

# APPOINTMENT OF Chief Operating Officer AT THE LEASEHOLD ADVISORY SERVICE (LEASE)

**Information for Candidates**

These notes provide information for candidates about the appointment of Chief Operating Officer at LEASE. They provide initial background on the organisation, role description, a person specification and guidance on how to apply.

LEASE is committed to appointing on merit, seeking candidates from a diverse range of backgrounds, and taking full account of equal opportunities. Applications are particularly welcome from women, minority ethnic and disabled candidates.

The closing date for applications is 16 July 2024.

# LEASE

Set up in 1994 as a private company limited by guarantee, LEASE became an Executive Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) in 2005. Led by an independent Chair, the Board of LEASE consists of members reflecting a range of expertise and interests, who abide by the Seven Principles of Public Life (the ‘Nolan’ principles).

The Leasehold Advisory Service is a small, expert organisation that provides free advice on residential leasehold and [park homes law](https://parkhomes.lease-advice.org/). We have recently had a new and ambitious Board appointed and we are developing a radical programme of change to improve the reach and impact of the organisation and to take on the new role of consumer champion for leaseholders and park homeowners.

There are around 5 million leaseholders in England and another 160,000 park home residents who own their own homes. LEASE - an Arm’s Length Body of the Department of Levelling up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) – is tasked by Government to support these citizens to:

* make more informed decisions about their homes;
* improve their general knowledge, education and understanding of the practical implications of being a long leaseholder, common holder or park home owner;
* increase their awareness and understanding of all relevant UK and Welsh government information, legislation and reforms - including those matters relating to the building safety and fire safety legislation.

In addition to this Government has set LEASE an ambitious new remit which includes playing a consumer champion role for leaseholders by using our expert knowledge to help advise the UK and Welsh governments in law making and policy and playing more of a convening role with other organisations in the leaseholder and park home sector.

The day-to-day management of LEASE is carried out by the Chief Executive, with a staff complement consisting mainly of legally qualified advisers, supported by a small administrative team.

Staff at LEASE are public sector workers, but they are not civil servants.

Further information about LEASE is available on its website: [www.lease-](http://www.lease-advice.org/) [advice.org](http://www.lease-advice.org/).

**Information about the role - Chief Operating Officer**

We are seeking an enthusiastic and highly motivated individual to fill the vital role of

Chief Operating Officer for LEASE – the Leasehold Advisory Service. We are developing a radical programme of change to improve the reach and impact of the organisation and to take on the new role of consumer champion for leaseholders and park homeowners.

For an informal discussion contact Sally or Alice on 07834 765568 / 07790974443.

# Job Description

The Chief Operating Officer is expected to:

1. play a central role in the transformation of LEASE - from an organisation providing limited front-line legal advice to one that actively explores and champions better outcomes for the 5 million people that own leasehold homes in England. This is a radical programme of change that will make LEASE the go-to place for leaseholders and will require a significant rise in the profile of the organisation.
2. report directly to the (job-share) Chief Executives (CEs) and deputise for them when required.
3. be responsible for overseeing the overall programme of change - including the digital transformation, a new target operating model (reflecting LEASE’s enhanced role), and a new people plan.
4. ensure LEASE – in both its current and future form - is compliant across Government functional standards – including financial management.

# Person Specification

*Leadership, People, Technology*

* Lead a small team - including our digital manager and business analyst – to bring together, manage and progress the various strands of digital, data and process change that the organisation has underway.
* Develop a new operating model for the organisation working with the CEs, LEASE staff, the Board and DLUHC.
* Develop, consult on and deliver a new people plan for the organisation – with the CEOs and Remuneration Committee - including benchmarking compensation and benefits, performance evaluation, training and recruiting (working with a recently enhanced business management team and with our HR contractors).
* Procure/re-procure, manage and engage professional services to support the organisational people function.
* Ensuring a Change Plan that develops LEASE staff to deliver LEASE’s new brief, uses their expertise and embeds and supports adoption of new technologies and ways of working.

