

**CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS**

**FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**

**BUSINESS PLAN**

**2006/2007**

# **CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS FOR NORTHERN IRELAND**

## **Business Plan – 2006/2007**

### **Mission Statement**

*“Ensuring appointment on Merit and safeguarding ethics”*

### **What we do**

Commissioners are appointed under the Civil Service Commissioners (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 which requires them to uphold the principle that selection for appointment to posts in the Northern Ireland Service (NICS) should be on Merit on the basis of fair and open competition. Additionally, Commissioners have a responsibility to hear appeals made by existing civil servants under the Northern Ireland Civil Service Code of Ethics.

### **Who we are**

Civil Service Commissioners for Northern Ireland were first appointed by Royal Warrant in 1923. All are independent of the NICS and bring to the job wide experience from the public, private and voluntary sectors. The current Commissioners have different backgrounds, careers and interests and none is a serving member of the Civil Service. This diversity helps them to provide insight into how the NICS can best service the public.

### **Commissioners:**

Brenda McLaughlin CBE (Chairperson) appointed 11 May 2006  
Judith M Eve CBE (outgoing Chair, retired 30 April 2006)  
Brian Carlin OBE  
Margaret M Elliott CBE  
Alan Henry  
Ruth Laird (appointed 1 June 2006)  
Sid McDowell CBE  
John Steele CB OBE TD DL

## How we carry out our work

We seek to achieve excellence in the manner in which we carry out our responsibilities. We have identified the risks of failing to achieve excellence and monitor these risks on a regular basis. We also evaluate our achievements against the actions, measures and targets contained in this Business Plan, and report on this in our Annual Report.

## Core Values

The Commissioners support and seek to adhere to the core principles of public life in all their activities. The principles are:

### **Selflessness**

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family or their friends.

### **Integrity**

Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their official duties.

