive member of the board.
4. The WRA will become fully operational in April 2018, and will initially be responsible for the collection of Land Transaction Tax and Landfill Disposals Tax, with scope to expand to take responsibility for further devolved taxes in the future.

The Recruitment Process

5. The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government wrote to the Llywydd on 27 October 2016 to propose that, as part of the recruitment process, a pre appointment hearing with the preferred candidate be undertaken by an Assembly Committee. The Llywydd proposed that it would be appropriate for this to be undertaken by the Finance Committee.
6. The roles of Chair and non-executive board members were advertised on 29 November 2016, and the closing date for applications was 3 January 2017.
7. The Welsh Government used the services of search consultants, Gatenby Sanderson to recruit to this position. The advertisement was publicised by the following means:
 - Welsh Government website;
 - Welsh Treasury and Welsh Government Twitter;
 - Cabinet Office Newsletter;
 - Welsh Government public appointments distribution list;
 - Welsh Government Equality networks;
 - Welsh Government Welsh Language networks;
 - Women in Tax network;
 - Golwg 360;
 - Sunday Times;
 - JobsWales;

¹ Tax Collection and Management (Wales) Act, [Explanatory Notes](#)

- Nendonboards.com;
- Nonexecutivedirectors.com.

8. The window for applications was open for approximately five weeks, candidates were required to provide a CV and personal statement outlining how they met the criteria set out in the job description. Sixteen applications were received from six women and ten men.

9. A long list sift was conducted by a panel on 6 January 2017, and seven of the sixteen applicants were selected for preliminary interview. This was further reduced to four candidates following a short list meeting on 16 January 2017. Following further consideration one candidate declined an interview. The panel members were:

- Rosie Varley - Public Appointment Assessor, Chair of Panel;
- June Milligan - Wales Commissioner, Equality and Human Rights Commission;
- Andrew Jeffreys - Director, Welsh Treasury, Welsh Government;
- Georgina Haarhoff - Deputy Director, Tax Policy and Legislation, Welsh Government;
- James Owen – Deputy Director, Expert Services and People, Welsh Government.

10. Interviews took place on 1 February 2017, at which candidates were required to give a presentation and were questioned on the criteria set out in the job description.

11. The Finance Committee undertook a pre-appointment hearing with the preferred candidate, Kathryn Bishop on 16 February 2017.

02. Requirements of the Post

Role and person specification

- 12.** The Chair of the WRA is an appointment made by the Welsh Ministers, regulated by the Office for the Commissioner of Public Appointments.
- 13.** The candidate pack states the successful candidate will be appointed for an initial period of up to 3 years and, subject to a satisfactory review, this post can be extended to a maximum total duration of 10 years.²
- 14.** The anticipated time commitment is 2-3 days per month during the implementation phase increasing to 4-5 days on formal establishment of the role. The rate of remuneration is £400 per day.³
- 15.** The job description stated that the successful candidate would need to
- ‘provide clear leadership and strategic direction’, ‘uphold high standards of regularity and propriety’ and ‘act as an ambassador for the organisation’;
 - challenge and improve performance of the WRA whilst playing a key role in representing the organisation;
 - building relationships with a wide range of stakeholders;
 - Play a role in setting up the WRA including developing a Taxpayers’ Charter and setting up a strategy for the organisation.⁴
- 16.** The person specification stated that the successful candidate must have experience in one or more of the following areas:
- Tax;
 - Finance;
 - Audit and risk;
 - Digital, data rich services;
 - Customer-focused environments;
 - Law;
 - Diversity and inclusion;
 - The public sector.
- 17.** Essential criteria for the post included knowledge of devolution, a wider understanding of the Welsh language and issues affecting Wales, high standards of integrity, commitment to public service values and the capacity to work in a sensitive area sometimes under the pressure of close public and political scrutiny.⁵

² Welsh Government, [Vacancy-- Chair – Welsh Revenue Authority](#), 29 November 2016

