

# Non-Executive Director for the Veterinary Medicines Directorate

Candidate Information Pack

Closing date: 25 April 2024



Veterinary  
Medicines  
Directorate



# Veterinary Medicines Directorate

You may not have heard of the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD), but have you ever:

- eaten meat, eggs, fish or honey
- drunk milk
- owned a pet or animal
- taken antibiotics

If you said yes to any of the above, you are directly affected by what the VMD does.

The VMD is the regulatory and policy lead body responsible for issues concerning the authorisation, use, and manufacture of veterinary medicines in the UK.

Our aim is to protect public health, animal health, and the environment, and promote animal welfare by assuring the safety, quality and effectiveness of veterinary medicines.



# The VMD

We support the Defra objectives on public and animal health, the promotion of a sustainable, competitive and safe food supply chain, and growing the rural economy. All statutory services are charged for at full economic cost, representing a major component of our income.

We work in close collaboration with veterinary professionals, livestock industry, and other public and private sector stakeholders to implement the Government's current 2019-2024 Antimicrobial Resistance Strategy. This is part of the Government's 20-year vision on Antimicrobial Resistance, and we are also leading the veterinary side of the development of the next 5-year action plan.

The VMD also leverages international collaboration opportunities in the post-EU landscape to advance global regulations and joint applications. We also have an active programme of supporting low and middle-income countries improve their regulation of veterinary medicines.

We follow an integrated approach, spanning policy development to delivery, supported by externally accredited quality systems and a programme of consistent improvement.



# Why join VMD?

## Welcome Message from CEO:

Hello! I am Abi Seager, I was appointed Chief Executive Officer, Veterinary Medicines Directorate in September 2021. As the VMD's Chief Executive Officer, I lead the VMD in delivering the policy and operational delivery business priorities and strategies. The VMD provides advice to Defra Ministers and works collaboratively with other government departments, Devolved Administrations and the Chief Veterinary Officer where the regulation of veterinary medicines contributes to policy in respect of animal health and welfare.

The VMD is policy lead for veterinary medicines and for antimicrobial resistance, and is responsible for:

- assessment, issue and maintenance of Marketing Authorisations for veterinary medicines
- controls on the manufacture and distribution of veterinary medicinal products, including inspections
- pharmacovigilance through the surveillance of Suspected Adverse Events
- surveillance for residues of veterinary medicines and illegal substances in animals and animal products

- the surveillance of antibiotic sales, use and resistance
- the provision and implementation of policy advice on these matters to Ministers and
- the management of the research and development programme linked to veterinary medicine issues.

A key focus of our work is to ensure that the domestic regulatory framework continues to provide the environment in which pharmaceutical companies invest in bringing veterinary medicines to the UK market. In this context, we are also seeking to strengthen our bilateral and multilateral partnerships with medicines regulators across the globe.

I am energised by the VMD's future and the role it will play as part of the UK's new global aspirations and commitments. As you're reading this, it means that you could become a key member of one of my teams.

Thank you for your interest in the role and in the work of the VMD.



# More about VMD

The Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) is an executive agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) and a regulatory and policy lead body. It is responsible for issues concerning the authorisation, manufacture and use of veterinary medicines in the UK, and focuses on assuring the safety, quality, and efficacy of veterinary medicines.

## Our Aims and Mission

By working closely with our stakeholders we promote animal health and welfare, as well as protect public health and the environment. Our work supports high standards of animal welfare and helps the Food Standards Agency to protect and improve the safety of the food people eat.

The work of the VMD work falls into three main areas:

## Policy

- Making, updating, and enforcing UK legislation and policy on veterinary medicines and medicated feed.
- Acting as a policy lead and providing policy advice on antimicrobial resistance issues.

## Licensing

- Assessing applications for marketing authorisations for veterinary medicines - will the new medicine work, is it safe?
- Licensing and inspection of manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers.
- Responding to supply shortages and permitting alternative products to be used.

