

Information for prospective Members of the Children's Convenor and Tribunal Board

Closing date for application: **Monday 26 February 2024**





Dear
Applicant

Thank you for expressing an interest in becoming a member of the Children's Convenor and Tribunal Board.

We are looking for individuals who are passionate about improving the lives of children and young people; eager to support the work of the Children's Convenor and Child, Youth and Community Tribunal (CYCT); and who want to make a positive contribution to public service.

You do not need to have Board or Committee experience, however you must have knowledge and experience relevant to the functions of the Children's Convenor, be willing to learn and, most importantly, share our values and commitment to children and young people across the Bailiwick.

Throughout 2024, we will have three Board vacancies arising and we are looking to fill these from this recruitment exercise. In addition, our current Chairperson's term of office will come to an end in September 2024 and we are therefore also looking for individuals who would be interested in the role of Chairperson.

You will find information about the Children's Tribunal System, who we are and what we do within this pack which we hope may help you decide whether this is the role for you. Additionally, to find out more about the work of the Children's Convenor and the CYCT before applying, I would encourage you to visit our website: www.convenor.org.gg

I would also be very happy to talk to you about the role of Board member. If you would find this helpful, you can contact me on 07839 266095 or by email at Executiveofficer@gov.gg.

If you are interested in this role, please send your CV with a covering letter to the Office of the Children's Convenor at Briarwood, La Grande Rue, St Martins, GY4 6RX or via email to Executiveofficer@gov.gg by Monday 26 February 2024.

Yours sincerely

Gill Couch, Board member



The Children's Tribunal System

The Children's Tribunal System (the CTS) is a bespoke system and is unique to the Bailiwick. It was established as part of the Children (Guernsey and Alderney) Law, 2008 to protect and safeguard children and young people in Guernsey and Alderney.

The CTS is made up of four parts: the Child Youth and Community Tribunal (the Tribunal); the Office of the Children's Convenor; the Office of the President of the Tribunal; and the Convenor and Tribunal Board (the Board). The Board and the Tribunal are independent statutory bodies and the roles of Children's Convenor and President of the Tribunal are independent public offices.

The purpose of the Tribunal is to make decisions that protect children from harm and promote their health, welfare and development. The Tribunal is a legal forum and the decisions that it makes are legally binding. The Tribunal deals with the majority of children where some compulsory State intervention may be needed to ensure that they receive adequate care, protection, guidance and control.

The Children's Convenor's main responsibility is to decide when a child or young person is referred to the Tribunal. The Children's Convenor also has many other legal responsibilities relating to children and young people and the Tribunal process. The Children's Convenor also provides the administrative and executive support to the four parts of the CTS.

The President of the Tribunal's main responsibilities are to manage the work of the Tribunal and monitor and develop the performance of the members of the Tribunal.

The Board sets the overall strategic direction for the CTS and provides support and challenge to both the President and the Children's Convenor. The Board does not get involved in operational matters and is not able to make decisions that relate to or interfere with any of the statutory functions of the Children's Convenor, President of the Tribunal or Tribunal itself.

In addition to the above, the CTS relies on a number of other agencies and roles. This wider community includes the Committee for Health and Social Care, which is responsible for giving effect to the decisions of Tribunal hearings, Social Workers, Safeguarders, Teachers, Advocates, Jurats and a range of other professionals and volunteers.

We have included more information about the CTS and our values in this pack.

The role of Board Member

The role of the Board members is to provide leadership, direction, support and guidance to ensure the CTS delivers, and is committed to delivering, its collective functions effectively and efficiently. The Board works closely and collaboratively with the Children’s Convenor and President providing advice and support when required.

The Board is an independent statutory body created by the Children (Guernsey and Alderney) Law, 2008. The functions of the Board are set out in this Law and in the Children (Miscellaneous Provisions) (Guernsey and Alderney) Ordinance, 2009. These statutory functions include:

- ▶ Appointing the Children’s Convenor
- ▶ Assisting & supporting the Children’s Convenor and President of the Tribunal
- ▶ Receiving & publishing the annual reports of the Children’s Convenor & the President of the Tribunal
- ▶ Receiving & approving the Children’s Convenor’s Business Plan
- ▶ Monitoring the budget for the CTS and securing from the States of Guernsey the resources required to deliver the functions of its offices

Board members are appointed by the Committee for Health and Social Care on the recommendation of the Board. There can be no fewer than five Board members and no more than eight. Persons appointed to the role must have knowledge and experience relevant to the functions of the Children’s Convenor. Board members use their skills, knowledge and experience to support, influence and shape the CTS.





