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**The Secretary of State
for Northern Ireland**

**First Annual Report
on
Public Appointments**

**1 April 1996 to
31 March 1997**

January 1998

Public Appointments in Northern Ireland 1996-97

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Foreword by The Rt Hon Marjorie Mowlam MP, Secretary of State for Northern Ireland

I am pleased to be able to make this Report on recent developments in the area of public appointments in Northern Ireland and the issues which will shape the way forward.

This is the first such Report compiled in Northern Ireland. It fulfils the recommendation of the First Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life that each Secretary of State would report annually on public appointments falling within his or her area of responsibility.

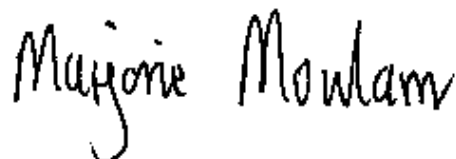
This Report covers the period from 1 April 1996 to 31 March 1997. That predates the General Election of May 1997 and, therefore, the Report deals with events and developments which took place, and appointments which were made, during the term of office of the last Conservative Government. I do believe, however, that it is important to make this Report, to set out as fully as possible, for the first time, details of the composition of the wide range of public bodies in Northern Ireland and of the new appointments made to them during the 12 month period.

Membership of public bodies enables the wider community to play an important role in influencing and shaping the provision of a whole range of services which are of critical importance. And this is particularly important in Northern Ireland where many public bodies are involved in areas which in Great Britain would be the responsibility of locally elected representatives.

This Government believes that it is vital to ensure that appointments are made with care, are made in an open and transparent way, are made on merit, and are made in a way which encourages people from all areas and backgrounds to come forward as candidates.

The implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on Standards in Public Life and, in particular, the appointment of the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Public Appointments, have had a marked positive impact on the way in which appointments are made. I welcome those developments.

The Government is currently considering views submitted in response to its paper "Opening up Quangos". I hope that this process will produce ideas for further changes to continue the process of improvement in quangos in general and in the public appointments system in particular.



MARJORIE MOWLAM

Section 1

Key Developments in Public Appointments in 1996-97

Public bodies and public appointments in Northern Ireland

1.1 It is worth, at the outset, defining what is meant in this Report by “public bodies” and “public appointments”, and to explain why there is a difference between “appointments made to public bodies” and “public appointments”.

1.2 The main public bodies in Northern Ireland, and in Great Britain, are listed in the Cabinet Office document “Public Bodies” which is produced annually. That document defines “public bodies” as covering:

executive bodies: these bodies normally employ staff and have their own budget. This group also includes some bodies which exercise administrative or regulatory functions in their own name but are supported by staff supplied by the sponsoring Department;

advisory bodies: these are bodies set up to advise Ministers and their Departments. They generally do not employ staff or incur expenditure on their own account;

tribunals: this group includes bodies with licensing and appeal functions. It covers bodies with jurisdiction in a specialised field of law. There are two types of tribunal: standing tribunals which have a permanent membership; and others which draw their membership from a pool of panel members as sittings are required. In general, tribunals are served by staff from the sponsoring Department;

other bodies: these comprise Northern Ireland’s health and personal social services bodies and the Boards of Prison Visitors and Prison Visiting Committees.

1.3 There are, in addition, a number of public bodies which are not at present included in any of these categories (for example, the Community Relations Council and the Rural Development Council). Appointments to these bodies, and to the bodies in the four categories listed above, comprise the total number of “appointments to public bodies”.

1.4 In addition, appointments are made to a number of bodies which are not regarded as public bodies, although the appointments made to them by the Government are deemed to be “public appointments” (for example, the Senate of QUB and the Governing Bodies of Voluntary Grammar Schools). Thus, the number of public appointments made by the Government is higher than the number of appointments made to public bodies.

1.5 The terms “public body” and “public appointment” in this Report exclude:

- central Government Departments;
- Next Steps Agencies (although their Advisory Boards are included);
- advisory bodies where the majority of members are civil servants, or working groups drawn from staff of the wider public service;
- the general criminal and civil court system;
- local authorities and bodies controlled by them; and
- housing associations.

1.6 The figures include those holding appointments in a number of major tribunals in Northern Ireland. These appointments are not made by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, but fall within the scope of the Lord Chancellor’s Department. They are, however, included in the statistics in this Report dealing with membership of public bodies as their Chairmen and members comprise a substantial body of people in Northern Ireland who have been selected, and are being remunerated, for public service.

1.7 As at 31 March 1997, there were some 2948 public appointments held in Northern Ireland in a total of 145 bodies. These appointees and the bodies on which they serve are listed in full in Volume 2 of this Report which will be published shortly.

Making of Appointments

1.8 Public appointments (excluding those to a number of tribunals) are made by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in respect of the Northern Ireland Office and by the respective Heads of the Northern Ireland Departments (ie Permanent Secretaries) following consultation with and approval from Ministers.

1.9 Candidates for public appointments are identified from a number of sources. A central database holds the names of over 4000 people who have indicated that they are willing to serve on public bodies; candidates are also put forward by nominating bodies, including District Councils, the voluntary sector, employers’ and employees’ groups, and by the Irish Government under Article 6 of the Anglo-Irish Agreement; and, increasingly, candidates are nominating themselves by responding to public advertisements of vacancies, a development which arose from the recommendations of the Committee on Standards in Public Life.