*Financial Management and Compliance*

* Analyse and present financial reports in an accurate and timely manner; clearly communicate monthly and annual financial statements; collate financial reporting materials for all grants, and oversee all financial, project/program and grants accounting - working closely with our external bookkeeper.
* Procure/re-procure, manage and engage professional services to support the organisational finance and audit functions.
* Coordinate and lead the annual audit process, liaise with external auditors and the finance committee of the board of directors; assess any changes necessary.
* Oversee and lead annual budgeting and planning process in conjunction with the CEs; administer and review all financial plans and budgets; monitor progress and changes and keep senior leadership team abreast of the organisation’s financial status.
* Implement a robust contracts management and financial management/reporting system and ensure that financial data and cash flow are steady and support operational requirements.
* Manage organisational cash flow and forecasting.
* Oversight of risk management for the organisation.
* Effectively communicate and present the critical financial matters to the board of directors, including responsibility for supporting the ARAC committee and Chair.
* Reviewing and refreshing all policies and procedures for the organisation.

## Technical and experience

Candidates should have:

* Minimum of a BA, ideally with an MBA/CPA or related degree.
* Able to demonstrate professional experience; to include senior financial or business management experience.
* The ideal candidate has experience of providing quality financial data, reporting and audit coordination for either a division or significant program area, contracting and has preferably overseen a finance function previously.
* Technology savvy with experience of managing relationships with digital teams - knowledge of accounting and reporting software.

**Competencies**

1. **Leadership**

* Promotes diversity, inclusion and equality of opportunity, respecting difference and external experience.
* Welcomes and responds to views and challenges from others, despite any conflicting pressures to ignore or give in to them.
* Seeks out shared interests beyond own area of responsibility, understanding the extent of the impact actions have on the organisation and citizens.
* Inspires and motivates teams to be fully engaged in their work and dedicated to their role.

1. **Delivering a quality service**

* Able to demonstrate positive customer service by understanding the complexity and diversity of customer needs and expectations.
* Delivers a high quality, efficient and cost effective service by considering a broad range of methods for delivery. Ensures full consideration of new technologies, accessibility and costings.
* Adheres to legal, regulatory and security requirements in service delivery. Proactively manages risks and identifies solutions.
* Establishes how the business area compares to industry best practice. Creates regular opportunities for colleagues, stakeholders, delivery partners and customers to help improve the quality of service.

1. **Changing and improving**

* Encourages, recognises and shares innovative ideas from a diverse range of colleagues and stakeholders.
* Creates an environment where people feel safe to challenge and know their voice will be heard.
* Makes changes which add value and clearly articulate how changes will benefit the business.
* Understands and identifies the role of technology in public service delivery and policy implementation.

1. **Communicating and Influencing**

* Communicates with others in a clear, honest and enthusiastic way in order to build trust.
* Can explain complex issues in a way that is easy to understand. Taking into account people’s individual needs.
* Able to deliver difficult messages with clarity and sensitivity, being persuasive when required.
* Introduces different methods for communication, including making the most of digital resources whilst getting value for money.

**Benefits & Training**

* Salary: £60,000 - £73,000 dependant on experience and qualifications
* Other benefits include:
  + 26 days holiday plus Bank Holidays
  + Professional subscriptions paid
  + 10% non-contributory pension
  + A friendly and supportive culture
* Appointment is a fixed term of 12-months, subject to three-month probationary period.
* The post is open on secondment. Part-time, flexible working and job-share applicants welcome.

# Main Terms of Appointment

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Appointment title: | Chief Operating Officer |
| Location: | The role is home based. However, you accept that you will be required to attend an office approximately once a month - and as required - for the proper performance of the role including for induction, training, supervisions, team events and team projects. This will usually be in London. |

# LEASE reserves the right not to make an appointment.

**How to Apply**

Please complete the application form along with a written statement of no more than two sides of A4 outlining your suitability for the post of Chief Operating Officer using the person specification and the required competencies. Please use examples to support your description.