Our Board members:

- ▶ Understand the environment in which the CTS operates
- ▶ Contribute to strategic planning and decision-making
- ▶ Uphold and promote the CTS purpose and values
- ▶ Play a part in ensuring that the Children's Convenor and President have sufficient resources to deliver their statutory functions
- ▶ Ensure that the Board is following up-to-date best practice in its governance functions
- ▶ Support the Children's Convenor and Senior Management Team in delivery of the Convenor's Business Plan
- ▶ Follow the Board Members' Code of Conduct, particularly when exercising the functions of the Board, of any of its sub-committees or groups
- ▶ Establish and promote the CTS's role in the community and maintain a good relationship between the CTS and its partners/stakeholders and the general public
- ▶ Represent the CTS at conferences and other events and facilitate communication with our partners
- ▶ Attend Board meetings on a regular basis and are well prepared by reading relevant papers in advance
- ▶ Ask questions/challenge proposals made by both fellow Board members and the Senior Management Team in a constructive way to reach a view on suitability of proposals
- ▶ Take part in training sessions provided for the benefit of Board Members and keep up-to date with subjects relevant to the work of the CTS





Our Chairing Member:

- ▶ Leads the Board and chairs Board meetings
- ▶ Meets bimonthly with the President of the Tribunal and Children's Convenor
- ▶ Makes recommendations to the Committee for Health and Social Care on Board appointments
- ▶ Ensures that the work of Board members is subject to regular self-assessment and that the members are working effectively
- ▶ Makes sure Board members are fully briefed on their terms of appointment, duties, rights and responsibilities
- ▶ Looks forward, ensuring that succession planning takes place and that Board members are diverse and effective
- ▶ Ensures that there is a code of conduct for Board members in place
- ▶ Makes sure that the strategy and policies of the CTS support the States of Guernsey wider strategic policies relating to children and families.



Skills and Experience Required

We are looking for individuals to join the Board who have a whole range of experience to offer. You don't need to have any specific formal qualifications to undertake the role, however we are looking for individuals who share our values – child-centred, respectful, fair, creative and community focused – and who show a real commitment to effective public services.

What we need is people who have experience of working together constructively, who have the ability to effectively analyse information, who have worked at a strategic level or are confident in engaging at a strategic level, have knowledge of or an interest in the work of the CTS and who are committed to improving children's lives across the Bailiwick.

You will see from the key criteria below the knowledge, skills and experience that are required for Board members. We welcome experience from both work and non-work settings and we value very highly the benefits of having different points of view and experiences on our Board.

Due to the nature of the vacancies that will arise during 2024, we would particularly welcome applications from those who would be willing to be considered for the role of Chairperson when this becomes vacant in September 2024 and/or with experience of:

- ▶ Financial/risk management and corporate governance
- ▶ Legal or human resource management, or
- ▶ Children's social care/children's rights



Key Criteria

	Essential	Desirable
Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Experience that is relevant to the functions of the Children’s Convenor - for example, experience within education, social services, health, law enforcement, legal, finance, human resources, children or family services ● Experience of working at a strategic level ● Leadership experience ● Experience of working with complex and confidential issues ● Experience of reading and digesting complex documents and reports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Board experience at an executive/ nonexecutive level ● Experience of political engagement ● Experience of change management ● Experience of improving/increasing participation and consultation with children and families ● IT experience ● Experience of dealing with the media
Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Knowledge of the functions of the Children’s Convenor ● Understanding of the work of the Board, its purpose and responsibilities ● Ability to demonstrate how your skills and experience can be used to contribute to the work of the Board ● Ability to identify relevant implications from what is being discussed, such as challenges, risks, etc. ● Ability to analyse and interpret a range of information ● Confident in questioning proposals, providing constructive challenge, debating issues and expressing your views 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Understanding the landscape of children’s services in the Bailiwick and how services operate ● Understanding of the impact of adverse childhood experiences on children’s development ● Understanding and experience of corporate governance
Personal Qualities / behaviours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Integrity ● Independent mindset with the ability to be objective ● Good interpersonal and communication skills with the ability to communicate confidently and effectively with a diverse range of people ● Ability to think strategically ● Ability to work collaboratively with other Board members and the Senior Team ● Ability to seek opportunities to build constructive relationships with both internal and external stakeholders ● Ability to offer constructive support and challenge ● Ability and willingness to learn 	

Remuneration

Board Members receive an allowance of £88 per half day. Expenses incurred as a result of carrying out the duties of the appointment, including reasonable travel and subsistence costs will be reimbursed.

