

Business plan objectives April 2020-March 2021

This is my Business Plan for my fifth and last year as Commissioner for Public Appointments. It takes into account the latest iteration of the Order in Council, November 2019 and the government's Governance Code for Public Appointments.

This plan was drafted before the outbreak of the coronavirus and as such, actions marked with asterisks may need postponement or adaptation as the public health advice develops over the coming months.

Rt Hon Peter Riddell CBE
Commissioner for Public Appointments

OBJECTIVE ONE: Providing independent assurance that appointing authorities act in accordance with the Governance Code and the principles of public appointments (Article 4(1) of the Public Appointments Order in Council 2019)

OBJECTIVE TWO: Being an active advocate for diversity (Paragraph 4.7 of the Governance Code)

OBJECTIVE THREE: Monitoring Compliance with the Governance Code & the principles of public appointments and improving capability (Paragraph 4.2 of the Governance Code)

OBJECTIVE FOUR: Improving the understanding of the Commissioner's role and the Governance Code

OBJECTIVE ONE: Providing independent assurance that appointing authorities act in accordance with the Governance Code and the principles of public appointments (Article 4(1) of the Public Appointments Order in Council 2019)	
What	When
The Commissioner will ensure that Departments:	Timescale for OCPA to conclude:
Consult him on decisions where Ministers make exceptional appointments without holding a fair and open competition (Governance Code paragraph 3.3), and where Ministers choose to reappoint said appointees on the basis of further exceptional circumstances	Respond to all consultations in 2 working days ¹ Decision notices following announcement of appointment published quarterly on OCPA website.
Consult him on Senior Independent Panel Members in advance of competitions (Governance Code paragraph 6.2)	Respond to all consultations in 2 working days

¹ Average April 2019 to 27 Jan 2020 (2019-20 year so far) processing time is 1.6 working days

Notify him of exceptional reappointments of appointees beyond two terms or extension of their tenure in office beyond 10 years (Governance Code paragraph 3.6). <i>Note:</i> Cabinet Office advice to Departments is that extension to terms should usually not exceed 12 months, OCPA agrees.	Record all details within 1 working day ²
Agree any changes to delegations and exemptions from the Governance Code with him (Governance Code paragraph 3.1)	Within 5 working days
Agree any changes to the list of Significant Appointments with Cabinet Office and Welsh Ministers with him (Governance Code paragraph 6.1)	Within 5 working days

OBJECTIVE TWO: Being an active advocate for diversity (Paragraph 4.7 of the Governance Code)	
The Commissioner will:	Timescale for OCPA to conclude:
Monitor the performance and recruitment practices of government departments by analysing diversity statistics submitted by Departments and publish a statistical report relating to ministerial appointments and reappointments (Governance Code paragraph 4.2)	In Commissioner's 2019-20 Annual report, by October 2020
Meet with organisations representing BAME, disabled and other minority groups in order to inform him of the views and needs of potential applicants for public appointments that those groups represent;	Ongoing*
Disseminate best practice to government departments in order to encourage them to advertise and recruit Public Appointees in a way that ensures a diverse a field as possible, including a dedicated section on the OCPA website.	Ongoing
Collaborate with the Cabinet Office on shared objectives in the Diversity Action Plan (June 2019), including actions on mentoring and improving data collection	Timescales are specified in the Government Diversity Action Plan*
Meet with Permanent Secretaries and Departments to discuss and share best practice on increasing diverse representation in public appointments.	Ongoing, and March 2020* and Autumn 2020*

OBJECTIVE THREE: Monitoring Compliance with the Governance Code & the principles of public appointments and improving capability (Paragraph 4.2 of the Governance Code)	
The Commissioner will:	Timescale for OCPA to conclude:
Undertake an audit of the procedures and practices, relating to specific competitions to provide independent verification of Departmental compliance	September 2020 to February 2021*

² Average April 2019 to 16 Jan 2020 (2019-20 year so far) processing time is 2.1 working days

Share and agree findings of the audits with Permanent Secretaries and Departments	February 2021
Carry out spot checks of Departments' paperwork as required (Governance Code paragraph 4.3)	Ongoing
Gather and issue best practice information in respect of matters (including any that require improvement) identified from compliance monitoring	Ongoing
Undertake a thematic review are required in respect of public appointment issues requiring more study in depth (Governance Code paragraph 4.5) on the issue of remuneration of public appointees	Spring 2020 on remuneration of public appointees
Deal with all complaints in a timely and efficient way (Governance Code paragraph 4.4)	Acknowledge complaints within 2 working days of receipt and complete all investigations within 3 months

OBJECTIVE FOUR: Improving the understanding of public appointments and public bodies, the Commissioner's role and the Governance Code

The Commissioner will:	Timescale for OCPA to conclude:
Maintain and regularly update the OCPA website to hold information about the Commissioner's role and the Governance Code, results of investigations and complaints and best practice and case studies	Ongoing
Maintain regular contact with the Public Administration & Constitutional Affairs Committee and the Committee on Standards in Public Life	Ongoing
Hold regular meetings with Permanent Secretaries and other key stakeholders to discuss Departmental performance in respect of public appointments	Ongoing, and more formally in Autumn 2020*
Meet his counterparts from Scotland and Northern Ireland;	Annually, set for April 2020 in Belfast*
Maintain a regular twitter feed on public appointments issues	Ongoing
Publish blogs on an ad hoc basis on matters of interest related to public appointments and invite others to guest blog	Ongoing
Maintain regular contact with public appointment teams in Departments and contribute to their understanding of the Code and the Commissioner by sharing good practice and helping in training events	Ongoing

**May be postponed to later in 2020 due to public health advice during the 2020 corona outbreak.*