



Department for
Communities
www.communities-ni.gov.uk



**APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHIEF COMMISSIONER AND
TWO COMMISSIONERS (ONE WITH RELEVANT
ACCOUNTANCY EXPERIENCE) TO THE BOARD OF THE
CHARITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**

CANDIDATE INFORMATION BOOKLET

**Completed applications must be returned to DfC Public Appointments
Unit no later than 12 noon on 23 March 2018**



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

Tel: 028 90515269

publicappointments@communities-ni.gov.uk

*Public Appointments Unit, Level 8, Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street, Belfast, BT2 7EG*

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The Department for Communities (DfC) is committed to the principles of public appointments based on merit with independent assessment, openness and transparency of process. The Department is also 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.

An e-version of the application pack is available from publicappointments@communities-ni.gov.uk. All reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate the needs of applicants/candidates with a disability.

Dear Applicant

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND (CCNI) – APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY CHIEF COMMISSIONER AND TWO COMMISSIONERS

Thank-you for your interest in applying for a position on the Board of the CCNI as either a Deputy Chief Commissioner or Commissioner. Please note that one of the two Commissioners appointed will be required to have relevant accountancy experience.

The main purpose of the Commission is to register, regulate and report on the charity sector in Northern Ireland. CCNI assists charities, enabling them to meet their legal and regulatory obligations and modern expectations thereby helping to ensure they retain public confidence.

The Board of Commissioners is corporately responsible for ensuring that CCNI fulfils the aims and objectives set by the Department and approved by the Minister, and for promoting the efficient, effective and economic use of staff and other resources by CCNI.

In pursuit of its corporate responsibilities the Board is required to:

- establish the overall strategic direction of CCNI within the policy and resources framework determined by the Minister and Department;
- constructively challenge CCNI's executive team in their planning, target setting and delivery of performance;
- Consider and take decisions reserved to Commissioners and or give approval as required e.g. strategic and business plans and the opening of statutory inquiries;
- ensure that DfC is kept informed of any changes which are likely to impact the strategic direction of CCNI or the attainability of its targets and determining the steps needed to deal with such changes.

The Commissioner roles provide opportunities to expand knowledge of this sector, and contribute towards shaping the future regulatory framework for charities as well as assisting the charity sector to meet the legislative and best practice standards required.

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 is of value and encourages you to apply. Please remember to complete the documentation fully and return it by the required closing date.

Yours faithfully

Arthur Scott
Director of Voluntary and Community Division, Department for Communities

Pen Pictures of Current CCNI Commissioners

Geraldine Donaghy has been a Charity Commissioner since May 2013. Below is an insight into her role:

“My career had been in the community and voluntary sector where for most of that time I was CEO of a voluntary sector organisation in the Newry and Mourne area. Throughout my career I took an interest in regional and national voluntary sector issues, and served on the management boards of a number of organisations including NICVA, NI Community Foundation and CO3.

At the time of applying to become a Charity Commissioner, I had left full-time employment and felt CCNI offered an opportunity for me to use my skills and experience to help develop and support the work of CCNI in promoting good governance throughout Northern Ireland charities.

Applying for any public appointment can be daunting and maybe more so in relation to CCNI because of its role as a regulator. However, despite this I applied because it is important to remember that public bodies in NI are required to create diverse boards that bring a variety of skills and experience. Often some of the skills required are specified e.g. finance, HR if the board is lacking expertise in these areas but it is also important to note that the job specification encourages candidates with relevant experience and this can be widely interpreted. It is important not to underestimate the experience and skills you can offer and in particular applications are especially encouraged from women and those with experience in non-traditional pathways as this group is notably underrepresented in public life. I fell within this category myself and was successful in being appointed.

As a Commissioner you will be supported, as I was, in undertaking any training needs you feel you have. Regular training in corporate governance is available as well as specialised training in audit, finance and recruitment.

While there is a comprehensive list of skills set out for such positions, anyone applying also needs to be open to learn, to listen, to constructively challenge and to work corporately as part of a team. Most people with their own life experiences can rise to this challenge and in doing so will enhance their own learning and development and will certainly find the work rewarding.”