Committee on Standards in Public Life

- 1.10** The first Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life made a series of recommendations designed to improve the system of public appointments in the UK, making the process more open and accountable.
- 1.11** A key recommendation concerned the establishment of an independent Office of Commissioner for Public Appointments. Sir Leonard Peach became Commissioner for GB and, in December 1995, was also appointed to the separate Office of NI Commissioner.
- 1.12** The NI Commissioner's remit, in line with the recommendations of the Committee on Standards in Public Life, covers executive public bodies and health and personal social services bodies - 78 public bodies, accounting for 936 appointments. The Government has announced that it is currently considering an extension of this remit.
- 1.13** The NI Commissioner issued a Code of Practice and Guidance on 1 July 1996, and Departments in Northern Ireland were required to apply that Guidance to appointments within the Commissioner's remit which were made on or after that date.
- 1.14** The Guidance set out the seven principles which were to underlie Departments' public appointments processes:
- Ministerial responsibility;
 - Merit
 - Independent Scrutiny
 - Equal Opportunities
 - Probity
 - Openness and Transparency
 - Proportionality.
- 1.15** Each Department in Northern Ireland drew up procedures in line with the Commissioner's Guidance. While Departments were required to apply those procedures only to appointments within the Commissioner's remit, they decided that this best practice should be applied, so far as possible, to all appointments, and the Commissioner's principles are therefore being extensively applied to public appointments in NI.
- 1.16** Departments' procedures are subject to audit by the Commissioner to ensure compliance with his Guidance, and he has produced two Reports to date on the performance of Departments and the issues requiring further attention.

Experience of operating the procedures

1.17 Although the Commissioner's remit is limited to nearly 950 of the 2950 (in round terms) public appointments made in Northern Ireland, Departments are generally applying the same principles to all appointments, although they may not always advertise some of the less significant or ad hoc appointments on grounds of disproportionate cost.

1.18 The specific changes made by Departments to bring their procedures into line with the requirements of the Commissioner for Public Appointments include:

- the documentation of the appointment process;
- the use of advertisements to attract applicants;
- the use of detailed "job" and person specifications;
- shortlisting of candidates against clearly defined criteria;
- the interviewing of candidates;
- the use of an independent assessor in the appointment process; and
- the introduction of more formal performance assessment arrangements for those serving on public bodies.

1.19 Generally Departments have found that public advertising produces a good response. By and large they have found that it produces high quality candidates who would not have been identified from other sources. One concern, however, resulting from some early experiences of using advertising, is that the number of responses from female applicants has been low, as has the level of response from people with disabilities and those from ethnic minorities.

1.20 The new procedures have proved more time consuming to operate, but Departments have welcomed the greatly increased transparency of those procedures with their aim of inspiring greater public confidence in the way in which appointments are now made. The involvement of an independent element in the procedures has worked well, and the flexibility allowed within the Commissioner's Guidance (while still working within the fundamental principles described at paragraph 1.14) has been found to be helpful, given the wide range of differing bodies to which appointments are made.

Section 2

Northern Ireland Statistics for 1996-97

- 2.1** The introduction of new public appointments processes has also involved the development of additional monitoring systems.
- 2.2** Traditionally, monitoring had been confined to determining the gender balance in public appointments. In line with the requirements of the NI Commissioner for Public Appointments, a wider range of monitoring information has now been assembled, covering:
- gender
 - age
 - community background
 - remuneration
 - disability
 - political activity
 - ethnic background.
- 2.3** This wider range of information has been collected in respect of new appointees selected during 1996-97 to serve on public bodies. As yet, this range of information is not available in respect of existing members of public bodies who were appointed prior to the introduction of the new procedures. The available information will, however, quickly expand as appointments fall vacant and new appointments are made.
- 2.4** The statistics available in relation to the appointments of individual Departments are set out in the Annex. The tables which follow show the overall Northern Ireland picture, drawing together the information from each Department. The tables show the numbers of appointments held at 31 March 1997 and analyse the appointments made in Northern Ireland between 1 April 1996 and 31 March 1997.
- 2.5** In the commentary which follows, the term ‘appointment’ includes re-appointments (except where the figures or narrative expressly differentiate between first and subsequent appointments) and the term “member” or “members” includes vice or deputy chairmen. Details relating to Chairmen (this term should be taken to refer to male and female Chairs) are recorded separately.

Public Appointments as at 31 March 1997

2.6 The overall number of public appointments held at 31 March 1997 was 2948.

Gender and Remuneration

2.7 The breakdown of public appointments by gender and as between Board Chairmen and Members is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Public Appointments held at 31.03.97: Gender

	Total	Male	Female	%Male	%Female
Chairmen	274	197	77	72%	28%
Members	2,674	1,733	941	65%	35%
Total	2,948	1,930	1,018	65%	35%

2.8 Of the 2948 public appointments, two-thirds were held by men and one-third by women. Female representation at the level of board Chairman was, however, lower; 72% of chairmanships were held by men and 28% by women, while the figure for board members was 65% male and 35% female. In addition, women were less likely than men to hold appointments at the higher end of the remuneration levels, as shown in Tables 2 and 3.

2.9 Figures for remuneration levels show the amount received per annum.

Table 2 Chairmen: Gender and Remuneration Levels

Remuneration	Total	Male	Female	%Male	%Female
£10,000+	85	65	20	76%	24%
Less than £10,000	132	88	44	67%	33%
Unpaid (expenses only)	57	44	13	77%	23%

Table 3 Members: Gender and Remuneration Levels

Remuneration	Total	Male	Female	%Male	%Female
£10,000+	29	23	6	79%	21%
Less than £10,000	990	626	364	63%	37%
Unpaid (expenses only)	1,655	1,084	571	65%	35%

2.10 4% of the 2,948 public appointments held at 31 March 1997 attracted remuneration of over £10,000 per annum. This figure consisted of 85 Chairmen and 29 board members. Overall, 42% of those holding public appointments received remuneration, leaving 58% receiving no remuneration other than expenses.

Appointments

2.11 During the period from 1 April 1996 to 31 March 1997, 492 public appointments were made in Northern Ireland. The tables which follow analyse those appointments. 203 were appointments to executive NDPBs and health and personal social services bodies, and so fell within the remit of the NI Commissioner for Public Appointments, while 289 were appointments to tribunals, advisory or other bodies, and so fell outside the Commissioner's remit.

2.12 The Commissioner requires the collection of a wide range of information about appointees to bodies within his remit. While Departments have been voluntarily applying the principles of the Commissioner's Guidance to appointments which fall outside the Commissioner's remit, in some cases the full range of information about appointees is not available. Thus, the tables which follow differentiate between appointments which are within the Commissioner's remit (in Executive NDPBs and HPSS bodies) and those which are outside the Commissioner's remit (mainly in tribunals and advisory bodies - referred to as "Other Bodies" for the purposes of the headings in the relevant Tables).

