



Department for
Communities

An Roinn
Pobal

Department for
Commonities

www.communities-ni.gov.uk

Northern Ireland Housing Executive Board Members Competition

Candidate Information Booklet

Completed applications must be returned to DfC Public Appointments
no later than **12 noon** (UK local time) **on Monday 10 March 2025**



© Crown copyright 2024

Equality of Opportunity and Diversity

The Department for Communities (DfC) is committed to equality of opportunity and welcomes applications from all suitably qualified people irrespective of religious belief, gender, disability, ethnic origin, political opinion, age, marital status, sexual orientation or whether or not they have dependants. We would particularly welcome applications from women, people with a disability, young people and people from minority ethnic groups as they are under-represented across public appointments. An e-version application pack is available from publicappointments@communities-ni.gov.uk. This material will be made available on request in other formats such as Braille, large print, audio etc. All reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate the needs of applicants with a disability.

Privacy Notice

DfC will only process the personal data you provide us for the purpose of recruiting new membership to the Board of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, in line with the Housing (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 and in line with the Commissioner for Public Appointments NI Code of Practice. For more information, please see our Privacy Notice at: www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/supplementary-privacy-notice-dfc-business-areas.

Contact

If you require further information about the appointment process or progress of your application, please contact Public Appointments as below:

028 9081 9417

publicappointments@communities-ni.gov.uk

Public Appointments, Governance Unit Level 5, Causeway Exchange, 1-7 Bedford Street, Belfast, BT2 7EG

Contents

Welcome Note	5
Section 1 Background Information	7
NIHE Background Information	8
Housing Executive Revitalisation Programme	8
Public Appointments Information	9
Section 2 Role Profile	10
Role of the Board	11
Governance Arrangements	12
Integrity and Conflicts of Interest & Conflicts of Loyalty	12
Remuneration and Time Commitment	13
Appraisal	13
Previous Appointments to the NIHE Board (the Two Terms Rule)	13
Section 3 Person Specification	14
Person Specification	15
Selection Criteria	15

Section 4 How to Apply and Contact Details	17
How to Apply and Contact Details	18
Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form	18
Timeframe for Process	19
Sifting and Shortlisting of Applications	19
Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS)	19
Interviews	19
Appointment	20
Publicising Appointments	21
Diversity in Public Appointments	21
Induction and Training	21
Complaints	21
Section 5 Other Relevant Information	22
Double Paying (Candidates from the Public Sector)	23
Former Civil Servant	23
Nationality Requirements	23
ANNEX A The Seven Principles of Public Life	25
ANNEX B Integrity and Conflicts of Interest – Guide for Candidates	27

Dear Applicant

NI HOUSING EXECUTIVE – APPOINTMENT OF BOARD MEMBERS

Thank-you for your interest in joining the Housing Executive Board as a Member.

This is an exciting opportunity to join an important public body at a time of significant challenge and change. The Housing Executive delivers a range of critically important public services. It is one of the largest social housing landlords in the UK, managing around 83,000 homes, although its footprint extends to more than 220,000 homes across Northern Ireland. It is also the regional strategic housing authority, responsible for a broad range of functions, duties and powers.

Its objectives are to deliver better homes, support independent living and build stronger communities, whilst delivering a quality service. Its work reaches across Northern Ireland, working with local communities and dealing with a vast range of complex and challenging issues. As a Board Member, you will have an important role in ensuring resources are utilised effectively and efficiently to meet these objectives and delivery of its many critical services, whilst also having a key role in assisting the organisation, and Board, through a period of significant change resulting from the Housing Executive Revitalisation Programme.

Joining the NIHE Board, whilst challenging, is highly rewarding, and provides a multitude of new opportunities and experiences. I would encourage anyone with the required knowledge, skills and experience, from any background, to consider applying.

I hope the information enclosed in this pack encourages you to apply for this position. Please remember to complete the documentation fully and return it by the required closing date.

