

APPOINTMENT OF JUNIOR COUNSEL TO THE ADVOCATE GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND

The Advocate General for Scotland invites expressions of interest from junior Counsel and suitably qualified solicitor advocates wishing to represent the Secretary of State for the Home Department at Immigration and Asylum First Tier Tribunal hearings in the place of Home Office Presenting Officers. Those appointed are likely to receive ad hoc instructions over a period of three to six months. It is intended that the scheme will operate along the same lines as the "Junior Junior" (formerly known as the "Baby Barrister" scheme) operated by the Government Legal Department in London.

Applications are invited from any member of the junior Scottish Bar and/or suitably qualified solicitor advocates, unless currently appointed as an Advocate Depute or Scottish Government Standing Junior. The applications will be assessed by a panel comprising of OAG solicitors and at least one Home Office official. The number of appointments is not fixed. As presently advised, these will only relate to the Home Office and will be for a three to six month period. Counsel joining the scheme will be required to read, and confirm that they have read, guidance on handling government information before they are added to the scheme. Those who currently hold an appointment as a "Junior Junior" are invited to reapply if they wish to continue as part of the new group of "Junior Juniors."

In line with the parallel scheme operated in England, fees are £45 per hour for preparation of appeals (to a maximum of 5 hours per case) and £45 per hour for appearing before the Tribunal.

Applications should be made by letter and should be accompanied by a current CV. Applications should provide the applicant's current contact details, together with details of his or her main specialisms/areas of work and professional qualifications. Applicants should also mention any other qualifications and/or experience which they would like to be considered as part of their application. Junior Counsel should give their year of call and solicitor advocates their year of admittance as a solicitor advocate.

E-mailed applications are acceptable and should be e-mailed to Fiona Robertson, Head of Litigation in the Office of the Advocate General at Fiona.Robertson@advocategeneral.gsi.gov.uk by the closing date and time of Friday 19 July 2019.

EU Exit Local Government Delivery

Board: June 2019 update

On 19 June, the Government Brexit Delivery Board met in London.

The Board provides an opportunity for national and local government leaders to discuss and address issues and opportunities arising from Brexit that impact on local government.

The meeting was chaired by Communities Secretary Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP.

Government ministers from DExEU, DfT and the Home Office were in attendance to discuss departmental preparations in relation to transport infrastructure and the UK Settled Status Scheme.

Representatives from the Local Government Association, County Councils Network, District Councils Network and London Councils provided updates and feedback.

Office address and general enquiries

2 Marsham Street
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Contact form <https://forms.communit...>

General enquiries: please use this number if you are a member of the public
030 3444 0000

John Glen speaks at the Green Finance Summit

It's a pleasure to join you for the City's third Green Finance Summit.

This event gets bigger every year, which reflects the momentum growing behind Green Finance in the Square Mile, and beyond.

I'd like to thank Sir Roger Gifford for all he has done to champion this cause as chairman of the Green Finance Initiative.

It also gives me great pleasure to welcome Dr Rhian-Mari Thomas, the newly appointed CEO of the Green Finance Institute, which is launched today.

I can't think of a better person to have at the helm as the Institute charts a bold and exciting course towards low carbon future.

International leadership

Today also marks the publication of the government's Green Finance Strategy.

Together with the Green Finance Institute, it represents a new and exciting step in the UK's long history of international leadership on climate change.

Indeed, this year is an important anniversary in that journey.

It was 30 years ago this November that Margaret Thatcher spoke at the United Nations, becoming the first major world leader to call for a coordinated global response to the climate challenge.

Mrs Thatcher may seem like an unlikely heroine of the environmental movement.

But she was a chemist by background, for whom the facts of ozone depletion, acid rain and rising temperatures were readily apparent.

And while her legacy in this area, as in so many others, is a matter of continuing debate, there is no doubt that her intervention was significant.

Before 1989, environmental concerns had been a fringe issue, on the margins of public debate.

But Mrs Thatcher gave it mainstream political respectability. She planted it firmly on the international agenda, where it has remained ever since.

It's a reminder that the UK has always led from the front.

Yes, we were the first country to industrialise.

But we were also one of the first countries to sound the alarm, and then one of the first to act by introducing legally-binding emissions reduction targets.

Getting the economics right

This leadership continues today.

Last month, the Prime Minister pledged to end the UK's contribution to global warming entirely by 2050.

We are now the first G7 country to legislate for net zero emissions.

