



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee

Mairi Gougeon MSP
Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands

Thursday 14 November 2024

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

Scottish Government candidates for appointment to the Scottish Land Commission

The appointment of Scottish Land Commissioners and the Tenant Farming Commissioner are subject to Parliamentary approval under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016. In practice, during this Parliamentary session, it falls to the Net Zero, Energy and Transport (NZET) Committee to make a recommendation to the Parliament on whether to approve any Scottish Government nominees.

You notified the Committee of the [end of the tenure of the current Tenant Farming Commissioner and two Scottish Land Commissioners](#) in April this year. The Committee considered [recruitment information](#) pertaining to the role of the Committee and Parliament in the appointment process in June.

A recruitment process took place over the summer and in October you wrote to the Committee notifying the Scottish Government's three candidates for appointment, together with information about the candidates and the process followed. (I have annexed this information to support Members consideration of Chamber motion.) They are—

- Dr Lucy Beattie (Land Commissioner)
- Dr Calum MacLeod (Land Commissioner)
- Robert Black (Tenant Farming Commissioner)

The Committee considered the letter and the supporting information at our meeting on 5 November. In order to ensure due diligence, we agreed to invite the three candidates to take part in a short public evidence session on 12 November.

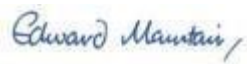
Following the evidence session, the Committee discussed the proposed appointments. This was followed by a vote. Six Members agreed to recommend the approval of the candidates, being satisfied that the appointment process appeared

Contact: Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee, The Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, EH99 1SP. Email netzero.committee@parliament.scot. We welcome calls through Relay UK and in BSL through Contact Scotland BSL.

adequately robust and that the nominees appeared suitably qualified, including having regard to the specific requirements for Commissioners set out in the 2016 Act. One Member¹ abstained on the basis of some doubts about aspects of the appointment process. There were no votes against recommending that the nominees be appointed.

As well as informing you of the outcome of the Committee's decision, I hope that this letter (which will be published), will be of assistance to MSPs in providing some background information on the appointments process and on the Committee's decision, prior to the motion being taken in the Chamber next week.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Edward Mountain".

**Edward Mountain MSP
Convener**

¹ Douglas Lumsden MSP

Annexe

Annexe A – Letter from the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands on the proposed candidates – 17 October 2024

17 October 2024

Dear Edward,

Scottish Land Commission: Appointment of Land Commissioners and Tenant Farming Commissioner – Recommendations

I wrote to you and your Committee on 15 April to agree the approach to appoint two new Land Commissioners and a new Tenant Farming Commissioner to the Scottish Land Commission (“SLC”); on 10 June with the draft application packs; and most recently on 19 September with further information on the oversight provided by the Ethical Standards Commissioner for Public Life in Scotland.

I am grateful to you and your Committee for your ongoing engagement and support on this appointment round. Following a successful recruitment exercise, which attracted 25 applications for the roles of Land Commissioner and 4 applications for the role of Tenant Farming Commissioner, I am pleased to propose to Parliament the following candidates:

Dr Lucy Beattie (Land Commissioner)
Dr Calum MacLeod (Land Commissioner)
Robert Black (Tenant Farming Commissioner)

As detailed in my previous correspondence and in accordance with the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016, appointments to the SLC are subject to Parliamentary approval. As such, I am writing to seek Parliamentary approval of the aforementioned candidates via the Net Zero, Energy and Transport Committee.

Appointments to the SLC are regulated by the Ethical Standards Commissioner for Public Life in Scotland and I can assure the Committee that the appointments process has been conducted in line with the Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies in Scotland (“the Code”), as well as in compliance with the terms of the Act.

Furthermore, the Scottish Government’s Public Appointments Team provided oversight of the appointment process. The assessment process was supported by a Public Appointments Adviser, appointed by the Ethical Standards Commissioner, who was a member of the selection panel.

For assurance purposes and to support the Parliament in its role in approving these appointments, the following supporting information is set out in Annexes A – D:

- ANNEX A: Scottish Government’s approach to the appointment process
- ANNEX B: Person Specification – Land Commissioners
- ANNEX C: Person Specification – Tenant Farming Commissioner

- ANNEX D: Candidate career history and panel recommendation

This supporting information contains details, as requested by the Committee in your letter of 27 June of how these nominees meet the requirements of section 11 of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016, including the reasonable steps taken to ensure the Board includes a Gaelic speaker.

Should the Scottish Parliament deem the proposed candidates suitable for appointment, the appointees will be appointed for a period not exceeding 5 years in accordance with Part 2, Chapter 1, section 10(3) of the Act.

I hope that the information enclosed will enable the Parliament to make an informed decision on the proposed candidates.

I am confident that the Parliamentary stage of the process will be a positive part of these nationally important appointments, and I am grateful for your support to ensure that there is appropriate Parliamentary scrutiny in line with the requirements of the Act.