Community Background

2.13 In line with the Guidance of the NI Commissioner for Public Appointments, Departments have been asking candidates applying for public appointments to declare their community background.

2.14 Information on community background is treated confidentially; it is used in statistical analyses (such as the tables in this report) but is never divulged in relation to individuals, nor available to those assessing the candidates for appointment. Given that the Commissioner’s Guidance did not come into effect until July 1996, and given that Departments introduced their new procedures on a progressive basis over time, information on the community background of some appointees (in particular those who applied for appointment before July 1996) is not available.

2.15 In this section of the Report the following terms are used:

Majority – meaning Community Background Protestant

Minority – meaning Community Background Roman Catholic

Other – meaning Community Background other than Protestant or Roman Catholic

N/K – meaning Community Background not known

2.16 Tables 4(a) to 4(g) provide an analysis of the community background information available on those appointed during the period of the report, together with information on gender and remuneration levels.

2.17 It is difficult to draw firm conclusions from the figures on community background because of the high number classified as “not known”, particularly in respect of appointments to advisory bodies and tribunals. The more complete figures for appointments to executive NDPBs and HPSS bodies show that, of those appointees whose community background was known (ie, excluding the “not known” category from the calculation), 53% were from the majority community, 45% from the minority community and 2% from other backgrounds.

2.18 Because the information is incomplete, it should be treated with care. More reliable conclusions should, however, be capable of being drawn in future years as the availability of community background information increases. Because of roundings percentages in this report may not always add to 100%.

Table 4(a) Appointments to Executive NDPBs and HPSS Bodies
Chairmen: Gender, Remuneration, Community Background

Remuneration	Total	Community Background					
		Male	Female	Majority	Minority	Other	N/K
£10,000+	12	11	1	6	5	–	1
Less than £10,000	5	5	–	3	–	–	2
Unpaid (expenses only)	1	1	–	1	–	–	–
Total	18	17 (94%)	1 (6%)	10 (56%)	5 (28%)	–	3 (17%)

Table 4(b) Appointments to Other Bodies
Chairmen: Gender, Remuneration, Community Background

Remuneration	Total	Male	Female	Community Background			N/K
				Majority	Minority	Other	
£10,000+	2	2	–	1	–	–	1
Less than £10,000	4	3	1	2	1	–	1
Unpaid (expenses only)	9	6	3	–	1	–	8
Total	15	11 (73%)	4 (27%)	3 (20%)	2 (13%)	–	10 (67%)

Table 4(c) Total Appointments of Chairmen
Gender, Remuneration, Community Background

Remuneration	Total	Male	Female	Community Background			N/K
				Majority	Minority	Other	
£10,000+	14	13	1	7	5	–	2
Less than £10,000	9	8	1	5	1	–	3
Unpaid (expenses only)	10	7	3	1	1	–	8
Total	33	28 (85%)	5 (15%)	13 (39%)	7 (21%)	–	13 (39%)

Table 4(d) Appointments to Executive NDPB's and HPSS Bodies
Members: Gender, Remuneration, Community Background

Remuneration	Total	Male	Female	Community Background			N/K
				Majority	Minority	Other	
£10,000+	7	6	1	2	1	–	4
Less than £10,000	105	60	45	42	36	3	24
Unpaid (expenses only)	73	47	26	26	26	–	21
Total	185	113 (61%)	72 (39%)	70 (38%)	63 (34%)	3 (2%)	49 (26%)

Table 4(e) Appointments to Other Bodies
Members: Gender, Remuneration, Community Background

Remuneration	Total	Male	Female	Community Background			N/K
				Majority	Minority	Other	
£10,000+	4	3	1	–	–	–	4
Less than £10,000	65	44	21	30	19	1	15
Unpaid (expenses only)	205	121	84	40	24	–	141
Total	274	168 (61%)	106 (39%)	70 (26%)	43 (16%)	1 (0.4%)	160 (58%)

Table 4(f) Total Appointments of Members
Gender, Remuneration, Community Background

Remuneration	Total	Male	Female	Community Background			N/K
				Majority	Minority	Other	
£10,000+	11	9	2	2	1	–	8
Less than £10,000	170	104	66	72	55	4	39
Unpaid (expenses only)	278	168	110	66	50	–	162
Total	459	281 (61%)	178 (39%)	140 (31%)	106 (23%)	4 (0.9%)	209 (46%)

Table 4(g) All Appointments
Chairmen and Members: Gender, Remuneration, Community Background

Remuneration	Total	Male	Female	Community Background			N/K
				Majority	Minority	Other	
£10,000+	25	22	3	9	6	–	10
Less than £10,000	179	112	67	77	56	4	42
Unpaid (expenses only)	288	175	113	67	51	–	170
Total	492	309 (63%)	183 (37%)	153 (31%)	113 (23%)	4 (1%)	222 (45%)

Gender

2.19 Tables 4(a) to 4(g) also show the gender balance in the number of appointments made between 1 April 1996 and 31 March 1997. 63% of appointees were male and 37% female. However, within this overall figure, there are variations according to the remuneration level involved and the status of the posts. 88% of the highest paid appointees (attracting remuneration of over £10,000 per annum) were male. 85% of those appointed to chairmanships were also male.

Age

2.20 The Guidance of the Commissioner for Public Appointments states that “age should not be a criterion in drawing up a specification for a public appointment unless there is a need to balance the age range of the membership. It is not intended to be used as the deciding factor when making appointments.”

2.21 Tables 5(a), 5(b) and 5(c) analyse the appointments made in the twelve month period covered by this report by age band. The predominant age group for appointees was the 50-59 age band. Those aged under 40 accounted for some 8% of appointees, while only two persons under the age of thirty were appointed. At the other end of the age range, 17% of those appointed were aged sixty or over. The high percentage of appointees whose age was not known (32% overall) distorts the figures and makes analysis difficult. More complete figures will become available as Departments collect age data on a more comprehensive basis.