Norman Bennett has been a Charity Commissioner since September 2012. Below is an insight into his role:

“I have worked in finance positions within the health and social services, and education sectors within Northern Ireland. In these roles I was required to work closely with the Boards of the organisations, supplying information and contributing to the overall good governance.

I am passionate about good governance and believe that a strong governance framework not only protects the organisation from challenge but also adds to the efficiency with which it undertakes its work. Given my finance background I have in recent years chaired the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee of the Commission and have played some part in helping the Commission continue to manage its financial affairs in an efficient and effective way

Prior to joining the Charities Commission, I had been involved in various charities and was well aware of the huge contribution that charities make to all sectors within the local community. My desire in joining the Commission was through regulation, monitoring and compliance to see that contribution enhanced in an open and transparent way. We have had to work through the application of new legislation and test how it is applied in real situations. This has been challenging at times but also very stimulating and rewarding.

I have thoroughly enjoyed working with my fellow Commissioners who I have come to regard as friends.”

Section 1 – Background Information

Appointment Information

1. The Department for Communities wishes to invite applications for the appointment of a Deputy Chief Commissioner and two Commissioners to the Board of CCNI. One of the Commissioners appointed will be required to have relevant accountancy experience. CCNI is a body regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments NI (CPA NI).

Information on CCNI

2. CCNI is a non-departmental statutory public body, established in March 2009, to deliver the legislative requirements of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008. Its vision is to have a dynamic and well governed charities sector in which the public has confidence. This is underpinned by effective delivery of its regulatory role.
3. The Commission's objectives are set out in subsection (2) of The Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 and are defined in the Act as follows:
 - The public confidence objective is to increase the public trust and confidence in charities;
 - The public benefit objective is to promote awareness and understanding of the operation of the public benefit requirement;
 - The compliance objective is to promote compliance by the charity trustees with their legal obligations in exercising control and management of the administration of their charities;
 - The charitable resources objective is to promote the effective use of charitable status; and
 - The accountability objective is to enhance the accountability of charities to donors, beneficiaries and the general public.
4. CCNI is sponsored by the Department for Communities and has a number of legal functions where it uses powers similar to those of the High Court. As the independent regulator of charities in Northern Ireland, CCNI has a crucial role to play in the development of charities, enabling them to meet statutory obligations and modern expectations. It is essential that CCNI enables charities to operate in a climate of trust and respect by providing statutory regulation in which the public can have confidence. CCNI therefore aims to develop a regulatory framework which is not only about intervention and strong governance, but which also establishes standards and promotes good practice across the sector.
5. The Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 states that CCNI must keep a publicly accessible register of all charities in Northern Ireland. The Commission commenced charity registration in Northern Ireland for the first time in December 2013, beginning the process of registering the thousands of charitable organisations operating in Northern Ireland. It is estimated that there are in excess of 12,000 charities operating in Northern Ireland. Registration is a managed process subject to available resources.

CCNI Board

6. The board currently consists of the following Chief Commissioner and Commissioners:
 - Thomas McGrath – Chief Commissioner serving his second term, which runs to 31 May 2019;
 - Norman Bennett – Commissioner serving his second term, which ends on 31 August 2018;
 - Seamus Magee – Commissioner serving his first term, which ends on 31 May 2018;
 - Geraldine Donaghy – Commissioner serving her first term, which has been extended to 30 June 2018; and
 - Steven Cockcroft – Current Commissioner serving his first term, as the legal representative, which ends on 1 November 2018.

Further information about CCNI can be found using the following website address www.charitycommissionni.org.uk

Previous Appointments to CCNI

7. Under the CPA NI Code of Practice, applicants who have served two terms as either CCNI Deputy Commissioner or Commissioner are not eligible to apply for a third term for that same position. If you are unsure if this applies to you, please contact the Department using the contact details at Paragraph 27.