Yours sincerely,

MAIRI GOUGEON

ANNEX A – Scottish Government’s approach to the appointment process

Appointments to Scottish Land Commission: Statement to Scottish Parliament under section 11(4) of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016 – October 2024

Scottish Government’s approach to the appointment process

1. This Report is laid in accordance with section 11(4) of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016 (‘the Act’). It is a statement of how the Scottish Ministers have complied with their statutory duties under section 11(1) to (3) of the Act.
2. The Scottish Ministers consider that the various steps taken through the appointments process, in particular the recommendations made by the selection panel and the final consideration by the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs, Land Reform and Islands, demonstrate compliance with the relevant duties.
3. As well as complying with the terms of the Act, the appointments process was regulated by the Ethical Standards Commissioner, and followed the principles of the Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies in Scotland (‘the Code’).
4. Section 10(2) of the Act states that the Scottish Ministers may appoint a person as a member only if the Scottish Parliament has approved the appointment.
5. This Report is set out in three parts, one part for each duty contained within section 11(1) to (3).

Section 11(1), and the appointment process

6. Section 11(1) of the Act provides that in appointing members to the Commission, the Scottish Ministers must –
 - (a) have regard among other things to the desirability of the Commission (taken as a whole) having expertise or experience in –
 - i. land reform,
 - ii. law,
 - iii. finance,
 - iv. economic issues,
 - v. planning and development,
 - vi. land management,
 - vii. community empowerment,
 - viii. environmental issues,
 - ix. human rights,
 - x. equal opportunities,
 - xi. the reduction of inequalities of outcome which result from socio-economic disadvantage, and
 - (b) encourage equal opportunities and in particular the observance of the equal opportunity requirements.
7. The Scottish Ministers have sought throughout the appointments process to seek to ensure that the competencies of the Commissioners who are appointed will help ensure that the Commission as whole has expertise or experience in the desired matters. The first part of

this duty is to have regard to among other things the desirability of the Commission (taken as whole) having expertise or experience in the areas that are listed.

The selection criteria used

8. The Code provides that when considering any appointment the Scottish Ministers will determine what skills, knowledge, experience and other attributes are needed by the Board for it to perform its statutory functions, and to do so economically, efficiently and effectively.
9. Taking into account the areas of expertise set out in section 11(1), section 11(2) and the criteria identified by the selection panel to support an effective Board, the skills, knowledge and experience of the continuing Land Commissioners and Chair, and any gaps left by the departing two Land Commissioners and Tenant Farming Commissioner, Ministers agreed the following selection criteria for the **Land Commissioners**:

Priority Criteria (at least one must be met)

- Human Rights and Equal Opportunities
- Stakeholder Engagement and Community Empowerment

Essential criteria (all must be met)

- Land Reform
- Strategic thinking and judgement
- Communication, influence and constructive challenge
- Teamwork and collaboration

Desirable criteria (not mandatory)

- Gaelic

10. Taking into account the areas of expertise set out in section 11(1), section 11(3) and the criteria identified by the selection panel to support an effective Board, the skills, knowledge and experience of the continuing Land Commissioners and Chair, and any gaps left by the departing two Land Commissioners and Tenant Farming Commissioner, Ministers agreed the following selection criteria for the **Tenant Farming Commissioner**:

Priority Criteria (both must be met)

- Agriculture
- Mediation

Essential criteria (all must be met)

- Strategic thinking and oversight
- Communication, influence and constructive challenge
- Teamwork and collaboration

Desirable criteria (not mandatory)

- Gaelic speaker

11. These selection criteria were set out in the applicant information packs for the Land Commissioners and Tenant Farming Commissioner, and applicants were asked to provide evidence of some of these in their submitted application forms, with others to be tested at interview, as indicated in the person specification.