Please submit **only** your completed application form and written statement marked ‘Private and Confidential’ to **Miss Nicolette Davis** by email: [recruitment@lease-](mailto:recruitment@lease-advice.org) [advice.org](mailto:recruitment@lease-advice.org).

**The closing date for applications is 16 July 2024**

# What happens next?

Applications will be considered by senior staff members. You are encouraged to become familiar with the role profile and its eligibility criteria.

The panel will draw up a shortlist of candidates and interviews are expected to take place the week commencing 22 July (we recognise that school holidays may affect availability and will make arrangements accordingly).

The interview will be conducted via online video, details of which will be provided to you should you be selected for interview.

We will try to meet the dates set out in the advert. There may be occasions when these dates will change. You will be provided with sufficient notice of the confirmed dates.

If at any stage you would like information on the progress of your application, please email: [recruitment@lease-advice.org](mailto:recruitment@lease-advice.org) or phone (020) 7832 2504.

Should you have a complaint about the way your application is handled you should contact LEASE in the first instance on [recruitment@lease-advice.org](mailto:recruitment@lease-advice.org) or phone (020) 7832 2504.

# APPLICATION FORM

**Position Applied for: Chief Operating Officer**

# Instructions for completion

The application form is separated into 7 sections. Please read each page carefully and make sure you answer every question that is relevant to you. You can continue any answer on separate sheets if you wish but must clearly mark each sheet with your name and the part of the form that it relates to.

Please use black ink and BLOCK CAPITALS, if completing this application form by hand.

The completed form should be returned by email to: [**recruitment@lease-advice.org**](mailto:recruitment@lease-advice.org)

# Please note - due to an expected high volume of applications, only successful candidates will be contacted.

**SECTION ONE – PERSONAL DETAILS**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Title |  | | | |
| Surname |  | | | |
| First name(s) |  | | | |
| Home address | Postcode: | | | |
| Telephone | Home: | | Mobile: | |
|  | Work: | | Mobile: | |
| (If applicable) | Fax: | | | |
| Which phone number would you prefer us to  use? | Home phone | Work phone | | Mobile |
| E-mail address  (If applicable) |  | | | |
| Occupation/current  position |  | | | |

# SECTION TWO – EMPLOYMENT HISTORY & QUALIFICATIONS

Please include details of your career history and other relevant experience. This might include employment, voluntary experience, involvement in the community, committee experience, board experience, and should include any public appointments held. (Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary.)

# EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Name/address of employer or  organisation | Dates from and to | Details (include position held and nature of work) |
|  |  |  |

**QUALIFICATIONS**

Please list relevant educational, professional or vocational qualifications

# OTHER INFORMATION

If there is any other general information you would like to include about your experience, personal qualities and skills, please do so here.

# SECTION THREE – PERSONAL QUALITIES, EXPERIENCE AND OTHER INFORMATION

Please include no more than two sides of A4 to describe your own skills and qualities and how you would bring these to the work of LEASE. Please use examples to support your description. You may wish to refer to the job description, person specification and criteria for the post when completing this section.

# SECTION FOUR – POTENTIAL CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

**Do you have any business or other interests or any personal connections which, if you are appointed, could be misconstrued or cause embarrassment to LEASE, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) or the Welsh Government (WG) (who co-fund LEASE), or lead to a real or perceived conflict of interest were you to be appointed? (Failure to disclose such information could result in an appointment being terminated.)**

These could include financial interests or share ownership, active connections with a field of expertise in which LEASE works, membership of societies, activities, associations or employment of a partner or friend in the field in which LEASE operates.

Key members of staff should ensure that any possible conflicts of interest are identified at an early stage and that appropriate action is taken to resolve them. No one should therefore use, or give the appearance of using, their position to further their private interests, or misuse their position as an employee of a public body to receive, agree to accept or obtain any payment or other consideration for doing, or not doing anything, or showing favour or disfavour to any person.

Any potential conflict of interest detailed here will not prevent you going forward to the interview stage but may, if appropriate, be explored with you during the interview to establish how you would address the issue(s) should you be successful in your application.