**Table 5(a) Appointments to Executive NDPBs and HPSS Bodies:
Gender, Age, Type of Appointment**

	Total	Male	Female	Age					N/K
				Under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	
1st appt	118	73	45	1	19	33	27	17	21
1st re-appt	67	44	23	–	3	14	25	21	4
Further re-appt	18	14	4	–	2	2	2	9	3
Total	203	131	72	1	24	49	54	47	28
				(0.5%)	(12%)	(24%)	(27%)	(23%)	(14%)

**Table 5(b) Appointments to Other Bodies:
Gender, Age, Type of Appointment**

	Total	Male	Female	Age					N/K
				Under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	
1st appt	147	83	64	1	10	22	29	14	71
1st re-appt	111	71	40	–	6	19	24	15	47
Further re-appt	31	24	7	–	1	1	9	10	10
Total	289	178	111	1 (0.3%)	17 (6%)	42 (15%)	62 (21%)	39 (13%)	128 (44%)

**Table 5(c) Total Appointments:
Gender, Age, Type of Appointment**

	Total	Male	Female	Age					N/K
				Under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	
1st appt	265	156	109	2	29	55	56	31	92
1st re-appt	178	115	63	–	9	33	49	36	51
Further re-appt	49	38	11	–	3	3	11	19	13
Total	492	309	183	2 (0.4%)	41 (8%)	91 (18%)	116 (24%)	86 (17%)	156 (32%)

Type of Appointment

2.22 Tables 5(a), 5(b) and 5(c) also show the number of first appointments and re-appointments made during the period of the report. The term “re-appointment” applies to those individuals who are given a further term of office after completing their first term. “First re-appointment” means that the individual has been given a second term of office. The term “further re-appointment” means that the person has been given a third, or subsequent, term of office. Only in exceptional circumstances should an individual be offered a further re-appointment.

2.23 Overall, 46% of the appointments were re-appointments. Further re-appointments made up 10% of total appointments.

Multiple Appointments

2.24 The Code of Practice of the NI Commissioner for Public Appointments does not place a numerical limit on the number of appointments which can be held by an individual. The Code does, however, require that those making public appointments should ensure that no-one is appointed to more offices than can be undertaken thoroughly and conscientiously. A judgement is made about a candidate's availability for a new appointment in the light of the time commitment involved in his/her existing appointments.

2.25 Table 6 sets out information on the number of appointments held by public appointees.

Table 6 Multiple Appointments

No of appointments held	No of people	%
1 appointment	2,023	83.0
2 appointments	329	13.5
3 appointments	77	3.2
4 appointments	9	0.4
Total	2,438	

Political Activity

2.26 Information on political activity currently covers public political activity - office holding, candidature, public speaking or writing in support of a political party. It does not relate to political allegiance or voting preferences. The collection of information on political activity derives from a recommendation of the Committee on Standards in Public Life and the requirement is set out in the Guidance of the NI Commissioner for Public Appointments. This states that the "underlying intention of these questions is systematic record keeping and monitoring of the political activities of candidates for appointment insofar as they are a matter of public record". Support of a political party is not a barrier to a public appointment. Information on political activity is publicly disclosed at the stage when a candidate's appointment to a public body is announced.

2.27 Table 7 sets out the information available on the declared political activity of those appointed in 1996-97.

Table 7 Declared Political Activity of Appointees

Political Party	Appointees to Exec NDPBs & HPSS Bodies	Appointees to Other Bodies	TOTAL
UUP	8	4	12
SDLP	3	8	11
DUP	2	1	3
ALLIANCE	–	1	1
OTHERS	1	1	2
TOTAL	14	15	29

2.28 The figures indicate that 6% of those appointed during the period declared political activity.

Ethnic Minorities

2.29 The ethnic community in Northern Ireland is small, numbering less than 10,000. None of the 492 individuals appointed in 1996-97 came from an ethnic minority.

Disability

2.30 None of the individuals appointed during the 12 months covered by this report declared any disabilities when completing their nomination forms.

Conclusion

2.31 This report spans a period of substantial change in the procedures for making public appointments, in line with the requirements of the Code of Practice and Guidance of the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Public Appointments. Part of those requirements was the collection of information on new appointees so that the effectiveness of the procedures could be monitored. The range of data collected in 1996-97, spanning the period of the introduction of the new processes, is incomplete and should therefore be treated with some caution. It is too early to ascertain firm trends or make defensible assumptions at this stage, but the 1996-97 information provides a starting point for the building of a comprehensive database which will be more fully reflected in the report for 1997-98.

Section 3

The Reports of The NI Commissioner for Public Appointments

- 3.1 The Northern Ireland Commissioner for Public Appointments, Sir Leonard Peach, has published two Reports since his appointment in December 1995.
- 3.2 His First Report, which covered the period up to the end of June 1996, before his Code of Practice and Guidance came into effect, described his role and remit, outlined the consultation process which he had undertaken in developing his Guidance, and looked ahead to the requirements which that Guidance would place on Departments, and the arrangements for audit of their performance.
- 3.3 The Commissioner's Second Report was published in July 1997. This Report spanned the period from 1 July 1996 to 31 March 1997, and assessed the impact of the Code of Practice and Guidance, and the extent to which Departments' processes had operated within that Code.
- 3.4 A two-phase audit of Departments' procedures had been carried out, including an examination of almost half the appointments falling within the Commissioner's remit which were made between 1 July 1996 and 31 March 1997.
- 3.5 The Commissioner's Report was generally encouraging, and confirmed that all Northern Ireland Departments and the NIO were applying their new appointments procedures with diligence and care. Independent scrutiny was well established within their processes, much progress had been made on openness and transparency, and appointments were continuing to be made on the basis of merit.
- 3.6 1996-97 was viewed as a learning period, when Departments were dealing with major revisions to their procedures. Some weaknesses were identified, but so too were an encouraging number of examples of good practice.
- 3.7 Particular areas highlighted in the Commissioner's Report were:

Performance Assessment: thorough performance assessment is essential so that decisions on whether or not to re-appoint a board member can be soundly based. The method used by one Department was particularly commended, and the Commissioner will be disseminating information about best practice in this area.

Advertising: some concern was expressed by Departments about the comparatively low number of female candidates who responded to advertisements.