Appointment Plan and Advertising

12. The Code requires that the selection panel agree an appointment plan containing the publicity, application and assessment methods to be used. The application and assessment methods and any positive action measures selected will be based on evidence of what works well to attract and lead to the appointment of a diverse range of able applicants, taking account of relevant information held by, maintained and regularly updated by the Scottish Government for this purpose. The appointment plan also contains a timetable specifying key dates within the round.
13. The Code requires that 'all materials to be made available to prospective applicants, such as publicity or advertisements about posts, details about posts, the assessment criteria to be applied, and the application forms (or equivalent), should be clearly and plainly drafted using simple, easy to understand, language. The objective is to encourage a wide range of people to apply for positions and for people to find it a comparatively easy exercise to submit applications'.
14. The application forms and information packs were compiled to reflect the selection criteria, and the posts were advertised in accordance with the agreed appointment plan.
15. The posts were advertised on the Scottish Government Public Appointments website www.appointed-for-scotland.org on Tuesday 2 July.
16. To augment this approach, the Scottish Government arranged for the advertisement to be circulated to a wide list of stakeholders, covering professional membership organisations, NGOs and public and private sector companies covering a wide number of subject areas. The Scottish Government and the Scottish Land Commission also promoted the board vacancies via linkedin and social media channels.
17. The SLC organised an online outreach event which 32 people signed up to and was hosted by the Chair of the SLC and an additional Land Commissioner. A number of candidates had additional 1:1 discussions with an existing commissioner. The application information pack for the Land Commissioner posts contained details of a current Land Commissioner from whom potential applicants could seek more information about the roles, and the application information pack for the Tenant Farming Commissioner post contained details of the current Tenant Farming Commissioner from whom potential applicants could seek more information about the role.
18. Letters from the Cabinet Secretary were sent to the following stakeholders to raise awareness of the appointments round: Community Land Scotland, Development Trusts Association Scotland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, South of Scotland Enterprise, Scottish Land & Estates, National Farmers Union Scotland, Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors Scotland, Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations, Institute of Directors Scotland, Social Enterprise Scotland, Bòrd na Gàidhlig, Scottish Tenant Farmers Association, Quality Meat Scotland, Changing the Chemistry, RSABI, Women in Agriculture Scotland, SAAVA, Agricultural Law Association and Lantra Scotland.

Shortlisting for interviews

19. Applications were anonymised prior to shortlisting. Prior to the shortlisting meeting the selection panel read the conflict of interest declarations made by the applicants. They noted that applicant No. 5 had declared Scottish National Party (SNP) membership and that they had stood for Westminster Parliamentary elections in July 2024. The candidate noted that they knew of Mr Russell 'from [their] previous work with the Scottish Crofting Federation and from my attendance at SNP conference in Inverness'. Mr Russell confirmed that he

had never knowingly spoken directly to the candidate. Applicant No. 15 declared that they knew Fiona Harrison and Mr Russell in a professional capacity.

20. Mr Russell confirmed that he did not have a professional or personal relationship with Applicant No.5. Fiona Harrison and Mr Russell confirmed that the relationship with Applicant No.15 was purely a professional working relationship which was not close.
21. Following advice from the Ethical Standards Commissioner concerning applicant No. 5, Mr Russell recused himself from the shortlisting for the Scottish Land Commissioner roles whilst further consideration could be given to candidate 5's disclosure that they knew of Mr Russell from attendance at SNP conference.
22. The full selection panel considered all of the applications received for the Tenant Farming Commissioner role.
23. Applications were assessed against the above criteria. In line with the Code, panel members received guidance on how they might score the evidence of each criteria provided by the applicants. Panel members used the markings to draw up a shortlist of applicants for interview. Decisions were based on an objective assessment of the applicant's suitability for the advertised posts.
24. Throughout the sift, the panel took account of the particular requirements in section 11(1) of the Act. In selecting the Land Commissioner candidates for interview, the panel assessed the application forms against the priority criteria of Human Rights and Equal Opportunities, and/or Stakeholder Engagement and Community Empowerment in addition to selected essential criteria which included knowledge and understanding of Land Reform. The Panel were satisfied that the candidates selected for interview met the requirements.
25. Seven people (including applicant No.5) were shortlisted for the Land Commissioner interviews and three people were selected for Tenant Farmer interviews.
26. All applicants were notified of the outcome of the shortlisting meeting.
27. The Cabinet Secretary considered advice from the Ethical Standards Commissioner and decided that Mr Russell should be involved in the interviews for both Land Commissioner and Tenant Farming Commissioner roles.

The interviews

28. Interviews were held on 25, 26 and 27 September. Candidates were invited to deliver a prepared response to an exercise issued a week prior to the interview, and to answer a series of questions. This approach is aligned to the Code's requirements that the assessment methods used to assess applicants will ensure that the most able people on merit are identified and recommended for appointment. The Code provides that the selection panel will assess the merits of applicants against the skills, knowledge and experience needed using the methods agreed and specified in the application pack. The Code requires that no new requirements should be introduced during the appointment round.
29. Before interview, the candidates for Land Commissioner were provided with an example board paper and advised in writing that the process would include a five minute response followed by up to five minutes of questions on the following:

You are preparing for a board meeting. One of the agenda items is a board paper on Land for Rural Housing that has been provided to you.

Please explain in no more than 5 minutes:

- (i) key issues and points that you wish to discuss and would be ready to raise during the meeting*
- (ii) your initial conclusions on this topic and item*

30. The candidates for Tenant Farming Commissioner were provided with an anonymised case study and advised in writing that the process would include a five minute discussion on the following:

A core part of the TFC role is resolving disputes through mediation. You have been provided with an anonymised case study of the type of dispute that can come to the TFC.