Kind regards

Heloise Brown
Director of Social Housing Policy and Oversight
Department for Communities

Jim McCall has been a Member of the NI Housing Executive Board since 1 June 2025. Below he gives his thoughts on the role:

My background is within the health and social care sector, having held a number of senior positions in a range of organisations across Northern Ireland. I have a real interest and involvement in social housing for people with special needs including individuals and families who are homeless, people with mental health problems or those discharged from long stay hospital and families in crisis resulting from domestic violence. In my role I've have been able to ensure that a multi-agency approach is adopted to meet the housing requirements of people with complex needs.

Since my appointment, I have been fully committed to the strategic aims and objectives of the NIHE, and have been actively engaged in influencing key decision-making linked to critical issues such as the management of the transition to ENGIE for key facilities management services following the collapse of Carillion.

I have been specifically engaged in the delivery of the NIHE key delivery targets connected to Supporting People including the Supporting People Strategy – this aims to help people live independently in the community. I was appointed to Chair the Progress and Scrutiny Group set up to ensure that the recommendations set out in the DfC review of Supporting People are delivered.

Other key issues I've been involved with include overseeing the issues facing the NIHE following the Grenfell Tower tragedy, and the development of the Tower Blocks Strategy and Action Plan. I've also been a member of a task and finish group established to assist with the review of NIHE Maintenance Services. I have also sought to focus on ensuring the delivery of key strategic objectives set out by the NIHE initiatives such as TBUC, specifically working in partnership with various statutory partners, community interests and third sector organisations.

The NIHE Board is supported by a range of sub-committees. During my time on the Board, I've been a member of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, allowing me to be actively involved in critical governance and assurance initiatives, and the Asset Management Committee. I'm currently Chair of the Tenants and Customer Services Committee which has allowed me to concentrate on the issues facing NIHE tenants and communities particularly in relation to safety and dealing with homelessness.

The range of issues which come to the NIHE Board are varied and complex, and as a Board Member you have a key strategic role in ensuring that the organisation meets its aims and objectives. Being a Board Member is a highly enjoyable role, but not without its challenges, and gives individuals a real opportunity to make a difference.

Section 1

Background Information



1. The Department for Communities (DfC) wishes to invite applications for the appointment of two Members to the Board of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE). The appointments are expected to begin on 1 June 2025 and will be for a term of up to five years.

NIHE Background Information

2. The NIHE was established by the Housing Executive Act (NI) 1971 to take over the housing responsibilities of the 65 separate housing authorities that existed at that time. It is now the overall housing authority for Northern Ireland, with an annual budget of approximately £1.2bn and staff of approximately 3,500.
3. The NIHE carries out two very important public service roles. First, it is the landlord of approximately 83,000 dwellings, in addition to its management of a commercial property portfolio of around 400 units and 6,170 leasehold properties, making it one of the biggest social housing providers in the UK and Ireland. Second, it is an Arm's Length Body that delivers a range of housing functions on behalf of the government. Its services impact the lives of one in every three people across Northern Ireland. Critically, it was established with the key aim of ensuring independence, transparency and fairness in the allocation of social housing. After fifty years this remains a cornerstone of its statutory responsibilities through its administration of the Common Housing Waiting List.
4. In delivering its core housing functions, the NIHE makes a substantial contribution

to better outcomes in health, education and wellbeing, with its vision being one in which housing plays its part in creating a peaceful, inclusive, prosperous and fair society. It works closely with local communities and other agencies across the public, private and voluntary sectors to tackle issues that make a real difference to everyone's quality of life including:

- the physical and social regeneration of local neighbourhoods
- community safety and reductions in anti-social behaviour
- good community relations
- supporting social enterprises to encourage inclusion and diversity

5. With its headquarters in Belfast, customer services are provided through a network of Area Offices, District Offices and Grants Offices.
6. Further information about NIHE and its work can be found at www.nihe.gov.uk

Housing Executive Revitalisation Programme

7. While the NIHE has served the community well since 1971, it faces a huge challenge to maintain and upgrade its housing stock under its current resourcing model. There is a need for transformation of that model to ensure that the NIHE can continue to deliver high quality homes for its tenants, respond to climate change, tackle homelessness and regenerate neighbourhoods. The Board has a key role in revitalising the organisation.