Second, or subsequent, re-appointments: second re-appointments should be rare, but can be made where considered essential. The Commissioner has asked that documentation supporting the case for re-appointments made should be improved.

Independent Members and Panels: the degree of flexibility provided in the Commissioner's Guidance on the way in which independent members and panels are to be used was reflected in the variations in procedures adopted by Departments. The Commissioner commended the special training provided by one Department for panel members in selection techniques, and the information pack provided by another, defining the roles and responsibilities of panel members. This too is an area which the Commissioner proposes to review further.

3.8 Other issues which the Commissioner will consider are: costing the processes used by Departments and the need to achieve balance, in setting criteria for selection, between being too wide and too restrictive.

3.9 The issues identified by the Commissioner for the coming year were:

- the possible extension, by the Government, of the Commissioner's remit;
- the need for the Commissioner's Guidance to be revised;
- the need to define and disseminate best practice in performance assessment;
- the continuation of audits of Departmental performance;
- the need to issue Guidance for use by bodies which hold rights to nominate members to public bodies, to ensure that, in so doing, they adhere to the spirit of the Code of Practice;
- consideration of the causes of delay in the appointments process; and
- monitoring of lengths of appointment and re-appointments.

Section 4

The Way Forward

- 4.1** The process of making public appointments in Northern Ireland has changed and improved with the introduction of the new procedures based on the Code of Practice and Guidance of the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Public Appointments.
- 4.2** There is, however, room for further change and development.

Consultation Paper on Quangos

- 4.3** In November 1997, the Government issued a Consultation Document “Opening up Quangos” for comment by the end of December. The Document looks at the need to justify the range and scope of the activities of quangos and to ensure that they deliver services in ways which meet the requirements of the public which they serve. The Document raises issues about the composition of quango boards, their accessibility, and the availability of information about their activities. In the field of public appointments, it proposes the extension of the role of the Commissioner to cover nationalised industries, public corporations and the regulators, and a limited extension of his remit to cover advisory public bodies.
- 4.4** The Consultation Document applies to the whole of the United Kingdom. There are, however, particular areas of interest in Northern Ireland which differ somewhat from those in Great Britain, and the Document was issued under cover of a memorandum setting out those particular issues.
- 4.5** The memorandum referred to the existence of a Government review group on public appointments which is examining the current arrangements with a view to determining how the composition of public bodies in Northern Ireland can, where appropriate, be made as politically representative as possible, and can also attract larger numbers of candidates from under-represented groups, including women, the young, and people from a community-based background. Respondents to the Consultation Document were invited to give their views on these (and any other) aspects of the public appointments arrangements. These views will be important in deciding how improvements can be made for the future.

Remit of the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Public Appointments

4.6 As mentioned already, the Consultation Document proposed extending the remit of the Commissioner for Public Appointments. That would mean that, in Northern Ireland, the remit of the Commissioner would extend to 112 bodies (covering 1366 appointments) rather than the 78 bodies (covering 936 appointments) of which he has oversight at present. At present, the offices of GB and NI Commissioners are separate but are held by the same person. The implications for this arrangement of an extension of the remit of the Commissioner will be considered in the light of whatever new remit is agreed after consideration of the views put forward during the consultation period.

Levels of Representation

4.7 The Government's Central Appointments Unit in Northern Ireland is setting arrangements in place for the regular monitoring of the progress being made by Departments in the operation of their appointments procedures. Monitoring will examine the make-up of the pools of applicants for appointments as well as the make-up of the successful candidates eventually appointed, to establish the extent to which Departments are attracting a sufficiently representative cross-section of candidates and to ensure that the processes of selection do not discriminate unfairly against any section of the community.

4.8 The figures in the statistical section of this Report, while incomplete in some areas, are sufficiently comprehensive to highlight some broad areas of under-representation on public bodies.

4.9 It is the Government's aim that membership of public bodies should achieve a balance. There is a need for the boards of public bodies to include the expertise needed to make them organisationally efficient and effective; but, likewise, they should be representative of the communities which they serve.

4.10 The Government's wish is to attract people to serve on public bodies, drawing them from a wide range of backgrounds, in terms of age, geographical location, gender, community background, ethnic groupings, and to ensure that appointments extend across all groups, including at community level. Public appointments are not the preserve of "the great and the good". Membership of public bodies should be shared more widely, and indeed progress is being made in this direction as a result of opening up the process of securing a public appointment, advertising vacancies, and enabling anyone to nominate him/herself, or any other person, for consideration for appointment.

4.11 Appointments will continue to be made on merit but, if Departments are successful in attracting wide and varied fields of candidates, the resulting appointments should reflect that diversity as well as merit.

Female Representation

4.12 One of the areas of under-representation which has already been the subject of scrutiny is that of women on public bodies. In common with GB Departments, Northern Ireland has, since 1992, set goals for the level of female representation on public bodies. The most recent goals, set out early in 1997, were:

- a. that Northern Ireland Departments will seek to increase the representation of women on their respective public bodies each year with an overall target of 40% by the year 2000;
- b. that there should be female representation on all public bodies with more than one appointed member by the year 2000; and
- c. that the percentage of women on the central database of those willing to serve on public bodies should be increased from 31% to 40% by the year 2000.

4.13 Progress has already been made towards achieving these goals. More, however, needs to be done, and the Government will be examining a range of initiatives, in the light of any proposals advocated during the consultation on “Opening up Quangos”, designed to attract greater numbers of women to come forward as candidates for public appointments.

Representation from Other Groups

4.14 With the introduction of the new procedures, reliable information is starting to become available for the first time on aspects such as community background, ethnic background, age and disability. These areas will be monitored on a regular basis. Action will be taken to attract candidates from under-represented groups, in the same way as action is to be taken to attract more female candidates.

Nominating Bodies

4.15 As a range of organisations and bodies (eg, District Councils, employers’ and employees’ groups) have rights to nominate candidates to public bodies in Northern Ireland, it is important that those bodies with nominating rights should also have regard to the same principles as Government Departments when selecting candidates to recommend. The Commissioner’s willingness to assist in raising awareness of the new procedures and the principles behind them will be helpful in achieving this.