Please explain in no more than 5 minutes:

- (i) key issues that will need to be resolved to agree a solution*
- (ii) your thoughts on how you would deal with this case*

31. The interviews conducted by the selection panel were used to identify the applicants who demonstrated the skills, knowledge and experience required to be effective in the role.

Scottish Ministers' consideration

32. Following the conclusion of the interviews, the selection panel identified the applicants who had demonstrated the skills, knowledge and experience required. The selection panel agreed an applicant summary for each applicant and provided those of the most able recommended candidates to the appointing Cabinet Secretary. The summary set out the panel's assessment of how each applicant demonstrated the skills, knowledge and experience required to be effective in the role. The applicant summary was based on the information provided by each applicant during the appointment round and was intended to be sufficiently detailed to:

- i. Identify to the appointing Cabinet Secretary the most able applicants and
- ii. Provide evidence that the panel's assessments were valid.

33. The conclusion of the process involved the appointing Cabinet Secretary considering the candidates who the selection panel recommended as most able and who, subject to approval by the Scottish Parliament, should be appointed to the Commission.

34. Of the candidates selected for appointment as Land Commissioners by Scottish Ministers, Dr Lucy Beattie provided exceptional evidence in relation to Community Empowerment and Dr Calum MacLeod provided exceptional evidence in relation to Human Rights and Equal Opportunities. Both provided exceptional evidence in relation to Land Reform.

35. The Act provides at 11(1)(b) that in appointing members to the Commission Scottish Ministers must encourage equal opportunities and in particular the observance of the equal opportunities as defined in schedule 5 of the Scotland Act 1998. The selection panel and the Cabinet Secretary took account of this requirement throughout the appointments process, including offering a Guaranteed Interview Scheme and anonymised applications.

Section 11(2)

36. Section 11(2) provides that: 'In appointing the Land Commissioners, the Scottish Ministers must take every reasonable step to ensure that at least one of the Commissioners is a speaker of the Gaelic language'.
37. The aspects of the appointments process where particular consideration was given to fulfilling the requirement in section 11(2) are set out below.
38. The appointment panel also decided to apply the same consideration to the appointment of the Tenant Farming Commissioner.

The selection criteria used

- Detail in relation to the selection criteria used is set out above. The selection panel recommended to Scottish Ministers that the ability to speak the Gaelic language should be a desirable criteria but not mandatory, so as not to narrow the pool of applicants with other relevant skills and experience. The application form asked applicants to provide evidence of an ability to speak and understand the Gaelic language and culture, and an awareness of the significance of land use in Gaelic culture.

Appointment Plan and Advertising

- Detail in relation to the steps undertaken in terms of the appointment plan and advertising is set out above. In addition, the advertisements were translated into Gaelic and signposted from the English language advertisements.

Shortlisting for interviews

- Detail in relation to shortlisting for interviews is set out above. Throughout the shortlisting, the panel took account of the particular requirements in section 11(2) of the Act.

The interviews and Scottish Ministers' consideration

- Detail in relation to the interviews and Scottish Ministers' consideration is set out above. The application form asked candidates to provide an assessment of their ability to speak and understand the Gaelic language and culture, and their awareness of the significance of land use in Gaelic culture, and this was probed at interview.
- One of the candidates selected by Scottish Ministers for the post of Land Commissioner, Dr Calum MacLeod, is a native Gaelic speaker. The other candidate selected by Scottish Ministers for the post of Land Commissioner, Dr Lucy Beattie, does not speak it but is a Gaelic learner.

Section 11(3)

39. Section 11(3) provides that: 'In appointing the Tenant Farming Commissioner; the Scottish Ministers must ensure that the person appointed has expertise or experience in agriculture.'
40. The aspects of the appointments process where particular consideration was given to fulfilling the requirement in section 11(3) are set out below.

The selection criteria used

- Detail in relation to the selection criteria used is set out above. This included a requirement to demonstrate evidence of the priority criteria of Agriculture. The person specification set out that this meant expertise and/or experience in agriculture, and an understanding or knowledge of agricultural holdings legislation in Scotland, and how this impacts on landlords and tenants, including small landholdings.

Appointment Plan and Advertising

- Detail in relation to the steps undertaken in terms of the appointment plan and advertising is set out above. This included the option for interested parties to speak to the current Tenant Farming Commissioner, and the issuing of the Cabinet Secretary's letter to a number of agricultural stakeholders.

Shortlisting for interviews

- Detail in relation to shortlisting for interviews is set out above. Throughout the shortlisting for the Tenant Farming Commissioner post, the panel took account of the particular requirement in section 11(3) of the Act. The requirement for applicants to demonstrate evidence of the priority criteria of Agriculture in the application form meant that only those with expertise and/or experience in agriculture were shortlisted for interview. Applicants were also asked to outline relevant experience in a tailored career history.

