

ROLE DESCRIPTION AND PERSON SPEC FOR PBS CHAIRPERSON ROUND

Parole Board for Scotland Chairperson – Role Description

Appointment description

The Parole Board for Scotland (Parole Board) plays a vital role in the criminal justice system by determining which prisoners can serve the remainder of their sentence in the community, on licence and under supervision.

The Chairperson is appointed by the Scottish Ministers, on the recommendation of the Judicial Appointments Board for Scotland. The Chairperson has a key leadership role in the justice system. This requires active and effective support and guidance to Parole Board members to ensure, so far as within their power, that they perform the duties allocated to them in terms of statute, and that the Parole Board delivers its functions effectively and efficiently. It also includes engagement with partners across the justice system, taking a collaborative approach to ensure the Parole Board is represented in that context and contributes to an efficient and effective justice system.

The Parole Board is a Tribunal non-departmental public body who work closely with the Parole Scotland Executive (PSE). The two are often referred to as the Parole Board, even though they perform different functions. PSE is staffed by civil servants who are assigned by the Scottish Government (SG) to provide corporate management to the Parole Board and are headed by a Chief Executive.

The Chairperson, working with the Chief Executive of the PSE, has the principal responsibility for setting the strategic direction of the Parole Board, within the framework set by legislation. The Chairperson is also the figurehead of the Parole Board and will represent the Parole Board at meetings with Scottish Ministers and Government; and from time to time may be asked by the media to make public statements on issues relating to the Parole Board's work. The Chairperson carries primary responsibility for 'promoting' the work of the Parole Board generally.

The Chairperson is required to chair the Parole Scotland Management Board (PSMB). The PSMB comprises of the Chairperson (the Chair), the CEO, two vice-chairs, up to two board members and up to two non executive members. The PSMB is tasked with considering a wide range of matters relating to the corporate management of PBS and its duties are set out in at para 5.3 of the current [Memorandum of Understanding](#) which is currently under review and is expected to be approved before the end of July 2025.

The Parole Board for Scotland was initially set up as an advisory body, however is required to be a court for the purposes of Articles 5(4) and 6(1) of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and changes to ensure the independence of the Parole Board and its members from the Scottish Ministers were made to meet the requirements of being a court. Members of the Board are ministerial appointees and hold judicial status when sitting as a court. All Parole Board members exercise judicial functions when carrying out decision-making functions on an individual prisoner's case such as participating in hearings or casework panels.

The Chairperson is answerable to the Scottish Ministers for the performance of their non-judicial functions. The Chairperson will form a strong working relationship with Parole Board members and the staff of the PSE. Parole Board Members have collective

responsibility for ensuring that the Parole Board observes the highest standards of governance at all times and the Chairperson will lead by example in this regard.

The Chairperson will have the following responsibilities/duties:

Strategic role

- Provide collaborative leadership, ensuring there is a clear vision and direction set for the work and long term future of the Parole Board for Scotland.
- Chair the Parole Scotland Management Board, providing effective leadership and direction to this Board.
- Provide support and challenge to the Chief Executive and Parole Scotland executive team to ensure they are held to account in delivering their goals and the strategic vision for the organisation.
- As chair of the PSMB, ensure that the Chief Executive has an effective system of corporate governance in place that has a strong focus on performance and value for money.
- Focus on continuous improvement of the parole system, ensuring effective collaboration with key stakeholders across the justice system and beyond to identify efficiencies while maintaining high standards of effectiveness, fairness and integrity.
- Ensure that the Parole Board performs its duties and maintains its independence within the framework laid down in legislation (and as clarified in case law), whilst at the same time embracing change and driving improvement at a strategic level.
- To act as the public face of the Parole Board where appropriate to promote an accurate understanding of the role and function of the Parole Board across Scotland's communities. This will include authorising any public statements to be made on the Parole Board's behalf.

Leadership role

- Promote effective working relationships amongst Parole Board Members and within the staff of the Parole Scotland Executive;
- Develop effective working relationships with those agencies with which the Parole Board engages in undertaking its duties including Scottish Government, Scottish Prison Service, criminal justice social work services, Risk Management Authority, Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service and the Scottish Legal Aid Board;
- Participate in the Parole Board's core work, including casework meetings and oral hearings.
- Maintain and keep under review an effective system for reviewing the performance of Parole Board members and make recommendations to the Scottish Ministers on the continuation of appointments where appropriate.
- Maintain and keep under review a statement of principles of ethics and behaviour for Parole Board Members.

TIME COMMITMENT

Parole Board appointments are for up to a period of five years in the first instance. Reappointment to the Parole Board is automatic up until the age of 75, unless the offer of reappointment is declined.

The appointment requires a time commitment of up to 150 days each year.

LOCATION, FREQUENCY AND ATTENDANCE

The Parole Board for Scotland's offices are located in Saughton House, Broomhouse Drive, Edinburgh. The Board works remotely by video link for all casework meetings and the majority of hearings. Exceptionally, hearings may still take place face to face in the relevant prison at the Board's discretion.

REMUNERATION

The appointment attracts a daily fee of £529.92. This post is not pensionable. Reasonable travel, subsistence and care expenses incurred in relation to the Board's work will be reimbursed. No remuneration is payable to salaried members of the judiciary, but they are entitled to claim travel and subsistence expenses. It should be highlighted that there is currently an ongoing fee review of the Parole Board's fees.

APPRAISAL

The Chairperson's performance is reviewed by the Director of Justice in the Scottish Government against the functions under this appointment, other than that of independent decision making in respect of cases, and also the extent to which the Chairperson contributes to ensuring that the Parole Board as a whole delivers its functions effectively and efficiently.

PAROLE BOARD CHAIRPERSON: PERSON SPECIFICATION

The position of Chairperson is challenging but rewarding and requires an exceptional individual to provide first class leadership. Applications are sought from candidates who can assure the effective and efficient running of the Parole Board and can command the confidence of its stakeholders.

To be considered for appointment you must be able to demonstrate evidence of **ALL** of the essential criteria for the post as listed below:

PAROLE BOARD FOR SCOTLAND	Essential	Desirable
Skills and Knowledge		
Relevant governance experience at an appropriately strategic level	√	
Strategic leadership skills, with the ability to provide innovative thought and an inclusive working environment.	√	
Experience of performance management and ability to embrace and lead collaborative change and improvement at a strategic level.	√	
The ability to demonstrate a direct working knowledge of the Scottish criminal justice system and public protection assessment relating to community justice issues.	√	
Excellent communication and relationship management skills which allow you the ability to represent the strategic needs and direction of an organisation, with external bodies and stakeholders.	√	
The ability to analyse and review complex issues in order to come to logical, structured conclusions in relation to risk.	√	
An understanding of the policy, political and media landscape in which the Parole Board operates	√	
Governance experience with expertise in strategic planning, corporate governance, internal controls and performance management in the public sector context	√	
A commitment to fairness, justice and valuing the protection of the public	√	
Personal Qualities		
Objectivity, integrity and excellent judgment.	√	

Sensitivity to the diverse needs and backgrounds of those affected by the work of the Parole Board.	√	
Ability to form strong working relationships with a diverse group of members and stakeholders	√	