But the scale of this commitment – coupled with the urgency of the challenge – demands we step up a gear.

Few people doubt the need for far-reaching action.

The question is what form it should take.

Some would have us make a choice between growth on the one hand and sustainability on the other.

The climate threat is so great that it can only be tackled by turning back the clock to simpler times, sweeping away years of social and economic progress in the process.

I don't believe it needs to be this way.

We won't become greener by making ourselves poorer.

Quite the reverse in fact.

Back in 1989, Mrs Thatcher pointed out that economic growth and environmental responsibility must work hand-in-hand.

"As well as the science" she said, "we need to get the economics right".

"We must first have continued economic growth in order to generate the wealth required to pay for the protection of the environment, but it must be growth which does not plunder the planet today and leave our children to deal with the consequences tomorrow."

This belief is at the heart of the government's green finance ambition.

The financial sector has perhaps more potential than any other part of our economy to bring about a greener future.

It is the City that can bring forward new financial products and services to meet rising demand for sustainable investment.

It is the City that can unlock capital for renewable energy and other clean technology required to reduce emissions in this country, and overseas.

And it is the City, with its restless commercial zeal, that will seize the opportunities of clean and resilient growth, and lead us toward a low carbon future.

The strategy

The potential is evident today.

More than 100 green bonds have been listed on the London Stock Exchange.

Billions of pounds of private and public capital have been raised for renewable energy projects: not just in the UK, but overseas too.

And on the retail side, some lenders now offer green mortgages for self-build properties and discounted borrowing for home improvement.

These are encouraging first steps: but the climate challenge, and the climate opportunity, demand we go much further.

Our Strategy seeks to bring about a complete change in the way the City

thinks and acts.

We must ensure the financial risk and opportunities from climate change are integrated into mainstream decision-making.

Because let's be clear: the climate challenge poses an existential risk to the future of the planet and, by extension, our economy too.

If our financial system is to remain resilient – and relevant – then the City must adapt.

But while most banks rightly identify climate change as a risk, only one in ten is taking a strategic approach to manage this.

That's why the government endorsed the recommendations of the Task Force on Climate-Related Disclosures in 2017.

The government is leading by example. Publicly-funded financial bodies must include climate-related disclosures in their accounts as soon as possible.

Hundreds of companies are also disclosing details of how they are mitigating climate risk on a voluntary basis.

But today I want to go further, which is why I'm calling on all public listed companies and large asset owners to do the same.

I want to see these disclosures become accepted practice across the financial services sector by 2022.

I don't want to resort to legislation straight away.

But I do expect to see far greater uptake in the coming months from across all industries.

The government will monitor progress and publish an interim report by the end of 2020, which will inform our next steps.

And behind the scenes, we will coordinate our approach with the regulators; and I welcome the joint statement today that confirms their shared understanding of climate change risk.

Skills

If the City is to change how it works, then it must also be equipped with the tools for a green future.

A new Green Finance Education Charter will help embed sustainable thinking at every stage of professional development.

We want the skills and expertise required for this task to have the professional standing they merit.

Data will be key too – which is why we will take steps to develop the right environmental and data analytics to support climate-related financial

disclosures.

Finally, we cannot act in isolation.

We must offer leadership, partnership and example to the rest of the world.

Our aim is for the UK to become the undisputed global hub for green finance.

This will be driven in part by the Green Finance Institute. But we will bring all the levers of government behind this task.

This includes ensuring our aid budget supports green investment in the developing world.

It is the world's poorest, after all, who will bear the brunt of the consequences if we fail to act.

We will keep this issue on the agenda at the United Nations, and in all our international dealings.

And as other nations become alive to the potential of green finance, we stand ready to support them.

Conclusion

I'd like to end with a word of thanks to those in government, and the City, who have worked tirelessly over the past few years to drive the green finance agenda forward.

The publication of the Strategy – alongside the creation of the Institute – is testament to your efforts to date.

But our Strategy is more than just a document – it's a call to action.

And our ambitions are just words unless they are matched by meaningful action and measurable progress, which is why we will review the Strategy and its objectives in 2022.

Every country, every business, every individual, has a part to play.

The task is urgent, and vital – but it's exciting too.

Because while the challenges of creating a sustainable economy are great, the opportunities are greater still.

Our efforts today will help determine the prosperity of our country – and the wellbeing of our planet – long into the future.

The threat is real, the opportunities are growing, and the world is watching.

So the time for action has come. The City must lead the way.