The appointment is non-pensionable.

Time Commitment

Members will be expected to attend 4-6 Board meetings each year and provide support to the Convenor and President as requested throughout the year (approximately 1.5 days per quarter).

Length of the Appointment

The term of appointment will be for 3 years.

There is the possibility of reappointment subject to evidence of effective performance and having regard to the skills, knowledge, understanding and experience required by the Board at the time.

Pre-appointment Checks

Candidates chosen for appointment will be required to complete a pre-appointment check. This will include checks of residency, identity documents and an enhanced Disclosure check. There is a small cost for these checks but this will be reimbursed.

Discussion with the selection panel

A discussion with a selection panel will take place on the week commencing 18 March 2024.

Training and support

Your induction will include (but not restricted to) the following:

- ▶ Your role and responsibilities
- ▶ Role of the Board and arrangements for Board meetings
- ▶ Organisational structure of the Children's Convenor and Tribunal Service
- ▶ Internal and external communication in relation to Board business
- ▶ Performance framework for the Board
- ▶ Role of and relationship with the Committee for Health & Social Care and States of Guernsey
- ▶ Budget and financial information
- ▶ Arrangements for remuneration and expenses

Code of Conduct

In carrying out their public service role, individual Board members will be expected to comply with the Code of Conduct. The nine Principles are set out below. If appointed as a Board member, you will be asked to confirm your understanding of, and agreement to, applying these principles.

Duty

You have a duty to uphold the law and act in accordance with the law and the public trust placed in you. You have a duty to act in the interests of the Convenor and Tribunal Board of which you are a member and in accordance with the core tasks of that body.

Selflessness

You have a duty to take decisions solely in terms of public interest. You must not act in order to gain financial or other material benefit for yourself, family or friends.

Integrity

You must not place yourself under any financial, or other, obligation to any individual or organisation that might reasonably be thought to influence you in the performance of your duties.

Objectivity

You must make decisions solely on merit when carrying out public business.

Accountability and Stewardship

You are accountable for your decisions and actions to the public. You have a duty to consider issues on their merits, taking account of the views of others and must ensure that the Office of the Children's Convenor and the Child Youth and Community Tribunal uses its resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

Openness

You have a duty to be as open as possible about your decisions and actions, giving reasons for your decisions and restricting information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty

You have a duty to act honestly. You must declare any private interests relating to your public duties and take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership

You have a duty to promote and support these principles by leadership and example, to maintain and strengthen the public's trust and confidence in the integrity of the Board and its members in conducting public business.

Respect

You must respect fellow members of the Board, staff and Tribunal Members and the role they play, treating them with courtesy at all times.

Thank you for taking the time to read this pack. We do hope that you will consider applying for the role of Board member and we very much look forward to hearing from you.

Appendix

About The Children's Tribunal System



The members of the Convenor and Tribunal Board are:

Mrs Jane St Pier (Chair)	Mr Alan Miller
Mr Nigel Lewis	Mr Peter Atkinson
Mrs Gill Couch	Dr Beverley Workman
Mrs Angharad Lewis-Jones	

The Children's Convenor is Ms Karen Brady
The President of the Tribunal is Mrs Ashley Rawles

Current Chair Jane St Pier

Jane is the current head of the Board which oversees the work of The Children's Tribunal System.

Jane describes the work of the System as a 'hidden gem', delivering a fundamental role in child welfare for the Bailiwick. Jane believes in a child centred, welfare and holistic based approach to responding to concerns about children and young people.

In her role as chair, she's keen to widen the general understanding of the System in conjunction with the current review of the Children's Law. She sees this as an important opportunity to build on the framework that's currently in existence to ensure that as many children as possible realise their potential.

In her spare time, Jane is a keen e-biker (her preferred mode of travel), dog walker and, in her words, the world's slowest jogger.