Conclusion

- 4.16** 1996-97 saw major changes which have gone a considerable way to demystifying the process of securing a public appointment. Advertising is helping to bring through candidates who would otherwise not have been known to those responsible for making appointments. But, as this Report has shown, more progress is needed to reach the position where the make-up of public bodies is in keeping with the communities which those bodies serve, and where they inspire public confidence.
- 4.17** This Section of the Report has pointed to the need for steps to be taken, largely to tackle areas of under-representation. Specific action will be developed, taking account of views received in response to the Consultation Document “Opening up Quangos”, and will be reported on in the next annual report on public appointments which will document the position reached by the end of March 1998.

Departmental Statistics

Membership of Public Bodies at 31 March 1997

Appointments to Public Bodies Between 1 April 1996 and 31 March 1997

These include:

- appointments to Executive NDPBs and HPSS Bodies (ie, appointments to bodies within the remit of the NI Commissioner for Public Appointments); and
- appointments to Other Bodies (ie, appointments to bodies outside the remit of the NI Commissioner for Public Appointments).

In this section of the Report the following abbreviations are used:

Majority: Community Background Protestant;

Minority: Community Background Roman Catholic;

Other: Community Background other than Protestant or Roman Catholic;

N/K: Community Background not known.

Department of Agriculture

Membership of Public Bodies at 31 March 1997

Membership of Public Bodies : Chairmen and Members

	Male	Female
Chairmen	7	1
Members	66	14
Total	73	15

Membership of Public Bodies: Gender and Remuneration

	Remuneration	Total	Male	Female
Chairmen	£10,000+	1	1	–
	Less than £10,000	4	3	1
	Unpaid (expenses only)	3	3	–
Members	£10,000+	–	–	–
	Less than £10,000	13	8	5
	Unpaid (expenses only)	67	58	9
Total		88	73	15

Appointments Made to Public Bodies Between 1 April 1996 and 31 March 1997

Appointments to Executive NDPBs: Gender, Remuneration, Community Background

	Remuneration	Total	Male	Female	Community Background			
					Majority	Minority	Other	N/K
Chairmen	£10,000+	1	1	–	–	–	–	1
	Less than £10,000	1	1	–	–	–	–	1
	Unpaid (expenses only)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Members	£10,000+	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Less than £10,000	4	3	1	2	1	–	1
	Unpaid (expenses only)	16	16	–	3	1	–	12
Total		22	21	1	5	2	–	15

Appointments to Other Bodies: Gender, Remuneration, Community Background

	Remuneration	Total	Male	Female	Community Background			
					Majority	Minority	Other	N/K
Chairmen	£10,000+	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Less than £10,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Unpaid (expenses only)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Members	£10,000+	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Less than £10,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Unpaid (expenses only)	1	1	–	–	–	–	1
Total		1	1	–	–	–	–	1

Appointments to Executive NDPBs: Gender, Age, Type of Appointment

	Total	Male	Female	Age					N/K
				Under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	
1st Appt	12	12	–	–	2	3	2	–	5
2nd Appt	6	5	1	–	–	1	2	3	–
3rd+ Appt	4	4	–	–	–	1	–	3	–
Total	22	21	1	–	2	5	4	6	5

Appointments to Other Bodies: Gender, Age, Type of Appointment

	Total	Male	Female	Age					N/K
				Under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	
1st Appt	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2nd Appt	1	1	–	–	–	1	–	–	–
3rd+ Appt	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total	1	1	–	–	–	1	–	–	–

Appointees: Declared Political Activity

No appointee declared any political activity in the past 5 years.

Department of Economic Development

Membership of Public Bodies at 31 March 1997

Membership of Public Bodies : Chairmen and Members

	Male	Female
Chairmen	25	14
Members	246	119
Total	271	133

Membership of Public Bodies: Gender and Remuneration

	Remuneration	Total	Male	Female
Chairmen	£10,000+	13	7	6
	Less than £10,000	25	17	8
	Unpaid (expenses only)	1	1	–
Members	£10,000+	–	–	–
	Less than £10,000	356	242	114
	Unpaid (expenses only)	9	4	5
Total		404	271	133

Appointments Made to Public Bodies Between 1 April 1996 and 31 March 1997

Appointments to Executive NDPBs: Gender, Remuneration, Community Background

	Remuneration	Total	Male	Female	Community Background			
					Majority	Minority	Other	N/K
Chairmen	£10,000+	1	–	1	1	–	–	–
	Less than £10,000	2	2	–	2	–	–	–
	Unpaid (expenses only)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Members	£10,000+	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Less than £10,000	28	15	13	14	14	–	–
	Unpaid (expenses only)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total		31	17	14	17	14	–	–

Appointments to Other Bodies: Gender, Remuneration, Community Background

	Remuneration	Total	Male	Female	Community Background			
					Majority	Minority	Other	N/K
Chairmen	£10,000+	1	1	–	1	–	–	–
	Less than £10,000	2	1	1	2	–	–	–
	Unpaid (expenses only)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Members	£10,000+	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Less than £10,000	48	34	14	27	18	1	2
	Unpaid (expenses only)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total		51	36	15	30	18	1	2

Appointments to Executive NDPBs: Gender, Age, Type of Appointment

	Total	Male	Female	Age					N/K
				Under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	
1st Appt	18	11	7	–	5	5	7	1	–
2nd Appt	9	7	2	–	1	4	3	1	–
3rd+ Appt	4	–	4	–	2	1	1	–	–
Total	31	18	13	–	8	10	11	2	–

Appointments to Other Bodies: Gender, Age, Type of Appointment

	Total	Male	Female	Age					N/K
				Under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	
1st Appt	9	7	2	–	2	2	–	1	4
2nd Appt	28	18	10	–	2	5	5	9	7
3rd+ Appt	14	10	4	–	1	1	4	4	4
Total	51	35	16	–	5	8	9	14	15

Appointees: Declared Political Activity

No appointee declared any political activity in the past 5 years.