Public Appointments Information

8. Appointments to NILGOSC are regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments Northern Ireland (CPA NI) and this competition may be examined by CPA NI for compliance with its Code of Practice.
9. The NI Executive has introduced targets for the equal representation of men and women on public body boards.
10. If you are interested in applying for this competition, further information about public appointments, including how to complete an application form, can be found at www.nidirect.gov.uk/public-appointments.
11. CPA NI periodically hosts a series of free, half-day workshops that aim to explain the Public Appointments process. Further information on these workshops, can be found at: <https://www.publicappointmentsni.org/workshops>.
If you are unable to attend a workshop, the CPANI website hosts useful public appointment information.

Section 2

Role Profile



Role of the Board

12. The NIHE Board normally consists of ten individuals – a Chair, Vice-Chair and eight Members. Four of these Members are local councillors who are nominated via the NI Housing Council, which represents the local government interest in housing, and the remaining Members are public appointment appointees made by the Minister for Communities.
13. The purpose of the NIHE Board is to provide effective leadership and strategic direction to the organisation and for ensuring the NIHE fulfils the aims and objectives agreed in the Corporate and Business Plans approved by the Minister. It is responsible for ensuring that the organisation has effective and proportionate governance arrangements in place and an internal control framework which allow risks to be effectively identified and managed. The Board will set the culture and values of the organisation, and set the tone for the organisation's engagement with stakeholders and customers. A Board Charter is currently under development.
14. The Board is responsible for holding the Chief Executive to account for the management of the organisation and the delivery of agreed plans and outcomes. The Board should also, however, support the Chief Executive in the exercise of their duties
15. Board members act solely in the interests of the NIHE and must not use the Board as a platform to champion their own interests or pursue personal agendas. They occupy a position of trust and their standards of action and behaviour must be exemplary and in-line with the seven principles of public life (Nolan principles). The NIHE has a Board Code of Conduct and there are mechanisms in place to deal with any Board disputes/conflicts to ensure they do not become wider issues that impact on the effectiveness of the Board. A Board Register of Interests is maintained, kept up to date and is publicly available to help provide transparency and promote public confidence in the NIHE
16. Communication and relationships within the Board are underpinned by a spirit of trust and professional respect. The Board recognises that using consensus to avoid conflict or encouraging members consistently to express similar views or consider only a few alternative views does not encourage constructive debate and does not give rise to an effective Board dynamic.
17. It is for the Board to decide what information it needs, and in what format, for its meetings/effective operation. If the Board is not confident that it is being fully informed about the organisation, this will be addressed by the Chair of the Board along with the Chief Executive as the Board cannot be effective with out-of-date or only partial knowledge.
18. In order to fulfil their duties, Board members must undertake initial training, and regular ongoing training and development. Review of Board skills and development will be a key part of the annual review of Board effectiveness.

Governance Arrangements

19. Good governance is essential to achievement of an organisation's strategic objectives and demonstration of accountability and transparency in the use of public funds. It is therefore an important area of focus for the Board. A Partnership Agreement between DfC and the NIHE is in place which explains the overall governance framework within which the NIHE operates: <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/partnership-agreement-between-department-communities-dfc-and-northern-ireland-housing-executive-nihe>. The NIHE Board is committed to high standards of corporate governance and has established a governance framework which reflects good practice.
20. The NIHE Board is supported by four sub-committees: the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee; the Asset Management and Maintenance Committee; the Tenant and Customer Services Committee; and the Resources and Performance Committee.
21. Board meetings take place every other month. Board sub-committee meetings taking place in the intervening months, with each committee reporting back to the Board. A nominated Board Member will chair each of the sub-committees in addition to attending the full Board meeting. All meetings are held in-person and it will be expected that Members will attend as such.