The interviews and Scottish Ministers' consideration

- Detail in relation to the interviews and Scottish Ministers' consideration is set out above. In relation to the specific requirement set out in section 11(3), the candidates for Tenant Farming Commissioner were asked to demonstrate their expertise and/or experience in agriculture. This, coupled with the anonymised case study they were asked to prepare for in advance, as detailed earlier, allowed them to provide evidence to the panel of their expertise and/or experience in agriculture and experience of mediation, and their understanding or knowledge of agricultural holdings legislation in Scotland, and how this impacts on landlords and tenants, including small landholdings
- The candidate selected by Scottish Ministers to be appointed as Tenant Farming Commissioner, Robert Black, demonstrated exceptional evidence of mediation and has expertise in agriculture.

Selection Panel Recommendation

Scottish Ministers have considered and agreed the recommendations of the selection panel and recommend the following candidates to the Scottish Parliament for appointment as Land Commissioners and Tenant Farming Commissioner of the SLC:

Land Commissioner – Dr Lucy Beattie

Land Commissioner – Dr Calum MacLeod

Tenant Farming Commissioner – Robert Black

ANNEX B – Person Specification – Land Commissioner

Person specification

What skills, experience and personal qualities do we need Land Commissioners to have?

This section provides information on the skills, experience and knowledge required for Land Commissioners of the Scottish Land Commission and how these will be assessed in the recruitment process.

In providing the evidence sought, you can draw on examples from your working and/or personal life, or through your participation with a private, public, voluntary, charity or community organisation.

There are two mandatory sections (Sections A and B) in the person specification and one optional section (Section C), so please consider these carefully when completing your application.

In respect of these posts, the priority criteria are weighted over the essential criteria (once met), and of the candidate or candidates who meet the essential criteria, those that provide the strongest evidence against at least one of the priority criteria will be considered most able to fulfil the role. In the event that candidates provide evidence of equal merit against the priority criteria, the panel will then take into account the strength of the evidence presented against the essential criteria in determining the candidate(s) most able to fulfil the role. The Minister will appoint a combination of candidates as Land Commissioners who together most closely meet the priority criteria in order to achieve the right balance of skills, knowledge and experience on the Board.

- 1. Section A – Priority Criteria:** applicants for Land Commissioner **must** be able to demonstrate evidence of **at least one** of the priority criteria in order to be considered for appointment.
- 2. Section B – Essential Criteria:** applicants for Land Commissioner **must** be able to demonstrate evidence of **all** of these essential criteria in order to be considered for appointment.
- 3. Section C – Desirable Criterion:** it is desirable to appoint an additional Gaelic speaker to the Board although this is not an essential requirement.

If you also wish to be considered for the Tenant Farming Commissioner role as well as a Land Commissioner role, you will need to submit a separate application form for the Tenant Farming Commissioner.

Please note the word limits in each case. Any words in excess of the limits will not be taken into account in assessing your application. **Evidence provided in a tailored career history should be no more than 400 words in total.** Full details on how to apply are set out on page 11 of the pack and in the application form.

Section A

Applicants wishing to be considered for the role of Land Commissioner must demonstrate **evidence of at least one of the two priority criteria below.** You are asked to consider which of the priority criteria listed best fit your skills, knowledge and experience. If appropriate, you can provide evidence against more than one of these priority criteria.

Knowledge, experience and skills required	What does it mean?	Where it will be tested
Human Rights and Equal Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of human rights law in relation to one or more of the following: property, ECHR, contract law, or devolved competence • Experience and understanding of the relationship between land reform, environment, human rights, social and economic wellbeing • Track record of enabling and promoting equality of opportunity 	<p>You will have up to 300 words in your application form to provide evidence against this criterion and you will also be asked to outline relevant experience in a tailored career history.</p> <p>We will also discuss this at interview, if you are shortlisted.</p>
Stakeholder Engagement and Community Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of community empowerment issues, including in relation to ownership, engagement, and wealth building • Experience of working with stakeholders and/or community groups and ensuring all voices are heard • Experience of bringing people together to build consensus and achieve outcomes 	<p>You will have up to 300 words in your application form to provide evidence against this criterion and you will also be asked to outline relevant experience in a tailored career history.</p> <p>We will also discuss this at interview, if you are shortlisted.</p>

Section B

All applicants **must** demonstrate evidence of **all** of the essential criteria listed below.

Knowledge, experience and skills required	What does it mean?	Where it will be tested
Land Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of the role of the Scottish Land Commission in urban and rural land policy • Knowledge of statutory and policy issues relating to land reform • Understanding of external factors impacting on land policy in Scotland 	You will have up to 300 words in your application form to provide evidence against this criterion. We will also discuss this at interview , if you are shortlisted.
Strategic thinking and judgement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to look ahead and consider issues over the short, medium and long term and identify relevant implications • Able to evaluate organisational performance • Skilled at weighing up evidence and balancing a number of considerations to make reasoned judgements 	We will assess this at interview , if you are shortlisted, as part of the practical exercise .
Communication, influence and constructive challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to communicate and influence effectively with different audiences and in public settings • Able to challenge constructively, particularly in a Board or group setting 	We will assess this at interview , if you are shortlisted, as part of the practical exercise .
Teamwork and collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of collaborating with others to achieve shared objectives • Able to build a range of effective working relationships 	We will assess this at interview , if you are shortlisted.