³ Welsh Government, [Vacancy-- Chair – Welsh Revenue Authority](#), 29 November 2016

⁴ Welsh Government, [Vacancy-- Chair – Welsh Revenue Authority](#), 29 November 2016

⁵ Welsh Government, [Vacancy-- Chair – Welsh Revenue Authority](#), 29 November 2016

18. Desirable criteria included the ability to communicate through the medium of Welsh as was previous experience of supporting the development and establishment of a new Board.⁶

Conclusion 1. The Committee is content with the approach taken to the recruitment. However, the Committee notes that the provision of the Tax Collection and Management (Wales) Act 2016 will not afford the candidate the opportunity to be appointed for “an initial period of up to 3 years and, subject to a satisfactory review, this post can be extended to a maximum total duration of 10 years”. The Act will allow for the Chair to be re-appointed once and for a period of no more than 5 years, hence the maximum this first candidate can serve will be 8 years.

⁶ Welsh Government, Vacancy-- Chair – Welsh Revenue Authority, 29 November 2016

03. The Preferred Candidate

The candidate

19. The Committee was provided with details of the preferred candidate, Kathryn Bishop, on Monday 13 February 2016. The Committee was provided with a CV, which shows Ms Bishop has over 30 years' experience in various organisations and has a background in Human Resources and Information Technology. Ms Bishop was appointed a civil service commissioner in April 2012 and acted as the interim First Civil Service Commissioner from April to September 2016. Additionally, she has held a number of non-executive directorships within government, including the UK Border Agency, the UK Intellectual Property Office and the Welsh Government. Ms Bishop's CV is attached as an annex. The Committee undertook the pre appointment hearing with a view to understanding the professional competence of Ms Bishop and how she is planning to undertake the role and the experience and expertise she would bring to the role.

20. During the hearing the Committee explored the following areas with Ms Bishop:

- her background and professional experience;
- the work of the WRA, and her aspirations.

21. During the evidence session Ms Bishop stated she was keen to undertake this important role. Ms Bishop recognised that the WRA is a new body and work would need to be done to effectively establish the WRA. Ms Bishop said she thought the WRA and the board needed to be adaptable, and will need to work together effectively. Ms Bishop stressed the importance of her relationship with the other non-executive Members and the senior management team. She stated that she hoped to build constructive working relationships based on her providing challenge and support.

22. Ms Bishop accepted it was important to acquire the right skills for the WRA, and she hoped to be able to be involved in upcoming recruitment procedures to add value to these processes.

23. A transcript of the evidence session can be accessed on the [Finance Committee webpages](#).

The suitability of the candidate

24. On the basis of the evidence received the Committee believe Ms Bishop to be a suitable candidate for the post and wish her well in this position.

Conclusion 2. On 16 February 2017 the Finance Committee held a pre-appointment hearing with Kathryn Bishop, the Government's preferred candidate for the post of Chair, Welsh Revenue Authority. On the basis of the evidence provided at this hearing, a majority of the committee concluded that Ms Bishop is a suitable candidate for the post.

One member did not concur, expressing reservations that Ms Bishop had not demonstrated sufficiently any relevant lessons she had learnt from her non-executive role at the UK Border Agency 2010-12, at a time of reported failures of governance.