The Communities Secretary's speech at the LGA Conference 2019

Introduction

When I first started thinking about this speech it is fair to say the world looked a bit different.

These are unique times.

So from the start I want to be clear with you all that just because it is difficult for me at this time to be expansive on new approaches or set out fresh policy with concrete certainty, I won't be holding back on the sense of ambition or gratitude I have for local government.

Because from the smallest parish to the biggest urban metropolis, from our historic counties to reinventing coastal towns, our communities, in all their glorious diversity, are what make this country so special.

As such, your work in local government – at the heart of these communities – and our work at MHCLG in backing you is fundamental to Britain's future.

That's why – as I said last year – I'm such a strong believer in local government.

Now a lot has changed in the past 12 months – with more big changes to come.

But what has not changed is the significance of local government and my regard for you as the bedrock of our democracy; delivering day in day out for our communities.

Before I go on, I want to pay tribute to Lord Porter, who after leading the Local Government Association (LGA) with distinction since 2015 is handing over to his successor [Cllr] James Jamieson.

I've gotten to know James well over the last year and I know that I'll continue to enjoy an excellent relationship with him.

Albeit, for how long, well that will be for someone else to decide!

But the sector could not have had a more determined champion than Gary, and is all the stronger for it.

I pay tribute to you Gary for the contribution you've made and the leadership you've shown.

Yes, the fish and chips and everything in between.

But most profoundly on reform and how I'm proud that we've delivered that lift on the housing borrowing cap which you championed to empower councils to get on and build more homes.

There are no excuses now but I know Gary that whilst you are stepping back from one role you will be stepping up your challenge to see that these new freedoms are harnessed to the fullest extent.

Thank you Gary for your service, your leadership and for being such an outstanding advocate for the good that local government can do. And as we look towards new leadership at the LGA I can't see a better future for this country that doesn't have local democracy at the heart of it.

People taking control of their lives and places, striving for better for themselves and those they love.

For their neighbours, their towns and their cities.

There is a golden thread that runs through each us, binding us not just together, but to the places we call, and have called, home.

Local government role in delivering national policies

And that's an emotional connection of which local government plays an important part in safeguarding and shaping.

And this is all the more impressive because local government has a role in this most delicate of things, through to the most robust.

Because whether we're talking about big national programmes on housing, transport and infrastructure or maximising local economic growth, the fight against knife crime or revitalising our high streets, it always comes back to strong local leadership.

I very much appreciate your efforts to support local areas to prepare for Brexit in extremely testing circumstances – preparations that will be central to ensuring all communities stand to benefit.

And as we mark two years since the still unimaginable tragedy at Grenfell Tower, continuing to keep people in similar buildings safe and, critically, transforming our approach to building safety to ensure nothing like this can ever happen again.

It's remarkable to think that local government provides over 800 services to residents and businesses in England – a breadth and volume of responsibilities that isn't always fully appreciated.

You have continued to deliver against a difficult backdrop of constrained finances and big demographic shifts and, looking ahead, it's clear there's a lot at stake not only for vulnerable groups, but for the whole of our communities.

Funding and the settlement

I'm very thankful for everything you've done to rise to these challenges and to help reduce our debts and rebuild our economy – a significant contribution that, notably, hasn't just been about driving efficiencies, but, increasingly, about innovating and improving public services.

I know this has been far from easy – and that's why one of my absolute priorities is to deliver a sustainable future for local government.

This year's local government finance settlement is an important step towards this – a settlement that provided a real-terms boost in spending, an extra £650 million for social care and which confirmed the government's continuing approach to addressing negative RSG [revenue support grant].

Much of your funding; such as retained business rates – which have risen annually in line with the growth in business rates – and council tax is, of course, already locally sourced.

Underlining our commitment to putting local government truly in the driving seat – answerable not to central government, but to the communities you serve.

And we remain committed to implementing local government finance reforms, including increased business rates retention, incentives to authorities to help grow local businesses and a new approach to distributing funding.

I am grateful for your support and input as we continue to advance these significant reforms.

But it is right that we consider how we implement these reforms. And I recognise your concerns that we cannot wait until the end of the year to provide you with this clarity, with budget preparations and planning for 2020-21 already underway.

Overall funding available to local government will, of course, be a matter for the Spending Review but I will continue to make a powerful case for you – for local government – as a proud champion of the sector. To see that local government receives the support needed and gains as much certainty as we can as early as we can.