Section C

It would be desirable to the Board if you could evidence the following:

Knowledge, experience and skills required	What does it mean?	Where it will be tested
Gaelic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Able to speak and understand the Gaelic language and culture• An awareness of the significance of land use in Gaelic culture	You will have up to 300 words in your application form to provide evidence against this criterion (if applicable) and this may be discussed at interview if you are shortlisted.

ANNEX C – Person Specification – Tenant Farming Commissioner

Person specification

What skills, experience & personal qualities does the Tenant Farming Commissioner need to have?

This section provides information on the skills, experience and knowledge required for the Tenant Farming Commissioner (TFC) and how these will be assessed in the recruitment process. The TFC will need to bring specific skills and experience to the role and it is a statutory requirement that the TFC must have expertise or experience in agriculture, as set out in section 11 of [the Land Reform \(Scotland\) Act 2016](#). Section 12 also states that a person may not be appointed as the TFC if they are the owner or tenant of land subject to a relevant tenancy. An explanation of 'relevant tenancy' is set out in section 12(3).

In providing the evidence sought, you can draw on examples from your working and/or personal life, or through your participation with a private, public, voluntary, charity or community organisation.

There are two mandatory sections (Sections A and B) in the person specification and one optional section (Section C), so please consider these carefully when completing your application.

In respect of this post, the priority criteria are weighted over the essential criteria (once met), and of the candidate or candidates who meet the essential criteria, those that provide the strongest evidence against both the priority criteria will be considered most able to fulfil the role. In the event that candidates provide evidence of equal merit against the priority criteria, the panel will then take into account the strength of the evidence presented against the essential criteria in determining the candidate(s) most able to fulfil the role.

- 1. Section A – Priority Criteria:** applicants for Tenant Farming Commissioner **must** be able to demonstrate evidence of **both** of the priority criteria in order to be considered for appointment.
- 2. Section B – Essential Criteria:** applicants for Tenant Farming Commissioner **must** be able to demonstrate evidence of **all** of these essential criteria in order to be considered for appointment.
- 3. Section C – Desirable Criterion:** it is desirable to appoint an additional Gaelic speaker to the Board although this is not an essential requirement.

If you also wish to be considered for a Land Commissioner role as well as this TFC role, you will need to submit a separate application form.

Please note the word limits in each case. Any words in excess of the limits will not be taken into account in assessing your application. Evidence provided in a tailored career history should be no more than 400 words in total. Full details on how to apply are set out on page 13 of the pack and in the application form.

Section A

Applicants wishing to be considered for the role of Tenant Farming Commissioner must demonstrate **evidence of both priority criteria below.**

Knowledge, experience and skills required	What does it mean?	Where it will be tested
Agriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expertise and/or experience in agriculture • An understanding or knowledge of agricultural holdings legislation in Scotland, and how this impacts on landlords and tenants, including small landholdings 	<p>You will have up to 300 words in your application form to provide evidence against this criterion and you will also be asked to outline relevant experience in a tailored career history. We will also discuss this at interview, if you are shortlisted.</p>
Mediation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of facilitating negotiations and mediating to avoid disputes and to assist with and enable dispute resolution • Able to see beyond a particular perspective and to help others consider their own position in a non-confrontational way 	<p>You will have up to 300 words in your application form to provide evidence against this criterion and you will also be asked to outline relevant experience in a tailored career history. We will also discuss this at interview, if you are shortlisted, and it will be assessed as part of the practical exercise.</p>

Section B

All applicants **must** demonstrate evidence of **all** of the essential criteria listed below.

Knowledge, experience and skills required	What does it mean?	Where it will be tested
Strategic thinking and oversight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to look ahead and consider issues over the short, medium and long term and identify relevant implications • Able to evaluate organisational performance 	<p>You will have up to 300 words in your application form to provide evidence against this criterion and you will also be asked to outline any relevant experience in a tailored career history. We will also discuss this at interview, if you are shortlisted.</p>
Communication, influence and constructive challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to communicate effectively with different audiences and in public settings • Able to influence colleagues and stakeholders, and to adapt your style appropriately • Confident in questioning proposals and debating issues, able to challenge constructively, and able to put forward views in an objective way 	<p>We will discuss this at interview, if you are shortlisted, and it will be assessed as part of the practical exercise.</p>
Teamwork and collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience of collaborating with others to achieve shared objectives • Able to build a range of effective working relationships • Striving to achieve consensus but accept collective decisions, even if going against a personal view 	<p>You will have up to 300 words in your application form to provide evidence against this criterion and you will also be asked to outline relevant experience in a tailored career history. We will also discuss this at interview, if you are shortlisted.</p>
Sound judgement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to weigh up all available evidence and balance a number of considerations within the wider context. • Confident analysing information, making reasoned judgements and articulating and 	<p>We will discuss this at interview, if you are shortlisted. and it will be assessed as part of the practical exercise</p>

	justifying their rationale.	
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Section C