Integrity and Conflicts of Interest & Conflicts of Loyalty

22. DfC must ensure that the individuals appointed are committed to the principles and values of public service. These principles are: **Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership** and are described more fully at **Annex A**. Any private or personal interests that a potential appointee may have and that may be relevant to the work of the NIHE must be declared publicly and to the Board.
23. DfC must take account of actual, or perceived, conflicts of interest or conflicts of loyalty. Conflict of loyalty is a particular type of conflict of interest, in which an individual's loyalty or duty to another person or organisation could prevent the individual from making a decision only in the best interests of the organisation.
24. Therefore, applicants must disclose in their application form information or personal circumstances which, if they were to be appointed, could lead to a conflict of interest or be perceived as such. Conflicts of interest may not be a barrier to appointment but both real and perceived conflicts must be discussed with all candidates by the selection panel. This is to ensure that the public can have confidence in the Board's independence and impartiality, and the integrity of the potential appointees.

25. Please refer to **Annex B** for further information on this subject. The Northern Ireland Audit Office has issued a Good Practice Guide on Conflicts of Interest which can be viewed at: <https://www.niauditoffice.gov.uk/publications/conflicts-interest-good-practice>

Remuneration and Time Commitment

26. The positions attract remuneration of £7,567 per annum plus reasonable expenses (including travel, subsistence and other reasonable expenses including caring responsibilities in line with NIHE rates). The appointments are not pensionable.
27. The time commitment for these positions is a minimum of one day per month. This currently includes attendance at Board meetings, annual Board away-days, sub-committee meetings, and such other meetings as may be arranged from time to time. Board meetings are held on the last Wednesday of each month during the daytime at NIHE Headquarters in Belfast. Board Members will also be expected to take part in a variety of functions within the Housing Executive with a view to meeting staff and seeing at first hand the work they do. This topic will be further discussed at interview for shortlisted candidates.

Appraisal

28. The performance of Board Members will be subject to ongoing performance appraisal with a formal annual assessment being completed by the NIHE Chair (and prior to any reappointment taking place). Board Members will be made aware that they are being appraised, the standards against which they will be appraised, and will have an opportunity to contribute to and view their report.

Previous Appointments to the NIHE Board (the Two Terms Rule)

29. Under the CPA NI Code of Practice, applicants who have served two terms as NIHE Board Members are not eligible to apply for a third term. Any previous time served as a Board member will be taken into account. If you are unsure if this applies to you, please contact DfC using the contact details in Section 4.

Section 3

Person Specification



Person Specification

30. Applications are welcome from a wide range of individuals who have an interest in public service. The Department wishes to recognise less traditional career paths and experiences such as community involvement or charitable and voluntary work, as well as those experiences found from within the business community and the wider public sector.
31. Candidates will be assessed against a number of set criteria. Details of each criteria and examples of the type of evidence the selection panel will be looking for in each instance are provided.

Selection Criteria

32. Candidates will be expected to demonstrate in their application form and - if shortlisted - at interview specific examples that show they are able to satisfy each of the following criteria and have the skills, experience and knowledge required:

Note: The term 'organisation' can be defined as a body operating in the public, community, voluntary or private sectors.

1. Governance Experience

Experience of delivering good governance within an organisation.

NB Governance refers to the way in which an organisation is directed and controlled. This includes how objectives are set, how resources are used, and how performance and risks are monitored and assessed.

Examples of the type of evidence which the selection panel will be looking for are outlined

below. You do not have to describe activities which meet each and every one of these bullet points:

- Understanding your role in the promotion of good governance including how to reduce any potential reputational damage or fraud;
- Ability to constructively challenge decisions, policies or procedures based on relevant evidence;
- Experience of holding people to account for decisions reached;
- Experience in developing, implementing, or monitoring key governance and risk documents / policies
- Being able to identify, evaluate and manage risks which may have an impact on an organisation's performance both adversely and positively;
- Demonstrating standards of behaviour that gain a reputation of trust and integrity within a team / organisational environment.

2. Financial Management Experience

Experience of financial management and financial analysis in an organisation.