Public Appointments

8. The NI Executive has introduced targets for the equal representation of men and women on public body boards. The timescales for achieving gender equality in aggregated public appointments is as follows:
 - By 2017/18 for appointments made in-year;
 - By end-year 2020/21 for all appointees in post, with equality reflected both in board membership and at chair level.
9. If you are interested in applying for this competition, further information on public appointments can be found at www.nidirect.gov.uk/public-appointments
10. CPA NI hosts a series of free, half-day workshops that aim to demystify the public appointments process. Further information on these workshops, including upcoming dates, can be found at: <https://www.publicappointmentsni.org/workshops>

Section 2 – Role Profile

Role and Responsibilities of the Board

11. Charity Commissioners are appointed by the Minister for Communities to bring independent judgement to bear on issues of strategy and performance against agreed aims and objectives, and to make appointments within the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland. They bring wide experience and critical detachment to the work of the Board.
12. The Board has corporate responsibility for ensuring that the Commission fulfils the aims and objectives set by DfC, which are approved by the Minister, and for promoting the efficient, economic and effective use of staff and other resources. To this end, and in pursuit of its wider corporate responsibilities, the Commissioners / Board shall:
 - establish the overall strategic direction of CCNI within the policy and resources framework determined by the sponsor Minister and Department;
 - constructively challenge CCNI's executive team in their planning, target setting and delivery of performance;
 - consider and take decisions reserved to Commissioners and or give approval as required e.g. strategic and business plans and the opening of statutory inquiries;
 - ensure that DfC is kept informed of any changes which are likely to impact on the strategic direction of CCNI or on the attainability of its targets, and determine the steps needed to deal with such changes;
 - ensure that any statutory or administrative requirements for the use of public funds are complied with; that the Board operates within the limits of its statutory authority and any delegated authority agreed with DfC, and in accordance with any other conditions relating to the use of public funds; and that, in reaching decisions, the Board takes into account all relevant guidance issued by DoF and DfC;
 - ensure that the Board receives and regularly reviews financial information concerning the management of CCNI; is informed in a timely manner of any concerns about the activities of CCNI; and provides positive assurance to DfC that appropriate action has been taken on such concerns;
 - demonstrate high standards of corporate governance at all times, including using the independent audit committee to help the Board address the key financial and other risks facing CCNI; and
 - appoint a Chief Executive to CCNI and in consultation with DfC, set performance objectives and remuneration terms linked to these objectives

for the Chief Executive, which give due weight to the proper management and use of public monies.

13. Individual Commissioners shall act in accordance with their wider responsibilities as Members of the Board – namely to:

- not misuse information gained in the course of their public service for personal gain or for political profit, nor seek to use the opportunity of public service to promote their private interests or those of connected persons or organisations; and to declare publicly and to the Board any private interests that may be perceived to conflict with their public duties;
- comply with the Board's rules on the acceptance of gifts and hospitality, and of business appointments; and
- act in good faith and in the best interests of CCNI.

Role of Deputy Chief Commissioner

14. The Deputy Chief Commissioner will be responsible for assisting the Chief Commissioner in their role as Chair and deputising for the Chief Commissioner when required.

Codes of Conduct and Accountability

15. To ensure that public service values remain at the heart of the CCNI, all Commissioners are required, on appointment, to subscribe to the Code of Conduct for CCNI.

16. In line with this code, Charity Commissioners may be trustees/management committee members, but not office bearers, of charities in Northern Ireland. If, on appointment as Charity Commissioner, an individual is already involved as an office bearer of a charity, they must declare this interest and a reasonable period may be agreed with the Chief Commissioner and Chief Executive for withdrawing from the office-bearer position and allowing the charity to make alternative arrangements.

17. The high standards of corporate and personal conduct required of a CCNI board member are described more fully in the Code which can be found at the following webpage address: www.charitycommissionni.org.uk/about-us/about-the-charity-commission/our-governance/code-of-conduct/

18. The Commission encourages good practice and provides guidance for charities about how to meet their statutory responsibilities. Most charities in Northern Ireland work hard to achieve their charitable purposes. The Commission has however a statutory duty to identify and investigate misconduct or mismanagement in the administration of charities. In doing so, the Commission's objective is to stop any abuse or damage and, where something has gone wrong, to take remedial or protective action to put the charity back on a proper footing, protecting the charity, its assets, its beneficiaries, and its reputation.

19. Charities which refuse to cooperate with the Charity Commission in such circumstances can expect robust action and the use of the Commissions powers restricting the transactions that a charity may enter into, appointing additional trustees; ‘freezing’ a charity’s bank account, suspending or removing a trustee and appointing an interim manager.