No Yes

If yes, please give details:

# DISCLOSURE

Are you, or have you ever been subject to the disciplinary process of any professional body or your employer? (Tick as appropriate)

No Yes

If yes, please give details including dates:

Have you ever been adjudicated bankrupt, made a composition with your creditors, or been sued for judgement for any debt, or are any such proceedings pending? (Tick as appropriate)

No Yes

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# SECTION FIVE - REFERENCES

Please give the details of two people who may be asked to act as referees for you. They will be expected to have authoritative and personal knowledge of your achievements. The first referee will be asked to comment on your professional achievements. The second referee will be approached as a personal referee. If references are taken up, the referees will be approached only following a successful application.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Reference One (Professional)** | **Reference Two (Personal)** |
| **Name:** | **Name:** |
| **Address:** | **Address:** |
| **Telephone:** | **Telephone:** |
| **E-mail:** | **E-mail:** |

# SECTION SIX – DECLARATION

I declare that the information given on this application is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge. I have also read the information pack and can confirm that I am eligible to be considered for the appointment of Chief Operating Officer. I also certify that I will immediately inform LEASE of any change in circumstances that affect the answers that I have given in this application.

Signed …………………………………………

Date ……………………………………………

To help us monitor the effectiveness of the way in which we publicise our appointments and plan for future recruitment rounds, please tell us how you found out about this vacancy.

# DECLARATION

I confirm that the information I have given is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, true and complete. I confirm that I understand the purpose of the monitoring form and the reasons for the collection of my personal data and that I agree to my personal data being used as stated.

Yes No

Name:.……………………………………………………….

Signature: ………………………………………………………..

Date: ….…………………………………………………….

# SECTION SEVEN – MONITORING FORM

All public bodies aim to provide fair and equal access to public appointments and to ensure that all sectors of society are represented. The questions set out in this form help us to monitor the effectiveness of this policy by gaining a picture of all those applying for and obtaining appointments.

In addition, we may also be asked to provide information - in summary form only that does not identify individuals - in response to Parliamentary Questions and other public enquiries. In line with government policy, and in accordance with the provisions of current data protection regulations the information you provide will be held confidentially, retained for no longer than necessary and only used for the purpose of assessing your application for employment with LEASE.

This form will be kept separate from your application form and will not be seen by the interview panel. Assessment of your suitability for the post is made purely on the information you give on the application form and your performance at the interview, should you be invited. Appointments are made strictly on merit. We hope that this encourages you to complete the form.

Should you have any questions please contact Miss Nicolette Davis

Telephone 020 7832 2504

E-mail: [recruitment@lease-advice.org](mailto:recruitment@lease-advice.org)

Please tick the appropriate box:

Gender: Male Female Prefer not to say

Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act defines a person as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long term (i.e. has lasted or is expected to last at least 12 months) adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Adverse effects may arise from external barriers experienced by people with impairments.

When you answer the question, you should not take into account the effect of any medication or treatments used or adjustments made (for example at work or at home) which reduce the effects of impairments. Instead, you should think about the effect the impairment would have if these were not being used or made.

Taking this into account, do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

Yes No

Should you be selected for interview will any provisions or equipment be required?

Ethnic Origin

Which group do you identify with? Please tick one box. The options are listed alphabetically.

|  |
| --- |
| **ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH** |
| Bangladeshi |
| Indian |
| Pakistani |
| Any other Asian background (Specify if you wish) |

|  |
| --- |
| **CHINESE OR OTHER ETHNIC GROUP** |
| Chinese |
| Any other Chinese background (Specify if you wish) |

|  |
| --- |
| **BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH** |
| African |
| Caribbean |
| Any other Black background (Specify if you wish) |

|  |
| --- |
| **MIXED** |
| Asian & White |
| Black African & White |
| Black Caribbean & White |
| Any other Mixed Ethnic background (Specify if you wish) |

|  |
| --- |
| **WHITE** |
| White background (Specify if you wish) |