

PRESS NOTICE
Embargoed to 10.00am on Friday 13 June 2008



PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS IN NORTHERN IRELAND

Lay Member and re-appointment of current members of the Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission

The Lord Chancellor has appointed Donal Flanagan OBE to be a lay member of the Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission (the Commission). He will take up his 5 year appointment on 15 June 2008. Donal Flanagan succeeds Harry McConnell OBE whose term as a lay member ends on 14 June 2008.

Re-appointments

The Lord Chancellor has re-appointed nine of the current members of the Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission with effect from 15 June 2008. Their details are given below. The judicial members have been re-appointed for a period of 5 years, the lay members have been re-appointed for a period of 4 years and the legal members for a period of 3 years. Two judicial posts are yet to be filled, one of a Lord Justice and the other a district judge (magistrates' court).

Notes for Editors

Jack Straw MP is the Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice.

The Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission was established in June 2005 to recommend appointments to judicial office up to and including High Court judge. The Commission is a Non-Departmental Public Body funded by Government through the Northern Ireland Court Service and is located at Headline Building, Victoria Street, Belfast, BT1 3GG. Its web site address is www.nijac.org.

Under the chairmanship of the Lord Chief Justice for Northern Ireland, Sir Brian Kerr, the Commission comprises thirteen members, including the Lord Chief Justice, 5 other members of the judiciary, 5 lay members, a barrister nominated by the General Council of the Bar for Northern Ireland and a solicitor nominated by the Law Society for Northern Ireland. As of 15 June 2008, the Commission will be made up of 7 men and 4 women and in terms of community balance, 6 are regarded as Catholic, 3 are regarded as Protestant and 2 are regarded as belonging to neither community.

Non-judicial Commissioners and the lay magistrate judicial member are paid such fees and allowances as the Lord Chancellor may determine. The daily rate is currently £294, or £147 for 4 hours or less. Commitment to the Commission will be on average 2-3 days a month.

The membership of the Commission will be:

- The Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland, Sir Brian Kerr
- Mrs Sinead Burns, Lay Magistrate
- Peter Cush, Barrister at Law
- Donal Flanagan OBE
- John Gordon, Solicitor
- Dame Joan Harbison CBE DBE, Lay Member
- Ruth Laird, Lay Member
- Her Honour Judge Loughran, County Court Judge.
- Professor John Morison, Lay Member
- Dr Raymond Mullan OBE, Lay Member
- The Honourable Mr Justice Weatherup, High Court Judge.
- There is a vacancy at Lord Justice of Appeal and District Judge (Magistrates' Courts) level.

The Commission has 4 main statutory responsibilities:

- 1) to conduct the appointments process and make recommendations to the Lord Chancellor in respect of all appointments up to and including High Court judge;
- 2) to recommend candidates on the basis of merit using transparent procedures to secure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that appointments to listed judicial office are such that those holding judicial offices are reflective of the community in Northern Ireland;
- 3) to engage in a programme of action, so far that it is reasonably practicable to do so, to ensure that a range of persons reflective of the community in Northern Ireland is available for consideration by the Commission for appointment; and
- 4) to publish a report annually on its activities.

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Donal Flanagan OBE

Career/Experience:

Mr Flanagan is a former teacher and is currently Chief Executive of the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools. He is a Board Member of both the Regional Training Unit (Department of Education) and the Teachers' Salaries Negotiating Committee (Department of Education) and is an independent Board Member of the Department of Agriculture.

Mr Flanagan was the inaugural former Chair of Crossgar Community Association, was a Non Executive Director of Down and Lisburn Health & Social Services Trust and held positions on the Boards of the Council for the Curriculum Examinations & Assessment, the Belfast Health Action Zone Council and the Northern Ireland Business Education Partnership.