It is right that we look at the challenges and opportunities you face, and the funding you are currently relying on, including for social care, when we consider what a sustainable settlement looks like for local government for the coming years.

Green Paper

It's clear that growing and evolving challenges demand we go further and that, at this time of great change, look to map the way ahead.

Look to get local government onto the front foot with a renewed confidence

and sense of purpose – which means delivering a new deal for local government.

This is about funding, yes.

But it's also about, I believe, a greater sense of shared responsibility for the difference we can all make for our people and places.

As someone who saw my father stand in your shoes, I take this responsibility extremely seriously. I know you do too.

Allied to my pragmatism and my passion for entrepreneurship, innovation and respecting the agency we all have to improve our lives and those around us, it's why I'm a Conservative.

And it's why I'm keen to see us working together more collaboratively to harness this collective responsibility to drive improvement – to get the difficult balance between managing day to day pressures and being dynamic and demanding excellence right.

That's why I believe that the next leader of my Party will need to look afresh at the entire ecosystem underpinning local government and acknowledge that role we all have to play – to spot problems earlier, champion best practice and help each other improve.

Central government, for example, could and should do more to identify and support struggling councils earlier to prevent failure and protect residents.

The local audit system, too, could and should step up more robustly – not just because it reinforces confidence in financial reporting.

But because it reinforces service delivery and, ultimately, our faith in local democracy – with potentially far-reaching consequences when audits aren't carried out properly and fail to detect significant problems.

That's why we must heed concerns that have recently been raised by audit quality and whether the audit framework is too fragmented.

To that end – as many of you will know – I've committed to reviewing the audit framework.

I'm approaching this with an open mind, but our aim must be to ensure the framework helps members, Section 151 officers and chief executives make informed and responsible decisions about improvements.

I'm also interested in exploring how we can invite greater input from citizens on this as part a more open system.

I know the LGA – which does so much great work to raise the bar – is also keen to see the sector getting better support.

Which is why we've strengthened the focus on leadership and efficiency this year as part of our £19 million offer to help authorities improve that's

delivered by the LGA.

Like you, I want councils to excel and am open to your thoughts about what more we can do together to support this.

I know the New Burdens Doctrine is key to this.

Authorities must feel confident that the Doctrine is doing its job – fully assessing and funding any new requirements placed on them – something I've not hesitated to impress on my Cabinet colleagues.

And I'm grateful for the LGA's insight and support to help my department make sure authorities don't lose out financially.

To guard against this, it is right we look at the process and assure ourselves that it is fit for purpose.

This is a conversation we must have with you, and I look forward to hearing what you want to see on this front.

As I've said, it's in all our interests to see you succeed.

And by fighting your corner in the Spending Review, by backing you to break new ground, by standing with you to take greater collective responsibility, I'm confident we can deliver the new deal that local government and our communities deserve.

A deal that resets the relationship between local and central government.

That sees us adapting, with ever more agility, to face the future with optimism.

That strengthens the special bond we share with our citizens and renews our democracy.

I want to see these plans set out in more detail in a Green Paper and welcome your input.

Troubled Families Programme

Because there's so much great work and expertise out there in our authorities.

And I want us to do much more to celebrate and spread this; to ensure that early intervention and prevention becomes the norm rather than exception – as seen so powerfully in the Troubled Families Programme. This inspirational initiative that has been helping around 400,000 families facing multiple challenges change their lives by fundamentally changing the way local services are delivered – with services joining up around whole families to overcome problems before they escalate.

When compared to a similar comparison group, the latest programme evaluation saw:

- the number of children going into care down by a third,
- the number of adults going to prison and juveniles in custody down by a quarter and a third respectively,
- and 10% fewer people claiming Jobseekers Allowance.

It's why I'm such a passionate advocate of the Programme and why I want to see a renewed programme for the years ahead.

Yes, the name may not be right and there are other improvements we can make.

But the programme is demonstrating the change in people's lives it is making and we need to get behind it.

Housing

Housing is another vital area where local authorities need to strengthen their ability to deliver.

This is, undoubtedly, our top domestic priority – the challenge of a generation.

Whatever else changes, that will not change.

And as we mark the centenary of the Addison Act, it's fitting that councils are once again leading the charge to help increase supply to 300,000 new homes a year.

In doing so, we want to help you maximise the potential the lifting of the HRA (Housing Revenue Account) cap offers by considering how you might boost your capabilities and develop joint ventures. Whether with housing associations and, indeed, the private sector to unlock more sites.