## Surveillance

- Monitoring and acting on reports of adverse events from veterinary medicines.
- Testing for residues of veterinary medicines and banned substances in livestock and animal products.
- Monitoring antibiotic use and resistance in animals.

Find out more by clicking [here](#), or clicking the icons to the right to visit our social media sites.

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## The Role

# Roles and Responsibilities

We are seeking **two** Non-Executive Directors: one to join our Management Board and chair the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee; and the other as the Independent Member of our Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC). Like many public sector boards, our Board is advisory – its role is to challenge and support executives in delivering strategy, policy and customer objectives, and achieving value for money. Critical to the effectiveness of the Board, is its ability to influence its stakeholders and to bring its collective wisdom to help to constantly improve the work and reputation of the Agency.

All our non-executives contribute to the Board's work and the achievement of its objectives through Board and committee meetings, and other tasks assigned by the Chair.

## **Non-executive Management Board member and ARAC Chair**

You will:

- provide advice about strategy and policy, and the delivery of customer objectives;
- provide effective oversight of financial and risk management;
- ensure issues are explored from a range of viewpoints, promoting inclusion and engaging with stakeholders when necessary;
- review and provide advice about performance, respecting the principles of good governance, supporting and holding the executive to account without becoming involved in the running of the business;
- make well informed and impactful contributions to debate and discussion at Board meetings to aid collective decision-making;
- maintain high personal standards in relation to personal behaviour and uphold the Nolan principles of public life;
- as Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, provide advice to the Board and executives about financial probity, risk management and governance;
- review and refresh the work of the Committee, and effectively chair its meetings.



# Role and Responsibilities

## **Non-executive Independent Member of Audit and Risk Assurance Committee**

You will advise the Board and Accounting Officer about:

- The strategic processes for risk, internal control and governance, and the Governance Statement;
- The accounting policies, the annual report and accounts of the organisation, including the process for review of the accounts prior to submission for audit, levels of error identified, and management's letter of representation to the external auditors;
- The planned activity and results of both internal and external audit;
- The adequacy of management response to issues identified by audit activity, including external audit's management letter;
- Assurances relating to the management of risk and corporate governance requirements for the organisation;
- Anti-fraud policies, whistle-blowing processes, and arrangements for special investigations; and
- The Audit and Risk Committee's periodic review of its own effectiveness.





## Terms

The appointments will run for four years from 1st July 2024.

Although current rules allow for appointments to be extended for up to a further four years by mutual agreement and subject to satisfactory performance, this cannot be guaranteed. The appointee may resign at any time by giving three months' notice in writing to the Chief Executive and Chair. The Chief Executive may terminate the appointment under certain conditions, which will be notified to the successful candidate on appointment.

## Remuneration

An attendance fee will be paid for each meeting as follows:

ARAC Chair: £520 per whole day, £260 per half day.

ARAC member: £470 per whole day, £235 per half day.

Tax will be paid by Defra at source. Any related expenses will also be paid.

## Working Practices

The duties of Management Board and Audit and Risk Assurance Committee members are normally expected to take up to twelve days per year, including time to read papers in preparation for meetings and to comment on issues in correspondence. The Board and Committee normally both meet quarterly either at the VMD's offices in Surrey (KT15 3LS) or remotely by video conference with meetings scheduled at key points along the accounts' timetable.



## Qualities and Experience

We are looking for candidates who will bring diversity of thought and a fresh perspective to the work of the Board and its committees, and who can demonstrate a passion for our work. You do not need to be an expert in animal health or veterinary medicines, but you will be someone who has already made a real difference as a non-executive or who can demonstrate how they could do so, in their own field.

The most important characteristics for us are:

- A passion and enthusiasm for our work;
- An enquiring mind, and independence of judgement;
- Personal charisma and an enthusiastic and engaging communication style;
- A track record of personally influencing the development of strategy and organisational performance;
- A demonstrable commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion;
- Experience in getting things done in challenging circumstances and complex governance structures.

We are looking for candidates who have a professional accountancy qualification or similar experience.



