



The Office of the Children's Commissioner for Jersey

Adult Advisory Panel

Terms of Reference 2024

The Office of the Children's Commissioner for Jersey

The Office of the Children's Commissioner for Jersey (OCCJ) was established under the Commissioner for Children and Young People (Jersey) Law 2019. The Office's primary function is to promote and protect the rights of all children under 18 in Jersey, as well as the rights of certain groups of young people aged 18 to 25 years. These latter groups are young people with care experience, young people with disabilities and young people in detention.

The OCCJ has a statutory duty to ensure good governance and management of its resources. To assist with this, the Office must establish a number of advisory panels. These include an Adult Advisory Panel, an Audit and Risk Advisory Panel and a Youth Advisory Panel.

The establishment of the Adult Advisory Panel is provided for in the Commissioner for Children and Young People (Jersey) Law 2019, Part 5, Article 26. This Panel must consist of adults (aged 18 or over) who represent a broad range of interests that are relevant to the Commissioner's functions and are able to provide the Commissioner with advice and assistance relating to the discharge of those functions.

The Law requires that the Commissioner must determine and publish:

- the criteria and process for appointment to the Panel;
- the terms and conditions applying in respect of an appointment; and
- the Panel's procedures.

The following Terms of Reference fulfil this requirement in respect of the Adult Advisory Panel.

| Purpose |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To provide strategic advice, support, scrutiny and challenge to the Commissioner and staff of the OCCJ.• To advise the Commissioner on how her statutory powers can be exercised to promote and protect children's rights in Jersey.• To advise the Commissioner on key issues and challenges facing children, young |



people and those who care for them, ensuring that the Commissioner's work is aligned to current and emerging issues.

- To act as a critical friend and be a vehicle for the Commissioner to test validity of ideas, projects, policies and proposals that will in turn inform the policies and strategic priorities of the Office.
- To help ensure that the Commissioner's work programme is aligned to legislative, policy and practice developments for children and young people in Jersey and is informed by research and best practice developments worldwide.
- To support the OCCJ in maximising its impact and influence across the Island, and beyond, as appropriate, thereby supporting the independence of the Commissioner's role and preventing isolation.
- To promote the work of the OCCJ when appropriate to do so.

Membership and Criteria for Appointment

- The Advisory Panel will comprise a group of experienced professional from across the children's and youth sectors and wider civil society, both locally and internationally, each of whom will bring specific expertise and knowledge to the Panel.
- The Panel should be made up of eight to ten members.
- The Commissioner retains discretion over the appointment of one additional member (aged 18 or over) who has previously participated in the work of the Youth Advisory Panel.

Experience, Knowledge and Skills

- With a view to achieving a balance and range of experience, knowledge and skills across the Adult Advisory Panel, the following criteria apply when appointing new members to the Panel.
 - Knowledge of the international legal instruments relating to children's and young people's human rights or an express commitment to gaining such knowledge.
 - Knowledge of the role, remit, powers and duties of the OCCJ as defined in legislation.
 - Proven ability to inform and influence relevant service development and delivery, policy and/or legislation through engagement at the highest level.
 - Knowledge of the particular context and service, policy and/or legal landscape of Jersey as pertains to the rights of children and young people, or an express



commitment to gaining such knowledge.

- In addition to the above, members of the Adult Advisory Panel will be expected to have **one or more** of the following.
 - A track record of excellence in strategic policy and delivery in the voluntary, private or public sector.
 - A track record of strategic or operational performance to support services relevant to children, young people and families at a senior level.
 - Proven knowledge and experience of engagement with public policymaking, legislative change or public affairs.
 - Experience of engagement with international human rights bodies.
 - Lived experience or professional expertise of one or more of the following: poverty; disability; care; educational disadvantage; youth justice or detention; mental health challenges or other forms of disadvantage or discrimination.

Appointment Process

- Applications for membership will be advertised by the OCCJ via its website, social media platforms and direct contact with a wide range of organisations both in Jersey and abroad.
- Applicants are required to submit a brief application that includes a short CV of relevant expertise and experience, as well as the rationale for seeking appointment.
- If a surplus of applications is received, the OCCJ will conduct a selection process based on the criteria set out above and requirements for achieving a balance of knowledge and expertise on the Panel. This will be done in consultation with existing or prior members of the Adult Advisory Panel.
- If insufficient applications are received, the OCCJ may approach individual organisations and/or individuals with a view to achieving a balanced Panel.
- Appointment is by formal invitation from the Commissioner.

Conduct of the Adult Advisory Panel

- Panel Members will conduct themselves in accordance with the Seven Principles of Public Life (the 'Nolan Principles') in discharging the functions of the Panel.
- Panel positions are not remunerated, and members will give their time pro bono. Expenses incurred as a member will be reimbursed on proof of having been incurred in the fulfilment of business for the Advisory Panel. All expenses claims must comply



with the regulations contained in the OCCJ's published Financial Procedures.

- A member of the Advisory Panel may at any time, and in writing, stand down from the Panel by giving three months' notice of the intention to leave.
- If the Commissioner deems it necessary to remove an Advisory Panel member – in the unlikely event that such an issue should arise, as a result of exceptional circumstances and only on the grounds of firm evidence – the Commissioner will write to the individual concerned stating, in detail, the reasons for terminating membership, and allowing 20 working days for the member to respond in writing.

Conflict of Interest

- Where any potential conflict arises between a member's role on the Adult Advisory Panel and any other professional, personal or voluntary activities or commitments, this must be declared by the member at the earliest possible opportunity.
- Panel members will not be contracted or commissioned for work by the OCCJ. Should a member wish to be considered for such work or be requested by the OCCJ to undertake paid work, they must remove themselves from the Panel for the duration of the project. This is to maintain the independence of Panel members in their fulfilment of either role.

Indemnity of Panel Members

- The Advisory Panel is not accountable for the policies, financial or other management affairs of the OCCJ.
- Individual members of the Advisory Panel carry no personal liabilities or risks for the work, policies or positions of the OCCJ.

Conduct of meetings and attendance expectations

- The Commissioner will chair meetings. In exceptional circumstances, when the Commissioner is unavailable, meetings will be chaired by a nominated staff member.
- Secretariat will be provided by the OCCJ and brief notes of meetings will be recorded and shared.
- The Advisory Panel will meet at least four times per annum. Dates will be published one year in advance and will not be subsequently changed unless in exceptional circumstances.
- Meetings will, in the main, be held online with a minimum of one in-person meeting per annum. The timing of the in-person meeting will be decided between the Commissioner and the Panel members to allow for maximum in-person attendance.



Where Panel members are unable to attend this in-person meeting, they may attend this online.

- Panel members are expected to attend a minimum of three meetings per annum. Where a member cannot meet this commitment for any reason, the Commissioner should be notified at the earliest opportunity.
- A quorum of at least 50% of Panel members, in addition to the Commissioner or nominated representative, is required for meetings to proceed.
- The Commissioner (or, in exceptional circumstances, a nominated staff representative), the Executive Assistant and other members of staff, as appropriate, will attend meetings. However, the Commissioner or any member of the Panel may request a confidential meeting or part of a meeting solely with the Commissioner and Panel members.
- Additional meetings of the Panel or agreed sub-groups may be arranged as required to address issues arising or in the interest of progressing specific pieces of work.
- Members are expected to be available between meetings via email or phone, on a limited basis, only as necessary and with the agreement of the Panel member.

Tenure

- Membership of the Advisory Panel is for three years with the option of one twelve-month extension, as agreed with the Commissioner and Panel members.

Review of Terms of Reference

- These Terms of Reference will be reviewed every three years.