Department of Education

Membership of Public Bodies at 31 March 1997

Membership of Public Bodies : Chairmen and Members

	Male	Female
Chairmen	17	1
Members	407	204
Total	424	205

Membership of Public Bodies: Gender and Remuneration

	Remuneration	Total	Male	Female
Chairmen	£10,000+	4	4	–
	Less than £10,000	8	7	1
	Unpaid (expenses only)	6	6	–
Members	£10,000+	–	–	–
	Less than £10,000	8	5	3
	Unpaid (expenses only)	603	402	201
Total		629	424	205

Appointments Made to Public Bodies Between 1 April 1996 and 31 March 1997

Appointments to Executive NDPBs: Gender, Remuneration, Community Background

	Remuneration	Total	Male	Female	Community Background			
					Majority	Minority	Other	N/K
Chairmen	£10,000+	1	1	–	–	1	–	–
	Less than £10,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Unpaid (expenses only)	1	1	–	1	–	–	–
Members	£10,000+	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Less than £10,000	3	2	1	3	–	–	–
	Unpaid (expenses only)	42	24	18	18	17	–	7
Total		47	28	19	22	18	–	7

Appointments to Other Bodies: Gender, Remuneration, Community Background

	Remuneration	Total	Male	Female	Community Background			
					Majority	Minority	Other	N/K
Chairmen	£10,000+	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Less than £10,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Unpaid (expenses only)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Members	£10,000+	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Less than £10,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Unpaid (expenses only)	65	38	27	29	17	–	19
Total		65	38	27	29	17	–	19

Appointments to Executive NDPBs: Gender, Age, Type of Appointment

	Total	Male	Female	Age					N/K
				Under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	
1st Appt	28	16	12	–	4	7	5	3	9
2nd Appt	14	7	7	–	1	3	5	3	2
3rd+ Appt	5	5	–	–	–	–	1	2	2
Total	47	28	19	–	5	10	11	8	13

Appointments to Other Bodies: Gender, Age, Type of Appointment

	Total	Male	Female	Age					N/K
				Under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	
1st Appt	51	24	27	1	2	4	1	1	42
2nd Appt	9	9	–	–	–	–	6	2	1
3rd+ Appt	5	5	–	–	–	–	1	–	4
Total	65	38	27	1	2	4	8	3	47

Appointees: Declared Political Activity

Political Party	No of Appointees
UUP	5
SDLP	2
DUP	2
Alliance	–
Others	–
Total	9

Department of the Environment

Membership of Public Bodies at 31 March 1997

Membership of Public Bodies : Chairmen and Members

	Male	Female
Chairmen	34	5
Members	237	109
Total	271	114

Membership of Public Bodies: Gender and Remuneration

	Remuneration	Total	Male	Female
Chairmen	£10,000+	8	8	–
	Less than £10,000	6	6	–
	Unpaid (expenses only)	25	20	5
Members	£10,000+	9	6	3
	Less than £10,000	103	75	28
	Unpaid (expenses only)	234	156	78
Total		385	271	114

Appointments Made to Public Bodies Between 1 April 1996 and 31 March 1997

Appointments to Executive NDPBs: Gender, Remuneration, Community Background

	Remuneration	Total	Male	Female	Community Background			
					Majority	Minority	Other	N/K
Chairmen	£10,000+	2	2	–	1	1	–	–
	Less than £10,000	1	1	–	1	–	–	–
	Unpaid (expenses only)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Members	£10,000+	9	6	3	6	2	–	1
	Less than £10,000	2	2	–	–	2	–	–
	Unpaid (expenses only)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total		14	11	3	8	5	–	1

Appointments to Other Bodies: Gender, Remuneration, Community Background

	Remuneration	Total	Male	Female	Community Background			
					Majority	Minority	Other	N/K
Chairmen	£10,000+	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Less than £10,000	2	2	–	–	1	–	1
	Unpaid (expenses only)	3	3	–	–	1	–	2
Members	£10,000+	4*	3	1	–	–	–	4
	Less than £10,000	6	6	–	3	1	–	2
	Unpaid (expenses only)	71	44	27	11	7	–	53
Total		86	58	28	14	10	–	62

*Includes 2 full-time Commissioners of the Planning Appeals Commission

Appointments to Executive NDPBs: Gender, Age, Type of Appointment

	Total	Male	Female	Age					N/K
				Under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	
1st Appt	11	8	3	–	–	3	4	2	2
2nd Appt	2	2	–	–	–	–	2	–	–
3rd+ Appt	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	–
Total	14	11	3	–	–	3	6	3	2

Appointments to Other Bodies: Gender, Age, Type of Appointment

	Total	Male	Female	Age					N/K
				Under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	
1st Appt	42	29	13	–	2	4	14	8	14
2nd Appt	38	23	15	–	–	1	2	3	32
3rd+ Appt	6	6	–	–	–	–	–	5	1
Total	86	58	28	–	2	5	16	16	47

Appointees: Declared Political Activity

Political Party	No of Appointees
UUP	7
SDLP	7
DUP	1
Alliance	1
Others	1
Total	17

Department of Finance and Personnel

Membership of Public Bodies at 31 March 1997

Membership of Public Bodies : Chairmen and Members

	Male	Female
Chairmen*	7	–
Members	46	23
Total	53	23

*Includes Lay Observer

Membership of Public Bodies: Gender and Remuneration

	Remuneration	Total	Male	Female
Chairmen	£10,000+	2	2	–
	Less than £10,000	3	3	–
	Unpaid (expenses only)	2	2	–
Members	£10,000+	–	–	–
	Less than £10,000	32	19	13
	Unpaid (expenses only)	37	27	10
Total		76	53	23

Appointments Made to Public Bodies Between 1 April 1996 and 31 March 1997

None of DFP's appointments fall within the remit of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

Appointments: Gender, Remuneration, Community Background

	Remuneration	Total	Male	Female	Community Background			
					Majority	Minority	Other	N/K
Chairmen	£10,000+	1	1	–	–	–	–	1
	Less than £10,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Unpaid (expenses only)	1	1	–	–	–	–	1
Members	£10,000+	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Less than £10,000	9	3	6	–	–	–	9
	Unpaid (expenses only)	12	8	4	–	–	–	12
Total		23	13	10	–	–	–	23

Appointments: Gender, Age, Type of Appointment

	Total	Male	Female	Age					N/K
				Under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	
1st Appt	10	8	2	–	–	2	2	1	5
2nd Appt	13	5	8	–	2	5	2	–	4
3rd+ Appt	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total	23	13	10	–	2	7	4	1	9

Appointees: Declared Political Activity

No appointee declared any political activity in the past 5 years.