Examples of the type of evidence the selection panel will be looking for are outlined below. You do not have to describe activities which meet each and every one of these bullet points:

- Ability to constructively challenge financial proposals, including value for money assessments as part of business case processes;

- An understanding of guiding principles relating to procurement to ensure efficiency and value for money;
- An understanding of public finances, budget setting and building, and annual reporting standards;
- Experience of financial management and effective utilisation of resources;
- Experience of implementing compliant risk management, internal control and/or audit systems;
- Ability to interrogate challenging financial statements and budgets to raise issues that require action.

3. Strategic Development & Implementation

Experience of contributing to the development, implementation and monitoring of strategies or policies to successfully achieve the aims of an organisation.

Examples of the type of evidence the selection panel will be looking for are outlined below. You do not have to describe activities which meet each and every one of these bullet points:

- Involvement in setting a clear direction and articulating the organisation's vision;
- Ability to anticipate future consequences and future trends accurately and plan accordingly eg social, economic, environmental including energy usage / decarbonisation, demographic and ageing population trends;
- Experience of contributing to a strategic plan for an organisation;
- Experience of improving the performance of an organisation through effective strategies, plans and procedures;
- Ability to motivate and inspire others to achieve aims through leadership;
- Ability to challenge policy decisions and outcomes, and production of innovative proposals for change.

4. Partnership and Collaborative Working

Experience of developing and building effective collaborative partnerships with internal and external stakeholders leading to successful outcomes.

Examples of the type of evidence the selection panel will be looking for are outlined below. You do not have to describe activities which meet each and every one of these bullet points:

- Ability to develop and maintain trustful, positive and collaborative working relationships;
- Experience of using persuasive and compelling arguments, using clear, concise language, to get others to understand and accept a different perspective to achieve a beneficial outcome;
- Ability to constructively contribute to group discussions and decision making;
- Ability to use partnerships to deliver shared objectives and successful outcomes;
- Experience of collaborating with individuals and organisations to gain commitment, solve issues and/or to achieve consensus.

Section 4

How to Apply and Contact Details



How to Apply and Contact Details

33. All applications must be made on the form provided. Hard copy or electronic versions are acceptable. Completed application forms can be delivered by email, hand or post to:

Email:

publicappointments@communities-ni.gov.uk

Public Appointments
Governance Unit
Department for Communities
Level 5
Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7EG

Telephone: 028 90819417

If you have any queries regarding the appointment process or any other aspect of this competition, please contact Ruth McNeill via the above contact details.

34. In your application form, you may use examples from your working or personal life, e.g. part-time or leisure activities, including any voluntary or community work you are or have been involved in. Make sure you take full advantage to provide practical evidence and examples of how you consider you meet the requirements for this appointment. Further advice can be found within the application form.

35. To ensure equality of opportunity for all applicants:

- CVs, letters, or any other supplementary material in place of, or in addition to, completed application forms will not be accepted;
- Applicants must ensure their completed application form is legible, whether this is completed electronically or written;
- Applications will not be examined until after the closing deadline;
- The number of words is limited to 350 per criterion.

36. **It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that their application form is complete.**

Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

37. The DfC is required to monitor a number of areas including gender, ethnic origin, community background and disability of applicants to ensure that equal opportunities measures are effective. Applicants are therefore asked to complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring form included in the application pack. The information is purely for monitoring purposes. It is not made available to the selection panel and does not play any part in the decision-making process.

Timeframe for Process

38. **The deadline for receipt of all applications is 12 noon (UK local time) on Monday 10 March 2025** with delivery instructions at paragraph 33. It is the responsibility of the applicant, taking into account their chosen method of delivery, to ensure that sufficient time is allowed for their application to arrive with the Department, on or before the deadline. **Late applications will not be accepted.**
39. Applicants who send their application form electronically are also required to meet the closing deadline for receipt in this office. The date and time at which the electronic application was received as recorded by the Department's IT system will be used to determine whether an application sent electronically is received before or after the closing date/time.
40. Once your application has been received, it will be acknowledged within 3 working days.