Public and Other appointments held and remuneration received:

- 1) Non Executive Director with the South Eastern Trust (Department of Health) - £7,500 per annum
- 2) Non Executive Director with the Middletown Centre for Autism (Department of Education) - £200 per day.
- 3) Independent Board Member with the Department of Agriculture - £10k per annum

Mrs Sinead Burns (Lay Magistrate)

Career / Experience:

Mrs Burns was appointed as a Lay Magistrate on 1 April 2005. She is an Occupational Psychologist and is a Chartered Fellow of the Institute of Personnel and Development. She holds a BA (Hons) Degree in Psychology, an MSc in Occupational Psychology, an MA in Human Resource Management and a PGCE. Mrs Burns has 12 years experience in human resource management in both the public and private sectors. Mrs Burns is Assistant Director of Human Resources within the Southern Health and Social Services Trust.

Public and Other Appointments Held and Remunerations Received:

No public or other appointments held currently.

Mr Peter Cush

Career / Experience:

Mr Cush is a barrister who practices in the following areas: Administrative and Law, Banking and Insurance, Civil Liberties & Human Rights, Civil Litigation, Common Law, Company Law, Competition Law, Contract, Defamation, Employer's Liability, Environment,

European Law, General Commercial, Health & Safety, Injunctions, Personal Injuries, Planning, Product Liability, Professional & Medical Negligence and Tort.

He was the representative of the Bar to the Consultative Committees of the Bars and Law Societies of the European Community 1982 – 1993, the Vice-Chairman of The Bar Council 2002 –2003 and was the Chairman of The Bar Council (2003 – 2006). He is also a member of the Bar of England & Wales (1974), Bar of Ireland (1974) and the Bar of New South Wales (1990).

Public and Other Appointments Held and Remunerations Received:

No public or other appointments held currently.

Mr John Gerard Gordon

Career / Experience:

Mr Gordon has over 25 years experience in private practice as a solicitor and is the senior and managing partner in a medium-sized and progressive firm of solicitors based in Belfast. He is a specialist insolvency lawyer (a Licensed Insolvency Practitioner) and employment lawyer who practices regularly before the Fair Employment and Industrial Tribunal.

He also serves as a primary adviser to the Northern Ireland Maintained Schools Sector on all aspects of equality legislation, is a Director of the Solicitors Benevolent Association, is a Board Member of Servicing the Legal System Limited, has experience of sitting on the Board of Governors of a large second-level school in Belfast, has served on the Law Society Equality Working Party and has served as a member of the Council of the Law Society of Northern Ireland for over 20 years and Treasurer for the last 10 years.

Public and Other Appointments Held and Remunerations Received:

No public or other appointments held currently.

Dame Joan Harbison CBE DBE

Career / Experience:

Dame Joan Harbison began her career as a teacher with the Belfast Education Authority where she held various teaching posts including Head of Department. She qualified as an Educational Psychologist in 1972. Following this Dame Joan lectured in Education at Stranmillis College of Education for 24 years. She was Chief Commissioner of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland from 1999 and 2005. She has wide experience in the public sector both locally and nationally. She was previously Chair of the Commission for Racial Equality for Northern Ireland, Vice Chair of the Eastern Health and Social Services Board and the Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights and a member of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority, the General Dental Council and the Financial Services Authority Consumer Panel.

Dame Joan is a Foundation Governor and Vice Chair of the Board of Governors of Victoria

College, Belfast. Dame Joan is currently a member of the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority for Health and Social Services and is a Civil Service Commissioner for Northern Ireland.

Public and Other Appointments Held and Remunerations Received:

Dame Joan currently holds three public and other appointments:

- 1) Civil Service Commissioner for Northern Ireland - £300 per session.
- 2) Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority for Health and Social Services - £5,000 per annum.
- 3) National Police Improvement Authority Lay Advisory Panel - £200 per session.

Mrs Ruth Laird

Career / Experience:

Mrs Laird was educated at Queen's University Belfast and holds a BA (Hons) Degree in Ancient and Modern History, and a Diploma in Human Resource Management. She has 25 years experience in human resource management and organisational development in the public, private and voluntary sectors and is a Chartered Member of the Institute of Personnel and Development. Mrs Laird was formerly Director of the National Trust for Northern Ireland, Head of Personnel at the BBC (NI), and a Fair Employment Commissioner. She is a non-executive Director of the NI Transport Holding Company and the NI Prison Service, and a member of the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority for Health and Social Services. Mrs Laird was appointed as a Civil Service Commissioner for Northern Ireland for a three year term from 1 June 2006 and is a member of the Board of Business in the Community. She is a Departmental Member of the Board of Governors of Strathearn School, Belfast.