Remuneration, Time Commitment and Appointment Term

20. The Deputy Chief Commissioner position attracts remuneration of £3,500 per year and is eligible to claim allowances, at rates set centrally, for travel and subsistence costs necessarily incurred on CCNI business. This post will require a commitment, which is currently under review, of approximately 2 days per month. This may involve a commitment both inside and outside normal working hours.
21. Both of the Commissioner positions attract remuneration of £2,300 per year and are eligible to claim allowances, at rates set centrally, for travel and subsistence costs necessarily incurred on CCNI business. The posts will require a commitment, which is currently under review, of approximately 1-2 days per month. This may involve a commitment both inside and outside normal working hours
22. The Board meets on a monthly basis. Board meetings are normally held at CCNI Headquarters, 257 Lough Rd, Lurgan, Co. Armagh.
23. The appointments of a Deputy Chief Commissioner and one Commissioner are expected to commence on 1 June 2018. The appointment of the Commissioner with relevant accountancy experience is expected to commence on 1 September 2018.
24. All appointments will be for a term of up to 5 years.

Section 3 – Person Specification

Person Specification – All appointments

25. 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. All appointees will be expected to be committed to the objectives of CCNI.

Selection Criteria – All appointments

26. 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 **essential criteria** and have the skills, experience and knowledge required. For one of the Commissioner appointments, there is an essential requirement for an accountancy qualification. There is also a desirable criterion for all positions if shortlisting is required.

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

Essential Criteria – For all appointments

1. Thinking Strategically

Experience of making a significant contribution to the strategic direction of an organisation.

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

- Anticipating and predicting the long term impact of developments including political, social, economic and technological changes in terms of developing future strategy for an organisation;
- Ability to apply strategic insight and constructive challenge in terms of strategy development, delivery and organisational issues to ensure positive impact and added value;
- Setting direction and vision for an organisation;
- Shaping strategies and plans to put into practice and support an organisation's vision and long term direction;
- Challenging the status quo to achieve value added improvements and change;
- Decisive decision taking to address strategic issues.

2. Governance and Financial Understanding

Experience of promoting good governance and an understanding of effective financial management within an organisation.

Note: 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, assessed and managed.

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

- Demonstrating how you have promoted and secured good governance in an organisation;
- Ability to interrogate complex financial statements, business plans, corporate plans and budgets to raise issues that require action;
- Understanding how to use financial resources effectively;
- Constructively challenge decisions, policies or procedures on the basis of gathering relevant evidence and ensuring accountability for decisions and actions;
- Making important decisions based on the evaluation of information;
- Identifying, evaluating and managing risks which may have an adverse impact on an organisation's performance;
- Developing, implementing and monitoring of key governance, finance and risk documents and policies;
- Demonstrating standards of behaviour that gain a reputation of trust and integrity within an organisation.

Additional Essential Criterion for Commissioner with Relevant Accountancy Experience.

3. Relevant Accountancy Experience

Those applying for the position of Commissioner Accountant must provide evidence that they are a qualified accountant of at least 3 years standing, with experience of working with charity accounts and be a current member of at least one of the following bodies:

- The Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland;
- The Institute of Chartered Accountants in Scotland;
- The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales;
- The Chartered Institute of Management Accountants;
- The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants;
- The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy; or
- The Institute of Certified Public Accountants in Ireland.

This evidence will be used for sifting purposes only and will not be tested at interview.

Essential Criteria – Deputy Chief Commission appointment only

4. Leadership Experience

Experience of leading an organisation to ensure focus, direction and successful delivery of results.

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

- Displaying integrity and building trust with colleagues and teams;
- Providing clear direction to an organisation and communicating clearly demonstrating active listening;
- Demonstrating competence dealing with a wide range of situations and people at all levels;
- Speaking with authority and persuasiveness in a challenging situation;
- Ability to lead on and implement a process of significant change and deliver results;
- Evaluating progress of an organisation towards agreed targets and objectives;
- Building the capability of the organisation to address current and future challenges;
- Ability to manage conflict and resolve difficult situations.

5. Analytical Thinking

Experience of making decisions and solving problems in an organisational environment.