It would be desirable to the Board if you could evidence the following:

Knowledge, experience and skills required	What does it mean?	Where it will be tested
Gaelic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to speak and understand the Gaelic language and culture • An awareness of the significance of land use in Gaelic culture 	You will have up to 300 words in your application form to provide evidence against this criterion (if applicable) and this may be discussed at interview if you are shortlisted.

ANNEX D - Candidate Career History and Panel Recommendation

1. The recommended appointees have provided the following tailored career history summaries as part of their application, which outline their relevant experience and suitability for the aforementioned board positions.
2. Copies of the full application forms submitted by the recommended appointees can be provided to the Committee if required.

Land Commissioner – Dr Lucy Beattie – Tailored Career History

- **University of Edinburgh – Teaching Fellow**

March 2024 – to date

- Research, teaching and supervision of students on the MSc Science Communication Programme part-time 0.4FTE.

- **Glasgow Caledonian University – Supply Lecturer**

May 2024 – to date

- Dissertation supervision of students MSc Business and International Development part-time 0.4FTE.

- **University of the West of Scotland - PhD Student (Scottish Government internship)**

October 2020 – May 2024

- I was funded as a stipendiary student to investigate the connections between research, teaching and public engagement in STEM. I have published in three academic journals to date and presented at three conferences: the Arctic Circle Assembly 2022, The International Autoethnography Conference 2022, OER23 and PCST23 in Rotterdam.
- In May 2023 I undertook a 3-month internship sponsored by SGSSS. This focused on work unconnected to my PhD and I was placed with RESAS to investigate long-term behaviour change in agriculture in relation to net zero targets. My duties included conducting a rapid review of literature and producing a policy briefing note.

- **The Scottish Crofting Federation - Training and Development Manager**

May 2012 – October 2020

- I was a regular contributor to the Crofter magazine, and I worked as a volunteer caseworker until October 2023. I was project manager of several development schemes that worked with over 2,000 crofters and stakeholders.
- 2019 – 2020 Gaining Ground: LEADER+ funded project to develop social farming and crofting network in Moray and the Highlands.
- 2018 – 2019 NEWBIE Project: James Hutton Institute advisory panel member to support stakeholder involvement with an interdisciplinary project funded by EU working with several European academic partners to promote new entrants to agriculture.
- 2018 – 2019 SOFIA Project: Working on the project team with academic and healthcare partners from Scotland, Ireland, Finland, Sweden, and

Norway. Focusing on agriculture and green care as a mechanism for the delivery of healthcare in remote and rural areas.

- 2012 – 2018 Knowledge transfer and innovation fund (KTIF): Crofting skills project.

- **TLC Consulting: Rural development consultant**

May 2011 – October 2020

- Working as a consultant within this partnership I helped to tender for and deliver projects working for the Scottish Crofting Federation, Garve and District Development Company and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
- For IUCN I investigated and co-authored a report on peatland education to undertake research relating to educational opportunities in 2019. In 2023 I spoke at the NatureScot Staff Conference *Transforming Nature and Us* and at the Ecosystems Knowledge Network *Nature Finance Scotland Forum* in Edinburgh.

Panel Recommendation

Dr Lucy Beattie submitted a well-presented application which demonstrated positive evidence of the priority and essential criteria being tested at the application stage. During the final stage of assessment Dr Beattie demonstrated acceptable evidence of human rights and equal opportunities and exceptional evidence of stakeholder engagement and community empowerment. Dr Beattie also demonstrated exceptional evidence of land reform, good evidence of strategic thinking and judgement and teamwork and collaboration, and acceptable evidence of communication, influence and constructive challenge. Dr Beattie demonstrated some evidence of Gaelic but below acceptable level.

Dr Beattie confirmed her conduct to date was compatible with this public appointment; and provided assurances she could meet the time commitment required. She also confirmed that she stood for election as a Scottish National Party MP at the most recent UK General Election and was unsuccessful. Dr Beattie confirmed that she would cease all political canvassing and campaigning and resign from her role as party chair of her constituency if appointed to the Commission.

The panel were in agreement that Dr Lucy Beattie should be recommended.