Sifting and Shortlisting of Applications

41. The selection panel will meet to consider applications on 8 April 2025 and will carry out a sift exercise, against a numerical rating scale, to assess how the skills, knowledge, experience and other qualities presented in your application meet the selection criteria as detailed in paragraph 32. Applications provided to the selection panel will be anonymised, which means that it will not include your name or personal details.
42. Only those applications that meet the agreed panel standard for each of the criterion will be considered for interview. If

a high number of applications are received and shortlisting is required, only the top scoring candidates, with a cumulative score across all four criteria, will progress to interview. All criteria are weighted equally. In addition, if there is a high number of applicants the Department may introduce a 'sift panel' which will consist of a Departmental representative, and two CPANI Independent Assessors. This panel will conduct the sift exercise, with the Departmental representative and the lead CPANI Assessor also taking part in the interview stage. All candidates sifted out will be provided with feedback based on the selection panel's agreed assessment of their application, if requested, as well as having the option of asking for a review of the selection panel's decision.

Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS)

43. The aim of the GIS is to provide applicants with a disability the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities beyond the initial application stage. Applicants with a disability who meet all of the criteria at the sift stage will automatically be offered an interview. Their application will not be subjected to any short-listing which may take place. Further information on this scheme can be found in Section 6 of the application form.

Interviews

44. Interviews are expected to take place on 29 April, 1 & 6 May 2025 at Causeway Exchange, 1-7 Bedford Street, Belfast. The interview panel members are:
- Heloise Brown: Director of Social Housing Policy and Oversight, DfC (Chair);

- Nicole Lappin: NIHE Chair (Panel Member); and
- Jim Beatty: Commissioner for Public Appointments NI Independent Assessor (Independent Panel Member).

45. The interview will be criteria based which means that all the questions asked by the selection panel will be linked to the criteria. You will be asked to provide specific examples and the selection panel will evaluate your answers. Candidates invited for interview are eligible for reimbursement of reasonable travelling expenses incurred within the UK and Ireland only.

Candidates are asked to advise DfC Public Appointments if they anticipate difficulties attending on the dates specified.

46. The selection panel will score candidates at interview against an agreed pass mark and those found to have achieved the pass mark will be recommended for appointment. All candidates will be updated on the outcome of their interview, with feedback on their performance provided upon request. The Minister for Communities has stipulated that appointments will be made on the basis of unranked (alphabetical) lists of candidates.

47. A 'candidate summary' will be agreed by the panel. This will provide an objective analysis of each candidate's skills and experience, based on the information provided by each candidate during the appointment process and the panel's assessment of that candidate, and inform the final appointment decision.

The summaries will be presented in an unranked order to the Minister.

48. Those candidates who are unsuccessful at interview and do not have their name presented to the Minister, will be advised in writing of the outcome of their interview which will include detail on how to request feedback on their performance. Candidates who are successful at interview, and will be considered for appointment, will be advised in writing.

Appointment

49. Those candidates whose application is successful, and who are appointed by the Minister, will have their appointment confirmed formally in writing. Those candidates not selected by the Minister, will also be advised in writing of the outcome.

50. Prior to names being presented to the Minister, a cross-departmental check will be carried out on the probity and performance of candidates who currently hold or have held public appointment roles. Any information that indicates that a candidate's performance and / or probity have been unsatisfactory will be noted in the candidate summary.

51. The Minister for Communities will be asked if they wish to create a reserve list to fill any unforeseen Member vacancies on the Board that may arise within 12 months from the date of the Minister's decision.

Publicising Appointments

52. A press release will be published to announce the appointments with the appointees required to complete a political activity form and approve a short biography for publication. The biography will be based on information provided by the candidate throughout the competition process.
53. The press release will include:
- The appointee's name;
 - A short description of NIHE;
 - A brief summary of the skills and knowledge they bring to the role;
 - The length of the appointment term and detail on remuneration;
 - Details of all other ministerial public appointments held and any related remuneration received; and
 - Details of the appointee's response to the political activity question.