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

- Ability to make decisions in a timely manner, sometimes with incomplete information and under tight deadlines;
- Ensuring decisions reached are based on a mixture of analysis, knowledge, experience and judgement;
- Solving difficult problems with robust effective solutions;
- Understanding the view point of others, whilst ensuring your reasoning is explained and understood;
- Ability to consider outcomes and adapt approaches so as to meet changing needs.

Desirable Criteria – For all appointments

6. Further Experience

The Commission requires a strong mix of skills and experiences to be successful. Candidates with experience in at least one of the areas below are sought. Please tick at least one or up to all three and give an example(s) of that experience:

(1) Knowledge of, and Commitment to, the Charity Sector

Working knowledge of the charity sector and a commitment to its aims and values.

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

- Wide ranging and practical working knowledge of the charity sector and the regulatory framework in which it operates;
- Delivering successful outcomes through engagement with key stakeholders, within the charity sector;
- Adhering to public service values and acting in line with those values.

Or

(2) Knowledge and experience of regulation in another sector

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

- Practical working knowledge of a regulatory framework in another sector;
- Use of regulation to establish and promote good practice within another sector;
- Ability to foster / create a culture / an environment of trust through a regulatory basis.

Or

(3) Proven experience in deploying Information Communication Technology to improve business performance.

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

- Using information communication technology to improve business performance in terms of reducing costs and or transforming business processes;
- Using information communication technology to improve customer service and service delivery;
- Experience of implementing successful information communication technology solutions and monitoring their effectiveness.

Section 4 – Application, Selection and Assessment

How to Apply and Contact Details

27. 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 Unit
Department for Communities
Level 8, Causeway Exchange
1 – 7 Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7EG

Telephone: 028 9051 5269
Text Relay: 18001 02890 515269

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

29. You may use examples in your application form 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 provide practical evidence and examples of how you consider you meet the requirements for the appointment you are applying for.

30. To ensure equality of opportunity for all applicants:

- only completed application forms will be accepted;
- applicants must ensure their completed application form is legible, whether this is completed electronically or handwritten;
- applications will not be examined until after the closing deadline; and
- Applications will be anonymised for sift purposes.

31. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that their application form is fully complete.

Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

32. The Department 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

33. **The deadline for receipt of all applications is 12 noon on 23 March 2018**, with delivery instructions contained in paragraph 27. Applications will be individually date-stamped and the time of receipt formally recorded. 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.**
34. Please ensure that posted applications bear the correct amount of postage as any shortfall may lead to a delay in delivery, causing you to miss the deadline.
35. Applicants who send their application form electronically are also required to meet the closing deadline for receipt. 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.

Sifting and Shortlisting of Applications

36. Once an application has been received, it will be acknowledged within 3 working days. The selection panel will meet to consider applications by 13 April 2018 and will carry out a sift exercise, against a rating scale, to assess how the skills, knowledge, experience and other qualities presented in your application meet the selection criteria as detailed in paragraph 26. Applications provided to the selection panel will be anonymised, which means that it will not include your name or personal details.
37. Only those applications that meet all the essential criteria, based on the evidence contained within the application form, will be considered for interview. If a high number of applications are received, the panel reserves the right to apply the desirable criteria to shortlist candidates for interview. 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)

38. 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 essential 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

39. Interviews are expected to take place on 30 April, and 2 & 8 May 2018 at Causeway Exchange, Bedford Street, Belfast. The selection panel members are:

- Ian Snowden, Deputy Secretary Engaged Communities Group, DfC (Chair)
 - Arthur Scott, Director of Voluntary and Community Division, DfC (Panel Member);
 - Thomas McGrath, Chief Commissioner, Charity Commission for NI (Panel Member); and
 - Rosalind Dunlop, Commissioner for Public Appointments NI Independent Assessor, (Independent Panel Member).
40. The interview will be criteria based which means that all the questions asked by the selection panel will be linked to the criteria. There will be no questions relating to the accountancy qualification or the desirable criterion. Candidates invited for interview will be asked to provide specific examples and the selection panel will evaluate their answers. Candidates invited for interview are eligible for reimbursement of reasonable travelling expenses incurred within the UK and the Republic of Ireland only. **Candidates are asked to advise DfC Public Appointments Unit if they anticipate difficulties attending on the dates specified.**

