

Public Appointments



Non-Departmental Public Bodies

This section covers the Non-Departmental Public Bodies sponsored by the Cabinet Office and a number of units and organisations that have links to the Cabinet Office, but whose work does not contribute directly to the achievement of the Department's objectives or whose funding arrangements are separate.

Civil Service Appeal Board

The Civil Service Appeal Board is an independent body sponsored by the Civil Service Capability Group (CSCG). It hears appeals from civil servants and staff bodies which offer analogous terms and conditions of service against;

- dismissal and early retirement
- the non-payment of compensation or the amount of compensation paid under the Civil Service Compensation Scheme to civil servants dismissed on inefficiency grounds;
- refusal to allow participation in political activities; and
- forfeiture of superannuation.

If the Board concludes that a department or Agency's decision has been unfair, it has the power, as appropriate, to:

- recommend reinstatement, reinstatement with a lesser penalty or re-engagement;
- order the payment of compensation in line with either Employment Tribunal guidelines (in dismissal appeals) or under the inefficiency terms of the Civil Service Compensation Scheme;
- recommend the granting of permission to take part in political activities; or
- order the payment of compensation.

The Civil Service Appeal Board is chaired by an external recruit supported by the Deputy Chairs, one appointed from the management side and the other from the trade union side. They are supported by 18 Board members, nine from the management side and nine from the trade union side. All appointments to the Board are made in line with the guidance on public appointments to advisory non-departmental public bodies issued by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

You can access more information, including the Board's Annual Report, on the website at:
www.civilserviceappealboard.gov.uk

House of Lords Appointments Commission (HoLAC)

The House of Lords Appointments Commission is an advisory, non-departmental public body with two core functions: to recommend individuals for appointment as non-party political life peers; and, to vet most nominations for life peers, including those nominated by the UK political parties, to ensure the highest standards of propriety.

The Commission was established in May 2000 as part of the transitional arrangements for reform of the House of Lords.

The Commission comprises an externally recruited independent Chairman, two externally recruited independent Members, and representatives of the three major political parties. The Commission publishes an annual report on its activities. Members of the Commission are appointed by the Prime Minister. Further information about the members of the Commission and its work is set out on the Commission's website at: www.lordsappointments.gov.uk

Main Honours Advisory Committee

The Main Honours Advisory Committee is formed by the chairs of eight specialist committees which look at nominations for honours from members of the public, government departments and others. Other members of the committee are the Chief of Defence Staff, the Permanent Secretary, Foreign and Commonwealth Office and another Permanent Secretary. The Committee is chaired by the Cabinet Secretary and Head of the Home Civil Service.

The Committee, and the sub-committees, each normally meet twice a year to consider candidates for the New Year and Birthday Honours rounds. The Main Honours Advisory Committee was established as part of the programme of reform to the honours system set out in cm 6479: *Reform of the Honours System*, published in February 2005.

The individual specialist committees comprise a non-Civil Service chair and a majority of non-Civil Service members, all selected after open advertisement. There are also permanent secretaries and other officials on the specialist committees, depending on the subject matter. Details of the composition on the committees can be found at: www.honours.gov.uk

Advisory Committee on Business Appointments (ACoBA)

The Advisory Committee on Business Appointments is an advisory non-departmental public body which provides advice to the Prime Minister or the Foreign Secretary on applications from the most senior Crown servants who wish to take up outside appointments within two years of leaving Crown service in accordance with the *Rules on the Acceptance of Outside Appointments by Crown Servants*.

The Committee also acts as a joint body providing advice directly to former Ministers of the UK Government, the Scottish Executive and the National Assembly for Wales about any appointments they wish to take up after leaving office.

The Committee publishes an annual report on its activities. Members of the Committee are appointed by the Prime Minister. Further information about the members of the Committee and its work is set out on the Committee's website at www.acoba.gov.uk/

The Committee also publishes information on its website about the advice it has given once an appointment is taken up or announced.

Commission for the Compact

The Commission for the Compact was set up as an independent public body (NDPB and company limited by guarantee) in order to promote and advance the implementation of the Compact and associated codes of practice and to bridge the gap between Government and the third sector to enable better partnership working. Its independence has been seen as the most vital asset and means of achieving its aims and objectives which are as follows:

- increase awareness and understanding of the Compact within public sector bodies and voluntary and community organisations;
- promote greater use of the Compact by those bodies and organisations;
- collect and publish evidence of the benefits of using the Compact;
- identify examples of good and bad practice in Compact working;
- ensure that the Compact keeps up to date with relevant changes in legislation and policy.