Annex

Kathryn Bishop

- 2012 – now **Civil Service Commissioner: Interim First Civil Service Commissioner**
- Regulating all appointments into the Civil Service and promoting and monitoring the application of the Civil Service Code. (Interim 1CSC April to October 2016)
- 2004 – now **Associate Fellow, Saïd Business School, University of Oxford**
- Designing and delivering executive development for private and public sector clients; Associate Fellow, Green Templeton College.
- 1999 – now **Director, Naughton Consulting Ltd**
- Managing projects for clients, including assistance with strategic planning for private sector organisations, executive agencies, NHS Trusts, and several NDPBs.
- 2000 - 2012 **Non-Executive Director roles in the public sector**
- UK Border Agency (2010-2012);
Welsh Assembly Government (2003-2010);
The UK Intellectual Property Office (2000-2009).
- 2001 - 2004 **Head of Planning and Projects, University of the West of England**
- Developing and co-ordinating faculty and service planning process, working on implementation of University's five-year strategic plan, and managing university development projects.
- 1998 – 1999 **Director, Business Transformation, Eagle Star, Allied Dunbar & Zurich**
- As Board Director of commercial insurance business, directed business transformation programme (a project team of 80 people and budget of £3m); planned and managed the integration of the commercial insurance divisions.
- 1994 – 1998 **Programme Director, Allied Dunbar/ Eagle Star Life**
- Reporting directly to CEO and Chairman, planned and co-ordinated a programme of 8 major projects, linking the companies' brands and operations.
- Led programme of 11 major transformation projects to reduce operating cost by £25m; managed the development of the annual business plans, as part of Board-level team, including strategy formulation and subsequent operational planning.
- 1992 – 1994 **Personnel Development Director, Allied Dunbar**
- Directed Personnel Operations, consisting of 5 Personnel Managers and their teams with an operating budget of £600,000; managed Training & Development department and Internal Communications team; implemented new Director Development Programme for senior management.

1990 – 1992 **Assistant Director, Business Consulting, Allied Dunbar**

Established a professional team of internal consultants and project managers and delivered strategic and operational projects, such as distribution strategy for sales directors and productivity improvement in administration.

1981 – 1990 **Senior Manager, Accenture**

Sold, planned and managed business strategy, organisational change and systems implementation projects, for financial services clients, e.g. for a major UK clearing bank, in a transformation programme costing £35m over 3 years.

Education:

1989 **Visiting Fellow, St Hilda's College, Oxford**

1979 – 1981 **Jesus College, Oxford** – M. Phil. in English Literature

1976 – 1979 **Wellesley College, USA** – B. A. (Hons.), 1st Class, Phi Beta Kappa

Awards and Other Experience:

2015 **European Foundation for Management Development Excellence in Practice**

2012 **European Foundation for Management Development – Case Study**

2015 – now **Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Dean Close Foundation** (an educational charity turning over £25million per annum).

2014 – now **Executive Education Board Member at the Saïd Business School**

Experience, Skills and Personal Qualities:

The experience set out above has helped to develop a variety of skills, principles and approaches which I bring to all my work:

As a Non-Executive Director: honed interpersonal skills; rapid but careful assimilation of complex situations; a conviction that adding value requires an understanding of what the organisation does, how and why; judicious use of external experience which can galvanise teams to think and act innovatively; an understanding that an effective NED listens twice as much as she speaks; experience of the interaction between the Civil Service and Ministers in the UK and in a devolved administration.

As a Board Director: an ability to balance action-oriented discussion of tactics and next steps with a thoughtful strategic perspective; a focus on the action which needs to conclude every discussion in the Board Room; a firm belief that attention to board process and dynamics has visible benefits in improved decision-making and implementation and that diversity is hugely valuable for a team in all its forms - psychological, functional, as well as the differences in race, gender and physical abilities.

As Civil Service Commissioner: extensive experience of the regulation of entry into the Civil Service at every level: using a range of interview and assessment approaches for selecting leaders; chairing panels of

very senior colleagues with diverse views; hearing appeals and complaints on recruitment processes and breaches of the Civil Service Code.

As an Educator at Oxford: experience in working *with* the grain of the organisation but selecting the issues on which to drive for change; polite but fervent tenacity; experience of implementing change from outside, slowly but strategically.

As a Change Programme Director: vigorous project management to deliver on time and on budget, yoked with a visible sense of purpose; the ability to pursue a strategy and still capitalise on an unexpected opportunity.

As a Manager and Leader: to choose when to listen and when to talk, or to coach rather than direct; to work in multiple cultures and with international managers from hugely different backgrounds; the insight that giving others space to deliver and credit when they have done so can be their best development opportunity.