Board member and previous Chair, Gill Couch

Gill has been a Board member for nearly ten years, serving as Chair for six of those.

For many years, Gill worked with children and young people and, following her retirement from education, she wanted to find a new role which put her experience to good use. She was aware of The Children's Tribunal System and was delighted to be part

of a team which gives young people and their families the time and space to be heard and ensures that they can take part when decisions are made about them.

As part of her work on the board, Gill meets regularly with the Children's Convenor and President of the Tribunal providing advice and support on a wide range of issues to ensure the smooth running of both services. The Children's Tribunal System has kept her busy and she has learnt a great deal during her time, describing it as progressive, forward thinking and fit for purpose.

In her spare time, Gill is an avid sailor and enjoys travelling and spending time with her grandchildren.

How the Children's Tribunal System Works

- ▶ An incident occurs or a concern arises that may require compulsory intervention and a child or young person is referred to the Children's Convenor.
- ▶ The Convenor investigates the incident or concern by requesting information from different sources. This can include information on the child's attendance and behaviour at school, their health and development, family background and involvement with other agencies.
- ▶ The Convenor evaluates the information and decides whether or not there may be a need for compulsory intervention (intervention in family life irrespective of the consent of the child and their parents). If so, the child is referred to the Tribunal.
- ▶ If the Convenor decides that a Tribunal hearing is needed, the child or young person and their family will attend a meeting arranged by the Convenor to consider the Convenor's Statement (a legal document setting out the concerns).
- ▶ A hearing of the Tribunal will take place once the information set out in the Convenor's Statement is accepted or, if necessary, once the Juvenile Court has decided that it has been established on the basis of evidence presented by the Convenor.

- ▶ Each hearing of the Tribunal comprises of three Tribunal members. The child or young person and their family or carers attend along with the key professionals involved in their lives – for instance teachers and social workers. The Convenor attends to keep a record of the proceedings, to provide procedural advice and to ensure fair process.
- ▶ At the hearing the Tribunal members will hear from the child or young person and their parents or carers and from the professionals involved in their lives. Having heard from everyone the Tribunal members make a decision on whether or not a legal order called a care requirement is necessary.
- ▶ If a care requirement is made, the Tribunal can attach conditions to this such as where the child shall live or who they will have contact with.
- ▶ Once made the care requirement must be reviewed at least once every year and it can be revoked, continued or changed.
- ▶ The Committee for Health and Social Care has a legal obligation to implement the decisions made by the Tribunal.

Key Features of the Children's Tribunal System

Welfare-based – the welfare of the child is the paramount consideration for all decisions and actions, irrespective of the reasons for concern.

Holistic – the Tribunal considers the child's whole circumstances, including their family and wider community. Compulsory intervention encompasses care, protection, guidance and control.

Integrated – concerns about children's behaviour and welfare are dealt with in one place at the same time, ensuring a co-ordinated approach is taken to the needs of young people.

Community based – the members of the Tribunal are trained lay people who represent a diverse cross section of the local community. They receive professional and procedural advice to inform their decisions.

Rights respecting – the principles and ethos of the Children’s Tribunal System resonate with a number of the rights enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Children, parents and carers have rights throughout the process; these include the right to accept or deny the reasons for concern, the right to appeal decisions and the right to ask for a review of compulsory intervention.

Non-adversarial – whilst still observing legal procedures, the style and setting of Tribunal hearings are relatively informal with participants sitting around a table to encourage full and frank discussions. Legalese and court language is set aside in favour of more straight-forward terminology, which contributes to a supportive atmosphere, encouraging children, families and professionals to participate.

Inquisitorial – the Tribunal’s approach allows a full enquiry into the circumstances of a child or young person in a way that a court cannot, resulting in an enhanced understanding of the child’s world.

Participative – the child or young person is at the centre of Children’s Tribunal proceedings. It is in effect “their hearing”; a place where their voice is heard and their views taken into account. Two-way communication and active participation is encouraged. This increases ownership of the presenting concerns and the solutions to these and therefore increases the prospect of successful intervention.

Transparent - Tribunal members reach their decisions in the presence of the child, family and professionals and explain the reasoning for the decisions made.

Flexible – the Tribunal has the ability to change or alter the measures initially put in place for a child when this is necessary.

Confidential – all hearings are conducted in private to ensure protection for the privacy of the child and their family.