The Commission does not investigate individual breaches of the Compact or adjudicate on questions about the scope or application of the Compact.

The Commission was launched in April 2007 and reached financial independence in November 2007.

It is currently headed by Commissioner Sir Herbert Massie CBE and, in the process of being appointed, Chief Executive Officer Richard Corden. The Commission employs nine policy staff and is based in Birmingham.

Further information can be found on the Commission website www.thecompany.org.uk

Committee on Standards in Public Life (CSPL)

The Committee on Standards in Public Life is an advisory non-departmental public body. It is charged to examine current concerns about standards of conduct of all holders of public office, including arrangements relating to financial and commercial activities, and make recommendations to any changes in present arrangements that might be required to ensure the highest standards of propriety in public life.

To fulfil this role and in addition to its formal inquiries, reports and research into public attitudes, the Committee devotes time throughout the year to discussing current issues and concerns relating to standards in public life. These considerations may, and sometimes do, result in full-scale inquiry. Even where no inquiry is conducted, these are regarded by the Committee as a useful check on current standards and the effectiveness, or otherwise, of the arrangements in place to ensure the highest standards of propriety in public life.

The Committee's consideration of these specific standards issues takes place within an overall appreciation of the level of trust in public institutions. The issues considered by the Committee come from a wide range of sources, including correspondence received, debates in parliament, and issues raised by the media. Not all these issues are about 'current concerns' with standards in public life. The Committee is equally interested to see and consider issues that demonstrate that arrangements already in place are working to ensure the highest standards of propriety in public life.

Sir Christopher Kelly was appointed Chair of the Committee on 1st January 2008, on a five year, non renewable term, taking over from Rita Donaghy CBE, who had been the Interim Chair since April 2007.

The Committee reports to the Prime Minister, who approves the appointment of the chair and members. You can find the Committee's consultation papers, reports and evidence submitted, and other publications on the website www.public-standards.gov.uk

Security Commission and Security Vetting Appeals Panel

The Security Commission and Security Vetting Appeals Panel are independent bodies sponsored by the Directorate, Security and Intelligence (Security Policy Division).

The Security Commission is available, at the request of the Prime Minister, to investigate and report on the circumstances in which a breach of security has occurred in the public service and to advise whether any change in security arrangements is necessary or desirable.

The current membership of the Commission is Sir Charles Mantell (Deputy Chairman), Sir John Foley, Sir Clive Whitmore and Sir John Goulden. There are currently three vacancies.

The Security Vetting Appeals Panel exists to provide an independent avenue of appeal for existing staff and contractors whose security clearance has been refused or withdrawn and to make recommendations to the appropriate head of department.

The current membership of the Panel is Dame Janet Smith (Chairman), Sir David Penry-Davey (Deputy Chairman), Sir Peter Woodhead, Sir John Bletloch, Dr George Gray and Mr Peter Jones.

Futurebuilders Advisory Panel

The Futurebuilders Advisory Panel was set up in 2005, originally by the Home Office, to provide independent advice to Ministers on how the Futurebuilders programme is progressing. This responsibility transferred to the Cabinet Office in summer 2006. During the year, the Advisory Panel acted as a 'critical friend' to the programme and provided a sounding board for Ministers.

The Futurebuilders Fund, a highly innovative demonstration programme, tested the theory that if third sector organisations can access investment finance at reasonable cost, they could then compete for, and win, public service delivery contracts and that public service delivery would improve as a result.

The emphasis was on a range of investments and loans rather than grants, so it was very important to ensure that we all learned as much as possible about how it works and how effective it was at helping the third sector to deliver more effective public services.

The Advisory Panel was chaired by Baroness Jill Pitkeathley and the other members were:

- Dr Mohammed Amran
- Mr Imtiaz Farookhi
- Ms Margaret Hyde
- Mr Bhupendra Mistry
- Ms Maureen Salmon
- Ms Anna Southall
- Mr Ted Unsworth
- Ms Sarah Wood

The Panel was appointed after public advertisement and was fortunate to attract people who had such wide ranging experience and knowledge across public, voluntary and private sectors. In addition, representatives from Departments with a policy responsibility for the public service delivery strands on which the Futurebuilders programme was focused, sat on the Advisory Panel as observers.

