

# Independent Monitoring Authority chair and members appointments

The Lord Chancellor, the Rt Hon Robert Buckland QC, has appointed Sir Ashley Fox to be the first chair of the Independent Monitoring Authority for the Citizens' Rights Agreements (IMA) for a tenure of 4 years. His appointment commenced on 8 December 2020 and run until 7 December 2024.

Sir Ashley's appointment follows a Justice Select Committee pre-appointment hearing on 24 November and the publication of the Committee's report into the same on 3 December. The Lord Chancellor and Sir Ashley have noted the report's contents and recommendations.

The Lord Chancellor has also made the following Non-Executive Member Appointments.

- Punam Birly has been appointed as non-executive member of the IMA for a 2 year tenure;
- Marcus Killick has been appointed as non-executive member with knowledge about conditions in Gibraltar relating to citizens' rights for a 3 year tenure; and
- Leo O'Reilly has been appointed as non-executive member with knowledge about conditions in Northern Ireland relating to citizens' rights for a 3 year tenure.

The appointees all commenced their tenure on 8 December 2020.

Non-executive appointments to the IMA are not currently regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

However, the Chair and Members have been appointed following fair and open competitions run in line with the process set out in the Governance Code on Public Appointments.

Further campaigns are currently underway to appoint a member with knowledge of the conditions in Scotland relating to the rights of citizens under the EU Withdrawal Agreement and EEA EFTA Separation Agreement, and a member with knowledge of the conditions in Wales relating to those rights, with the appointments expected to be announced by the end of January and the end of February 2021, respectively.

## **Independent Monitoring Authority for the Citizens' Rights Agreements**

The IMA is a brand-new public body, which has been established under the [EU \(Withdrawal Agreement\) Act 2020 \(EUWAA\)](#). The IMA needs to be operational by the end of 2020. The chair of the IMA will play a crucial role in establishing the IMA's early direction and effectiveness, and in winning the confidence of its stakeholders.

Under the provisions set out in EUWAA, the IMA will have the power to receive complaints, launch inquiries and initiate legal proceedings. The IMA will also have a role in reviewing the effectiveness of the citizens' rights legislative framework, for instance by reviewing draft legislation. The legislation also provides that it is important for the IMA to focus on general or systemic failures in the implementation of the citizens' rights agreements, as well as receiving and investigating individual complaints. The IMA will have to publish guidance on how it will exercise its functions.

## **Biographies**

### **Sir Ashley Fox – Chair of the IMA:**

Sir Ashley is a business consultant providing strategic advice on the European Union. Since 2015 he has been the lay member on the Leadership Nomination Committee of the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors. Sir Ashley served as MEP for the South West of England and Gibraltar from 2009 to 2019. He was Leader of the Conservative MEPs from 2014 to 2019. Prior to being elected Sir Ashley practised as a solicitor in Bristol.

### **Punam Birly – Member:**

Punam was a Partner at KPMG LLP (UK) from 2008 – 2020. She was Head of Employment and Immigration within the Tax and Legal Services Practice and the lead on People related Brexit issues. She is an EU/international social security specialist. She is a Solicitor of the Senior Courts of England and Wales and previously worked at Andersen, Deloitte and PwC.

### **Marcus Killick – Member with knowledge about conditions in Gibraltar relating to citizens' rights:**

Marcus qualified as a Barrister at Law (England and Wales), an Attorney at Law (New York), and a Chartered Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Securities and Investment. His current role is Chief Executive Officer of ISOLAS LLP, one of Gibraltar's leading law firms.

### **Leo O'Reilly – Member with knowledge about conditions in Northern Ireland relating to citizens' rights:**

Leo is a Non-Executive Audit and Risk Committee Member of the Office of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland. He was a former civil servant in the Northern Ireland Civil Service with over 27 years' experience as a senior civil servant covering a diverse range of functions and activities across government in both NI and GB. These include over 11 years as the Permanent Secretary of three Northern Ireland departments.