Public and Other Appointments Held and Remunerations Received:

Mrs Laird currently holds 4 public and other appointments:

- 1) Non Executive Director of the Northern Ireland Transport Holding Company (DRD) and Chair of Group Remunerations and Pensions Committee - £13,500 per annum.
- 2) Board Member of the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority for Health and Social Services - £5,500 per annum.
- 3) Non Executive Member of the NI Prison Service Management Board - £9,000 per annum.
- 4) Civil Service Commissioner for Northern Ireland - £300 per session.

Her Honour Judge Loughran (County Court Judge)

Career / Experience:

Judge Loughran was educated at Queen's University, Belfast. She was called to the Bar of Northern Ireland in 1989 and was appointed a County Court judge on 6 September 2004. She is a former Director of the Eastern Health and Social Services Board and a former member of the Senate of Queen's University, Belfast. She is a current member of the Board of Visitors of Queen's University, Belfast.

Public and Other Appointments Held and Remunerations Received:

No public or other appointments held currently.

Professor John Morison

Career / Experience:

John Morison is Professor of Jurisprudence in the School of Law at Queen's University, Belfast. Since completing his education in Cardiff University and joining Queen's in 1984, he has held various positions within the School of Law, including Head of Research, Head of Department of Jurisprudence and, from 2003-2007, Head of the School of Law. He has been a visiting Professor in London and in Cape Town and in 2008 he is an occasional visiting Research Fellow in the Universiteit of Utrecht. He has written and edited several books, and published widely in scholarly journals internationally as well as carrying out projects for the European Commission, Government, Research Councils and charities.

Professor Morison is a member of the Peer Review College of the Arts and Humanities Research Council for the UK, a member of the Board of Directors of the European Public Law Centre, Athens, and of the Scientific Committee of the European group of Public Law, as well as a member of the Curatorium of the European Public Law Academy. He serves as a trustee on the Hamlyn Trust and was previously a member of the Task Force on Resourcing the Voluntary and Community sectors in Northern Ireland which reported at the end of 2004.

Public and Other appointments Held and Remunerations Received:

No public or other appointments held currently.

Dr Raymond Mullan OBE MSc

Career / Experience:

Dr Mullan was Director & Chief Executive of Newry & Kilkeel Institute of Further & Higher Education from 1991 until his retirement in 2007. Previous to this he held various posts in Further Education including Head of Business & Management Studies. He is a graduate of Queen's University, Belfast in Economics and Accounting and holds a Masters degree in Education Management from the University of Ulster.

He received an OBE in 2000 for his contribution to education in Northern Ireland and was

awarded a Doctor of the University of Ulster in 2006 in recognition of his distinction in promoting access to Further and Higher Education in Northern Ireland.

During his career he served as Chairman of the Association of Principals of Northern Ireland Colleges and was Chairman of ANIC - the Association of Northern Ireland Colleges. He is currently Chair of Greenshoots - Newry Ltd, an incubation and innovation company established in conjunction with Newry Institute and the University of Ulster and is a life member of Newry Chamber of Commerce & Trade.

Public and Other appointments Held and Remunerations Received:

Non Executive Director of the Southern Health and Social Care Trust - £7,500 per annum.

The Honourable Mr Justice Weatherup (High Court Judge)

Career / Experience:

Sir Ronald Weatherup was educated at Queen's University, Belfast. He was called to the Bar of Northern Ireland in 1971 and took Silk in 1993. He served as Junior Crown Counsel for Northern Ireland from 1989 to 1993 and Senior Crown Counsel for Northern Ireland from 1997 to 2001. He was appointed a High Court Judge on 4 June 2001. Sir Ronald is the Visitor to the University of Ulster.

Public and other Appointments Held and Remunerations Received:

No public or other appointments held currently.

All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, in accordance with the original Nolan recommendations there is a requirement for appointees' political activity (if any is declared) to be made public. None of the appointees have carried out any political activity in the past 5 years. This appointment and the re-appointments have been made in accordance with the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments Code of Practice.

If you have any queries regarding these appointments to the Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission please contact:

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