Land Commissioner – Dr Calum MacLeod – Tailored Career History

- **The Mental Health Foundation – Senior Policy and Public Affairs Officer (Scotland) (Part-time)**
July 2024-Present
- **Freelance sustainable development consultant**
2017-present, 2012-2015
 - Policy advice, feasibility studies, discussion papers

- **Community Land Scotland – Policy Director (Part-time on freelance basis)**
2018-2022
 - Policy advocacy, commissioning and managing research projects
- **University of Edinburgh – University Teacher, School of Geosciences**
2015-2017
 - Postgraduate teaching on sustainable development
- **Perth College UHI – Deputy Director, Centre for Mountain Studies**
2010-2012
 - Postgraduate teaching, research project management
- **Inverness College UHI – Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Remote and Rural Studies**
2009-2010
 - Research project management
- **Queen Margaret University – Lecturer in Public Management**
2006-2009
 - Postgraduate teaching in public management
- **Scottish Environment Protection Agency – National Advisor on Sustainable Development – European Structural Funds Partnerships**
2001-2006
 - Advice on mainstreaming sustainable development in Structural Funds Progs.
- **Blake Stevenson Ltd – Consultant in Economic and Social Research**
2000-2001
 - Economic and social research projects
- **Robert Gordon University – Lecturer in Public Policy and Management**
1995-2000
 - Undergraduate teaching in public policy and management
- **Public appointments**
 - 2022-present – MG ALBA -Board Member
 - 2008-2018 – Harris Tweed Authority – Board Member
 - 2016-2017 – Scottish Land Fund – Committee Member

Panel Recommendation

Dr Calum MacLeod submitted a well-presented application which demonstrated positive evidence of the priority, essential and desirable criteria being tested at the application stage. During the final stage of assessment Dr MacLeod demonstrated exceptional evidence of - human rights and equal opportunities and good evidence of stakeholder engagement and community empowerment. Dr MacLeod also demonstrated exceptional evidence of land reform, good evidence of communication, influence and constructive challenge and acceptable evidence of strategic thinking

and judgement and teamwork and collaboration. Finally, Dr MacLeod demonstrated exceptional evidence of Gaelic.

Dr MacLeod considered that if appointed it would not be compatible for him to be campaigning and/or advocating for issues around land reform; confirmed his conduct to date was compatible with this public appointment; provided assurances he could meet the time commitment required; and confirmed in his application that he had not been involved in any political activity in the last five years.

The panel were in agreement that Dr Calum MacLeod should be recommended.

Tenant Farming Commissioner – Robert Black – Tailored Career History

- **North West Rural Consulting – Self Employed Business**

Nov 2023 – Ongoing

- A continuation role as a rural advisor covering the same support and practices as I have in my previous consulting role, but under my own business practice.

- **Isle of Luing Community Trust - Development Manager**

Feb 2023 – Ongoing

- At present the three facets of my role cover the proposed delivery of a major development project in the reactivation of the Cullipool Slate Quarry, delivery on community led housing projects across the island, and the island carbon net zero objectives, which covers an array of smaller intertwined projects to meet this objective. In this role I am required to organise the project planning, liaise with key stakeholders, network with relevant agencies and key professionals that can help assist in the delivery of objectives. I am responsible for the concept, planning, delivery and execution of these plans and communicate in a range of formats to ensure transparency, efficiency and successful understanding of what is trying to be achieved. The overall objective of the role as agent for the trust is to facilitate the changes that will encourage economic growth, provision of jobs, housing, and suitable infrastructure as well as encourage the change in trend of rural sensitive depopulation effects to secure a future for the island community.

- **SAC Consulting - Agricultural Consultant**

Oban Jan 2016 – February 2023, Stornoway 2016 – 2019

- Covering a range of topics specifically relating to the crofting agriculture that is the main activity in the Isle of Lewis & Harris in both technical advice, legislative guidance, and grant/subsidy application. Technical advice coverage includes soil assessments, fertiliser recommendations, business management guidance, enterprise planning, rationing and animal health information. Legislative advice pertains to the labyrinth of law and regulations specific to crofting agriculture. Subsidy and grant guidance and assistance covers both crofting specific applications, such as CAGS, CHGS, as well as IACS, AECS, New Entrant, Young –farmer, BES, SUSSS, SSBSS, LEADER and other SRDP related funding.

- **Charles Rivers Laboratories - Research Scientist**

September 2014 – July 2015

- Duties are to organise animal studies, following protocol, from preliminary stages, conduction of the experiment and process and analyse results to be written in a final report. I work as part of a team. Skills include use of scientific equipment, computer-based programmes, animal handling and sample collection and processing. All the work conducted is toward GLP compliance.

Panel Recommendation

The panel were in agreement that Mr Black was a good candidate. He has a clear commitment to the issues that the Scottish Land Commission champions and demonstrated this across the assessment and overall met the criteria for appointment to a high standard.

Mr Black confirmed that he did not have any unmanageable conflicts of interest, that he could meet the time commitment for the role and that he would uphold the principles of public life.

The panel were in agreement that Mr Black should be recommended.