Ensuring we do reach the full ambition of a new generation of council homes.

This push also demands we build faster and reduce delays.

That's why – as I said last week – we will be publishing an Accelerated Planning Green Paper – to look at how greater capacity and capability within local planning authorities, stronger plan-making, better performance management and procedural improvements can accelerate the end-to end planning process for all.

Delivery also depends on getting communities on board – communities who are more likely welcome new development when it's underpinned by the right infrastructure.

Our £5.5 billion Housing Infrastructure Fund – which aims to unlock new homes in areas of greatest demand – reflects this.

And, as we get funds out of the door – just this month, in Woking and Truro – this is having an impact.

Conclusion

Self-sacrifice, frugality and belief.

These are virtues we rarely place in the context of public service, preferring instead to talk in pseudo motivational management speak; dynamism, agility, high energy.

Those words and phrases, however, are not the virtues of human beings. No, they are the characteristics of systems and processes. They are mechanical words.

And yet, when I see the best of public service, it is the opposite of the machine, it is deeply human. Fundamentally it is an honest and empathetic connection between people.

A social worker and a vulnerable child. A care worker and their elderly patient. A teacher and proud parents.

It is in these moments, these connections, that public service becomes more than material, and changes how we feel about ourselves.

Because public service should lift us all. Those who give and those who receive.

But it is easy to forget this deeper truth. Easier to fall back on mechanical words, on systems and processes.

You have had more pressure than most and a greater weight placed on you to help us correct the nation's finances.

And for this reason, and others, it is so impressive that in spite of all that, when we meet, you don't talk in spreadsheets or corporate strategies – well not all of you at least – but in terms of the people you love and the communities you serve.

I can see, that self-sacrifice, that frugality and that belief in yourselves that you can make a difference.

When thinking about what I wanted to say to you all, I knew above all that I wanted to say thank you for staying true to those virtues and never losing them.

Thank you to the councillors who give up their time to represent the communities they serve and thank you to the officers who work so diligently and fairly in supporting to deliver local priorities.

Now is clearly a time of change.

A new Prime Minister will be in post shortly and a new government. Such moments provide us with opportunities for that most important of things; renewal.

An opportunity to ask the bigger and more fundamental questions.

A renewed opportunity to ask ourselves how we can deliver better, smarter services for the people we serve.

And as we open this new chapter, be positive about the future for our communities, be positive about the future of our country and the intrinsic and special role that local government has to play.

Thank you

[Home Secretary visits Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territories](#)

Home Secretary Sajid Javid visited Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories earlier this week to discuss the region's security, tackling extremism and the importance of freedom of religion.

On Sunday 30 June, Mr Javid visited Ramallah where he met the Palestinian Authority Prime Minister Mohammad Shtayyeh. They discussed bilateral cooperation in the security sector, the current political and fiscal challenges facing the Palestinian Authority and the impact of the occupation. Mr Javid reaffirmed the UK's commitment to the two-state solution, based on 1967 borders with Jerusalem as a shared capital as the path to unlocking the peace, prosperity and freedom desired by Israelis and Palestinians.

On Monday 1 July he visited the Old City of Jerusalem – one of the most sacred and holy sites in the world for Christians, Jews and Muslims alike, becoming the first British Cabinet Minister to say a prayer at the Al Aqsa Mosque, and visit the Haram Al Sharif/Temple Mount. He also paid his respects at the Western Wall and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Mr Javid later met Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, where he praised the strength of the 2 countries' bilateral relationship, and discussed Iran, the concerning rise of antisemitism and prospects for peace with the Palestinians.

He also discussed strengthening security cooperation with Israeli Minister for Public Security, Strategic Affairs and Information, Gilad Erdan.

Mr Javid also visited the Holocaust Memorial Centre of Yad-Vashem where he heard moving stories of bravery and compassion in the most tragic and horrifying of circumstances. He emphasised that we must ensure such abhorrent crimes never happen again and fight religious intolerance wherever it arises.

Home Secretary Sajid Javid said:

It was an honour to meet our friends in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories to discuss our continued commitment to security and the pursuit of peace.

The importance of the political progress needed to unlock a just and lasting peace is inescapable in the Old City of Jerusalem. With sites sacred to Christians, Muslims and Jews, all believers need to be able to practise their faith freely, peacefully and without fear.

As Home Secretary, I'm committed to working with friends at home and abroad to tackle all forms of religious hatred – including antisemitism, anti-Muslim hatred, and the persecution of Christians.