The Advisory Panel had been set up as a Non Departmental Public Body and its terms of reference were to:

- advise on progress, effectiveness and future developments relating to the fund
- scrutinise and evaluate the activities of the fund
- influence the development of the fund

The Advisory Panel worked in co-operation with the Futurebuilders Board and with its other evaluation programmes, while maintaining the independence which a 'critical friend' requires. During the year, members of the Advisory Panel undertook a number of activities including a programme of visits to third sector organisations that had experience in applying to the Futurebuilders Fund to increase their knowledge and received direct feedback from investees and potential investees.

The Futurebuilders Advisory Panel ceased to exist on 31 March 2008.

Capacity Builders

Capacitybuilders was established in April 2006 to manage and administer the ChangeUp programme. ChangeUp is a Government funding programme, developed with third sector organisations, to build capacity and infrastructure in their sector. It aims to transform front-line third sector organisations, so that local communities will be able to experience a real difference in the quality of their lives.

Capacitybuilders overall aim is to help create a more effective third sector so that third sector organisations are able to access high quality support that meets their needs, when they need it. Their key objectives are:

- improve the quality and effectiveness of support for third sector organisations
- demonstrate to key stakeholders the benefits of support services
- aim to ensure equal access for all third sector organisations to mainstream support services and target resources where necessary to address the needs of particular excluded groups
- influence funding policy and practice to ensure sustainable support to third sector organisations
- engage with the public sector

The legal form of Capacitybuilders is a Company Limited by Guarantee; it has not been established in statute. Capacity Builders is led by a board of ten directors. Six of the directors are ministerial appointments and non executive directors.

Other office holders

Civil Service Commissioners and Commissioner for Public Appointments

The Civil Service Commissioners and the Commissioner for Public Appointments are Independent Statutory Office holders supported by the Department. They are the Independent regulators in areas for which the Cabinet Office has Policy responsibility. The Civil Service Commissioners and the Commissioner for Public Appointments are all appointed through Prerogative powers by way of orders in council which are secondary legislation.

Civil Service Commissioners

The Civil Service Commissioners contribute to the development of an effective and impartial Civil Service and support its core values by giving an assurance that appointments are made on merit on the basis of fair and open competition and by promoting the Civil Service Code. There are fifteen Commissioners, including the First Civil Service Commissioner, Janet Paraskeva. The Commissioners are appointed directly by the Crown under Royal Prerogative, and are not civil servants. They are appointed following fair and open competition, and between them bring experience from a wide variety of backgrounds. They are independent from Ministers and Government Departments.

The Commissioners' activities include:

- Issuing a Recruitment Code which provides an effective and flexible approach to recruitment at all levels;
- Auditing compliance with the Recruitment Code and considering complaints in relation to the application of the Code;
- Chairing and overseeing the process of selection of senior civil servants;
- Promoting the core Civil Service values of integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality as set out in the Civil Service Code;
- Investigating appeals under the Civil Service Code, the Diplomatic Service Code of Ethics, and the Code of Conduct for Special Advisers.

The Commissioners report annually on their work to The Queen. The annual report, and further information on their role and work is available on the Commissioners' website at www.civilservicecommissioners.org/

The Government's draft Constitutional Renewal Bill, published on 25 March, includes provisions which will put the Commissioners on a statutory footing, and establish an independent Civil Service Commission.

Commissioner for Public Appointments

The Commissioner for Public Appointments is an independent statutory office-holder, established under Order in Council and appointed by The Queen. The role of the Commissioner is to regulate and report on around 10,000 Ministerial appointments to the boards of over 1,000 public bodies. The current Commissioner, Janet Gaymer CBE QC, took up office in January 2006.

The Commissioner produces a *Code of Practice* which Ministers and Government departments follow during the appointments process. The *Code* requires public appointments to be made on the basis of merit, following an open and transparent process. These processes must involve an Independent Assessor (and from October 2008 all such Independent Public Appointments Assessors must be accredited by the Commissioner). The Commissioner may also investigate complaints received about a selection process.

The Commissioner is required by Order in Council to audit appointment policies and practices, and also to publish an annual report. The Commissioner is also required to promote equal opportunities.

The Commissioner is supported by an independent office called the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA). More information about the Commissioner may be found on the OCPA website www.ocpa.gov.uk/

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