Diversity in Public Appointments

54. DfC is committed to equality of opportunity and welcomes applications from all suitably qualified people irrespective of religious belief, gender, disability, ethnic origin, political opinion, age, marital status, sexual orientation or whether or not they have dependants. We would particularly welcome applications from women, people with a disability, young people and people from minority ethnic groups, as these groups are under-represented in public appointments.

55. All public appointments must be made on the basis of merit. Only those individuals judged to best meet the requirement of the post will be recommended to the Minister for appointment. The final decision on appointment will rest with the Minister for Communities.

Induction and Training

56. The appointees will be expected to attend appropriate induction and training courses, as a condition of your appointment. Further information will be provided upon appointment.
57. **Every effort will be made to provide whatever reasonable support is needed to help the appointees carry out their duties.**

Complaints

58. If you wish to make a complaint about any aspect of this appointment's process, you should in the first instance contact DfC's Head of Governance Public Appointments who will manage your complaint:

FAO Head of Governance and
Public Appointments
Department for Communities
Level 5, Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street
Belfast, BT2 7EG

Email: CGU@communities-ni.gov.uk

Telephone: 028 90819192

59. You may contact the Commission for Public Appointments NI at:

Email: info@publicappointmentsni.org

Telephone: 028 905 24820

Section 5

Other Relevant Information



Double Paying (Candidates from the Public Sector)

60. Applicants who already work in the public sector need to be aware that:

- they may be ineligible for consideration for this appointment if in DfC's view there is a conflict of interest, the perception of a conflict or a potential conflict, between the appointment and their existing commitments; and,
- they will be asked to confirm that they have permission from their employer to take up an appointment if one is offered and the employer will be asked to confirm this.
- there is a general guiding principle that an individual should not be paid twice from the public purse for the same period of time. As a result applicants who already work in the public sector may not be entitled to claim remuneration including expenses for this position if the duties are undertaken during a period of time for which they are already paid by the public sector. If in doubt contact your employer for advice.

In the interests of minimising the potential for double paying to occur the Department reserves the right to contact your employer regarding your candidature.

Former Civil Servant

61. Any former civil servant applying for this position must comply with the relevant approvals from section 6.1 Annex 4 of the NICS HR Handbook – Standards of Conduct, i.e. for SCS to seek approval for any appointment up to two years following leaving the service, and following one year for G6 and below. This should be ascertained in advance of any application being submitted.

Nationality Requirements

62. The Department has no public appointments which are restricted to UK nationals only. However, there is a mandatory requirement to ensure that those appointed do not contravene immigration legislation:
- Republic of Ireland (RoI) citizens may be appointed to any post.
 - Commonwealth citizens who have immigration status allowing them to work in the UK may be appointed to any post.
 - There is an onus on non-UK and non-RoI citizens to provide proof of their right to work in the UK and an onus on the appointer to check that.

Therefore, it is the responsibility of the individual to provide evidence that they have the appropriate permission if being offered a post. The Department will check the individual's passport, share code or other documents, if necessary, to confirm if they can legally work in the UK.

ANNEX A

The background of the page is an abstract composition of large, overlapping triangles in various shades of dark blue and black. The triangles are oriented in different directions, creating a dynamic, geometric pattern. A solid pink horizontal bar is positioned to the left of the text 'ANNEX A'.

The Seven Principles of Public Life

Public appointees are expected to uphold the seven principles of public life as set by the Committee on Standards in Public Life:

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

ANNEX B

The background of the page is composed of several overlapping triangles in various shades of dark blue and black, creating a complex geometric pattern. A solid pink horizontal bar is positioned to the left of the text.

Integrity and Conflicts of Interest – Guide for Candidates

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the information contained in the leaflet “Guidance on Conflicts of Interest, Integrity and How to Raise a Complaint” produced by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments, Northern Ireland, which provides examples of the types of issues that may give rise to conflicts of interests.