# Conduct

Non-Executive Directors must observe the highest standards of impartiality, integrity and objectivity. Appointees will be accountable to the Chief Executive and should not use information gained in the course of this appointment for personal gain or to promote other interests. Any appointment can be terminated early and without notice by the Chief Executive if the appointee fails to perform his or her duties to a satisfactory standard.

Members will be expected to uphold [the seven principles of public life](#).

## Conflicts of interest

Candidates will be asked to complete a conflict of interests questionnaire. In principle anyone who is currently, or has within the last 12 months, worked for or been involved with any of the business areas we regulate will not be eligible.

All candidates are also required to complete the following forms

- Diversity Monitoring Questionnaire
- Political Activity Questionnaire





A large flock of sheep is gathered in a lush green field during the golden hour of sunset. The sheep, with their thick white wool, are looking in various directions, some towards the camera. The background features rolling hills and a line of trees silhouetted against the warm, orange glow of the setting sun.

# Selection Process

Selection is through fair and open competition, and is based on merit



## Our Selection Process

To apply, please send a CV and Personal Statement giving clear examples in no more than 1000 words of where your experience matches the essential skills mentioned above to Chris Abbott at [director.support@vmd.gov.uk](mailto:director.support@vmd.gov.uk), to be received no later than noon, Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> April.

We will acknowledge receipt of your application form.

### Selection Panel

A selection panel will meet and consider your application. The panel will be chaired by the Chief Executive and include the Chair of the Management Board.

The selection panel will determine which candidates best demonstrate that they have the specified qualities and experience. The shortlisted candidates will then be invited for interview. It is therefore essential to give full but concise information/evidence relevant to the appointment in your letter of application.

### Interviews

Interviews will be held over video using Microsoft Teams and are expected to last approximately 45 minutes. If selected for interview you will be asked to prepare a five minute presentation. This should be made without the use of visual aids. We will notify you of the topic in advance of the interview. Please note that if you are invited to interview but are not able to attend on the given date, we will do our best to arrange an alternative date.

Ministers will be advised of the selection panel's recommendations.

# Timeline

Please note that this timeline is indicative at this stage and could be subject to change. The anticipated timetable is as follows:

Application Closing Date	25 April 2024
Shortlisting Outcomes	W/C 6 May 2024
Interviews Conducted	5, 6 and 12 June 2024
Interviews Outcomes	W/C 17 June 2024
Potential Start Date	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2024

## Interviews will take place via MS Teams

Candidates are asked to note the above timetable, exercising flexibility through the recruitment and selection process as it may not be possible to offer any alternative dates for assessments or interviews.



# Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

We passionately believe in equality, diversity & inclusion and we match that belief with action.



**Respect Include Support Engage**



As part of the Defra Group, VMD works with Defra to improve equality, diversity and inclusion to enhance our capacity to make the UK a great place to live.

Defra is committed to being an organisation in which fairness and inclusion are central to all our working relationships. At Defra we want you to have a respectful, welcoming; and engaging working environment, free from discrimination regardless of age, disability, gender identity, marriage and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, social background, trade union activity, caring responsibilities or working pattern.

We encourage applications from neurodiverse people and believe it is only through having a mix of ideas and ways of thinking that we will be able to have a culture which produces high quality work.

The inclusion of all of our employees is very important. We want everyone who works at VMD to feel they belong here, and we recognise that everyone will come to us from different backgrounds and with a range of different experiences.

We will not tolerate discrimination, bullying, harassment, victimisation or negative stereotyping. Our aim is a working environment where you feel you belong and have a voice, whatever your job or your grade.

You can read more below

[Defra group equality, diversity and inclusion strategy 2020 to 2024 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

## Contact us

If you have any queries about the roles, please email Mike Griffiths  
at [m.griffiths@vmd.gov.uk](mailto:m.griffiths@vmd.gov.uk)

For enquiries about your application or the recruitment process, please email  
Chris Abbott at [director.support@vmd.gov.uk](mailto:director.support@vmd.gov.uk)