Presentation of Results to the Minister

41. The selection panel will evaluate candidates at interview against an agreed pass mark and those found to have achieved the pass mark will be recommended to the Minister, with a letter issued to these candidates advising of the interview outcome. Ministerial choice is a key element of public appointment policy that enables Minister(s) to indicate if they wish to have the names of candidates suitable for appointment presented in a ranked (merit order) or unranked (alphabetical) list. Given the current circumstances within the Northern Ireland Executive, the Department cannot confirm (at the time of writing), the preferred manner in which a new Minister wishes to be presented with a list of candidates considered suitable for appointment by the panel.
42. The new Minister will, in line with their preference, be presented with a 'candidate summary', agreed by the panel. This will provide the Minister with 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.
43. All candidates whether successful or unsuccessful at interview, will be informed accordingly of the outcome of their interview, as soon as practicable to do so, in writing, which will include detail on how to request feedback on their performance.

Appointment

44. 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.

45. Before appointment, a check will be carried out on the probity and performance of candidates who currently hold or have held Ministerial public appointments.
46. Once a Minister for Communities is appointed they will be asked if they wish to create reserve lists for all positions to fill any unforeseen Board vacancies that may arise in CCNI within 12 months from the date of the Minister's decision.
47. Upon appointment to the Board, Commissioners will receive an appropriate induction programme.

National Security Vetting Clearance

48. Successful applicants will be subject to a National Security Vetting Clearance at Security Check level before any appointment is confirmed.

Publicising Appointments

49. A press release will be published to announce the appointments made. Consequently, should a candidate be appointed, they will be required to complete a political activity form and approve a short biography for publication. The biography will be based on the information provided by the candidate throughout the competition process.
50. The press release will include:
 - The candidate's name;
 - A short description of CCNI;
 - A brief summary of the skills and knowledge they bring to the role, by way of short biography;
 - The length of the appointment term and whether it is remunerated; if remunerated the amount will be included;
 - Details of all other ministerial public appointments held and any related remuneration received; and
 - Details of the candidate's response to the political activity question.

Diversity in Public Appointments

51. The Department 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.
52. The Department for Communities is committed to the principle of public appointments based on merit. Only those individuals judged to best meet the requirement of the posts will be recommended to the Minister for appointment. However, the final decision on appointment will rest with the Minister for Communities.

Double Paying

53. Applicants who already work in the public sector need to be aware that no one can 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 or travelling expenses for these appointments if the duties are undertaken during a period of time for which they are already paid by the public sector. Each case will be considered individually, however, the guiding principle should be to avoid “double-paying”. In the interests of minimising the potential for double paying the Department reserves the right to contact your employer regarding your candidature.

Other

54. Board members of public bodies are expected to undergo appropriate training in governance and board membership. Successful candidates will be expected, as a condition of their appointment, to attend an appropriate training course, approved by DfC, within six months of taking up their appointment. DfC will arrange this training. Alternative arrangements can be agreed with DfC if they have previously attended an appropriate training course within the last two years. Performance of the appointees will be formally assessed annually.
55. **Every effort will be made to provide whatever reasonable support is needed to help appointees carry out their duties.**
56. As the appointments are CPA NI regulated, the competition, including information provided by candidates, may be examined by CPA NI for compliance with the Commissioner’s Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies.

Making a Complaint

57. If you wish to make a complaint about any aspect of this appointments process, you should in the first instance contact the Head of Governance and Public Appointments as follows:

FAO Head of Governance and Public Appointments
DfC Public Appointments Unit
Department for Communities
Level 8
Causeway Exchange
1 - 7 Bedford Street
BELFAST BT2 7EG

Email publicappointments@communities-ni.gov.uk
Telephone: 028 90512633

Section 5

Integrity & Conflicts of Interest

58. The Department 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 public body concerned must be declared.

59. The Department must take account of actual, or perceived, conflicts of interest. 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. Please refer to **Annex B** for further information on this subject.

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:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life>

SELFLESSNESS

Holders of public office should take decisions 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.

Integrity and Conflicts of Interest – Guide for Candidates

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 a 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 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 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.