All candidates who put themselves forward for a public appointment must be able to demonstrate their commitment to the principles and values of public service. One of the issues which might arise in relation to this is that of conflict of interest.

What is a conflict of interest?

1. Public Appointments require the highest standards of propriety, involving impartiality, integrity and objectivity, in relation to the stewardship of public funds and the oversight and management of all related activities. This means that any private, voluntary, charitable or political interest which might be material and relevant to the work of the body concerned should be declared. There is always the possibility for real or perceived conflicts of interest to arise. Both are a problem, as the perceived inference of a conflict may, on occasions, be as damaging as the existence of a real conflict.

2. No-one should use, or give the appearance of using, their public position to further their private interests. This is an area of particular importance, as it is of considerable concern to the public and receives a lot of media attention. It is important, therefore, that you consider your circumstances when applying for a public appointment and identify any potential conflicts of interest, whether real or perceived.

Surely a perceived conflict is not a problem, as long as I act impartially at all times?

3. The integrity of the individual is not in question here. However, it is necessary for the standing of the individual and the board that members of the public have confidence in their independence and impartiality. Even a perceived conflict of interest on the part of a board member can be extremely damaging to the body's reputation and it is therefore essential that these are declared and explored, in the same way as an actual conflict would be. The fact that a member acted impartially may be no defence against accusations of potential bias.

What should I do if I think I have a conflict of interest?

4. You will find a section on conflicts of interest in the application form for you to complete. This asks you to consider and declare whether or not you have a real, or perceived, conflict. If you are unsure if your circumstances constitute a possible conflict, you should still complete this section, in order to give the Selection Panel as much information as possible.

If I declare a conflict, does this mean I will not be considered for appointment?

5. No - each case is considered individually. If you are short-listed for interview, the Panel will explore with you how far the conflict might affect your ability to contribute effectively and impartially on the board and how this might be handled, if you were to be appointed. For example, it may be possible to arrange for you to step out of meetings where an issue is discussed, in which you have an interest. However, if, following the discussion with you, the Panel believes that the conflict is too great and would call into question the probity of the board or the appointment, they can withdraw your application from the competition.
6. The report on the outcome of the interview process which is put to the Minister and/or Department will include clear written

reference to any perceived or actual conflicts of interest or integrity issues connected to any candidate put forward as suitable for appointment. It will include sufficient information to ensure that the Minister and/or Department is fully aware of any of these matters and can make an informed decision.

What happens if I do not declare a known conflict, which is then discovered by the Department after my appointment?

7. Again, each case would be considered on its merits, but the Department may take the view that by concealing a conflict of interest, you would be deemed to have breached the Seven Principles of Conduct Underpinning Public Life and may terminate your appointment.

What happens if I do not realise a potential conflict exists?

8. This situation may arise where the candidate is not familiar with the broad range of work which a body covers and therefore does not realise that a conflict might exist. In some cases, the Panel, with their wider knowledge of the body, might deduce that there is a potential conflict issue, based on the information on employment and experience provided by the candidate in the application form. They will then explore this at interview with the candidate.

What happens if a conflict of interest arises after an appointment is made?

9. This could arise for two main reasons. The first is that the member's circumstances may change, for example, they may change jobs and in doing so, a conflict with their work on the board becomes apparent. The second is where a member is unfamiliar with the range of the work of the body, but after appointment, it becomes clear that a conflict exists where none had been envisaged during the appointment process.
10. In both cases, the issue should be discussed with the Chair of the board and the Chief Executive of the body concerned, in consultation with the Sponsoring Department, to decide whether or not the member can continue to carry out their role in an appropriate manner and each case is considered individually.
11. It may be that the conflict is such that it would be impractical for the member to continue on the board, if they would have to withdraw from a considerable amount of the body's routine business. In such, cases, the member may be asked to stand down from the board.

Available in alternative formats.

© Crown Copyright 2025



Department for

Communities

www.communities-ni.gov.uk

An Roinn

Pobal

Depairtment fur

Commonities