Department of Health and Social Services

Membership of Public Bodies at 31 March 1997

Membership of Public Bodies : Chairmen and Members

	Male	Female
Chairmen	98	51
Members	650	419
Total	748	470

Membership of Public Bodies: Gender and Remuneration

	Remuneration	Total	Male	Female
Chairmen	£10,000+	50	37	13
	Less than £10,000	84	51	33
	Unpaid (expenses only)	15	10	5
Members	£10,000+	16	13	3
	Less than £10,000	442	255	187
	Unpaid (expenses only)	611	382	229
Total		1,218	748	470

Appointments Made to Public Bodies Between 1 April 1996 and 31 March 1997

Appointments to Executive NDPBs and HPSS Bodies: Gender, Remuneration, Community Background

	Remuneration	Total	Male	Female	Community Background			
					Majority	Minority	Other	N/K
Chairmen	£10,000+	6	6	–	4	2	–	–
	Less than £10,000	1	1	–	–	–	–	1
	Unpaid (expenses only)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Members	£10,000+	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Less than £10,000	53	30	23	13	11	3	26
	Unpaid (expenses only)	15	7	8	5	8	–	2
Total		75	44	31	22	21	3	29

Appointments to Other Bodies: Gender, Remuneration, Community Background

	Remuneration	Total	Male	Female	Community Background			
					Majority	Minority	Other	N/K
Chairmen	£10,000+	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Less than £10,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Unpaid (expenses only)	4	2	2	–	–	–	4
Members	£10,000+	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Less than £10,000	1	1	–	–	–	–	1
	Unpaid (expenses only)	30	15	15	–	–	–	30
Total		35	18	17	–	–	–	35

Appointments to Executive NDPBs and HPSS Bodies: Gender, Age, Type of Appointment

	Total	Male	Female	Age					N/K
				Under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	
1st Appt	40	21	19	–	6	12	8	10	4
2nd Appt	32	20	12	–	–	5	13	12	2
3rd+ Appt	3	3	–	–	–	–	–	2	1
Total	75	44	31	–	6	17	21	24	7

Appointments to Other Bodies: Gender, Age, Type of Appointment

	Total	Male	Female	Age					N/K
				Under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	
1st Appt	19	8	11	–	4	6	5	1	3
2nd Appt	13	7	6	–	1	5	5	1	1
3rd+ Appt	3	3	–	–	–	–	2	–	1
Total	35	18	17	–	5	11	12	2	5

Appointees: Declared Political Activity

Political Party	No of Appointees
UUP	–
SDLP	1
DUP	–
Alliance	–
Others	1
Total	2

Northern Ireland Office

Membership of Public Bodies at 31 March 1997

Membership of Public Bodies : Chairmen and Members

	Male	Female
Chairmen	9	4
Members	77	48
Total	86	52

Membership of Public Bodies: Gender and Remuneration

	Remuneration	Total	Male	Female
Chairmen	£10,000+	6	6	–
	Less than £10,000	2	1	1
	Unpaid (expenses only)	5	2	3
Members	£10,000+	4	4	–
	Less than £10,000	36	22	14
	Unpaid (expenses only)	85	51	34
Total		138	86	52

Appointments Made to Public Bodies Between 1 April 1996 and 31 March 1997

Appointments to Executive NDPBs: Gender, Remuneration, Community Background

	Remuneration	Total	Male	Female	Community Background			
					Majority	Minority	Other	N/K
Chairmen	£10,000+	1	1	–	–	1	–	–
	Less than £10,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Unpaid (expenses only)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Members	£10,000+	3	3	–	2	1	–	–
	Less than £10,000	10	5	5	4	6	–	–
	Unpaid (expenses only)	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Total		14	9	5	6	8	–	–

Appointments to Other Bodies: Gender, Remuneration, Community Background

	Remuneration	Total	Male	Female	Community Background			
					Majority	Minority	Other	N/K
Chairmen	£10,000+	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Less than £10,000	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Unpaid (expenses only)	1	–	1	–	–	–	1
Members	£10,000+	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	Less than £10,000	1	–	1	–	–	–	1
	Unpaid (expenses only)	26	15	11	–	–	–	26
Total		28	15	13	–	–	–	28

Appointments to Executive NDPBs and HPSS Bodies: Gender, Age, Type of Appointment

	Total	Male	Female	Age					N/K
				Under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	
1st Appt	9	5	4	1	2	3	1	1	1
2nd Appt	4	3	1	–	1	1	–	2	–
3rd+ Appt	1	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	–
Total	14	9	5	1	3	4	1	4	1

Appointments to Other Bodies: Gender, Age, Type of Appointment

	Total	Male	Female	Age					N/K
				Under 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60+	
1st Appt	16	7	9	–	–	4	7	2	3
2nd Appt	9	8	1	–	1	2	4	–	2
3rd+ Appt	3	–	3	–	–	–	2	1	–
Total	28	15	13	–	1	6	13	3	5

Appointees: Declared Political Activity

Political Party	No of Appointees
UUP	–
SDLP	1
DUP	–
Alliance	–
Others	–
Total	1

Office For The Regulation of Electricity and Gas (OFREG)

Membership of Public Body at 31 March 1997

Membership of Public Body: Chairman and Members

	Male	Female
Chairmen	–	1
Members	4	5
Total	4	6

Membership of Public Body: Gender and Remuneration

	Remuneration	Total	Male	Female
Chairmen	£10,000+	1	–	1
	Less than £10,000	–	–	–
	Unpaid (expenses only)	–	–	–
Members	£10,000+	–	–	–
	Less than £10,000	–	–	–
	Unpaid (expenses only)	9	4	5
Total		10	4	6