### **Objectivity**

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

### **Accountability**

Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

**Openness**

Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

**Honesty**

Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

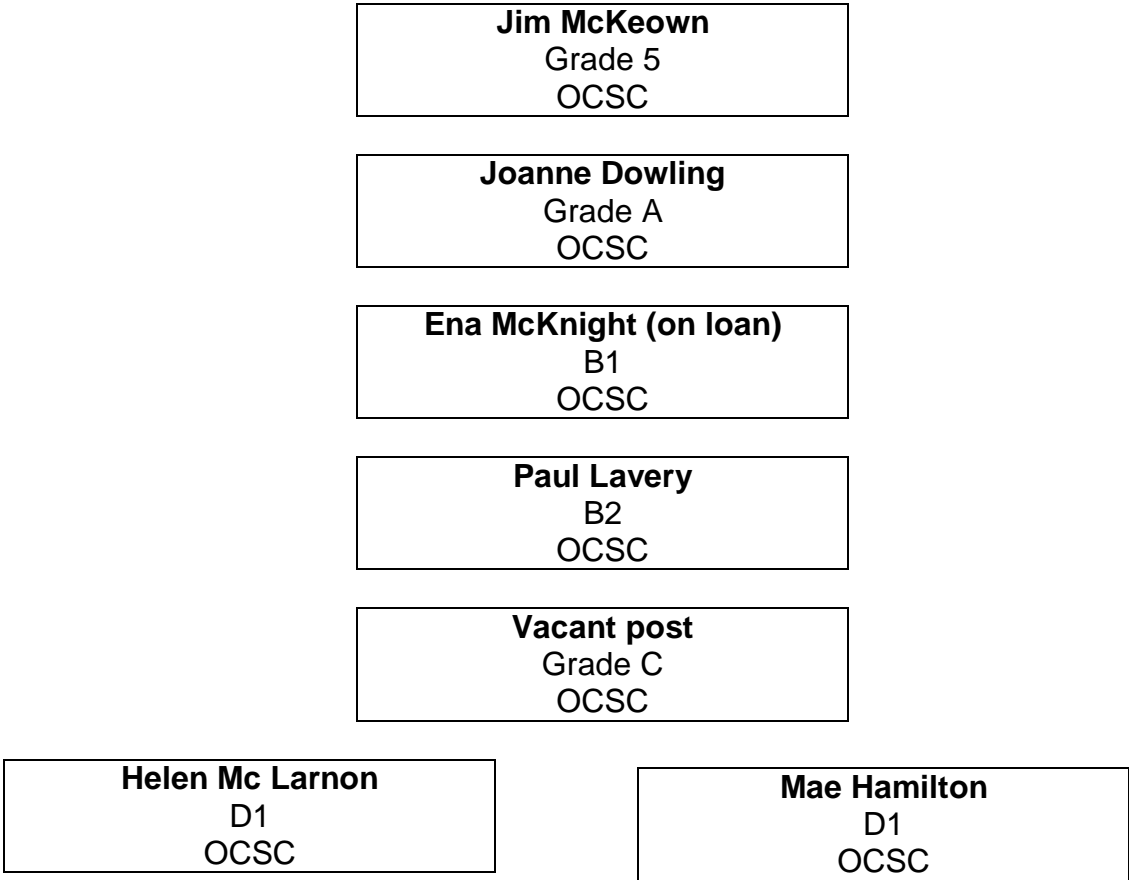
**Leadership**

Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

These core principles may change during 2006-07 as the Cabinet Office completes a consultation exercise on the Civil Service Code and the Committee on Standards in Public Life reviews the principles listed above. We shall closely monitor developments, including any parallel exercise by the NICS to revise its Code of Ethics.

**Civil Service Commissioners Office Secretariat**

The organisational structure for the secretariat at the start of Financial Year 2006/07 is illustrated below –



## BUDGET ALLOCATIONS 2006/07

ITEM	ALLOCATION
Commissioners' Fees	£50k
Audit Contract	£40k
Staff	£150k
Training	£3k
Accommodation & Overheads	£70k
Capital	£2k
<b>Total</b>	<b>£315k</b>

## CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS – BUSINESS PLAN – 2006/07

<b>CUSTOMERS</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To promote public confidence in recruitment to the NICS</li> <li>• To provide timely responses to queries from the Public and Ministers</li> <li>• To provide timely and appropriate advice to NICS Departments/NIO on interpretation of Recruitment Code/remit of Commissioners</li> <li>• To approve SCS appointments within the specified timescales</li> <li>• To progress Code of Ethics appeals by civil servants with minimum delay</li> <li>• To promote equality of opportunity and good relations duties under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998</li> <li>• To demonstrate our commitment to freedom of information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a minimum of 6 Commissioners and successfully manage the transition of integrating the new Chairperson and new Commissioners to ensure a continuing balance of diversity and competence levels</li> <li>• Maintain staffing levels required for the effective discharge of the Commissioners' functions</li> <li>• To deploy and manage resources to secure good value for money</li> </ul>
<b>PROCESSES</b>	<b>ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING AND GROWTH</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure the Commissioners have effective support and advice to enable the achievement of their statutory role and responsibilities</li> <li>• To support and assist the new Chairperson and Commissioners in developing their role</li> <li>• To effectively and efficiently manage Commissioners' meetings with the support of the secretariat</li> <li>• To produce an Annual Report on time</li> <li>• To develop and establish an effective appropriate approach to audit NICS recruitment practices against the new Recruitment Code and complete an agreed Audit Programme</li> <li>• To continually review processes for improvement including electronic records management</li> <li>• To monitor and report on exceptions to the merit principle</li> <li>• To improve and update the Website</li> <li>• To evaluate key outputs as appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide effective strategic leadership and direction to the OCSC secretariat</li> <li>• To provide induction training for the new Chairperson and new Commissioners and continuous professional development for Commissioners</li> <li>• To maintain a well managed, trained and motivated secretariat</li> </ul>

## OCSC: CUSTOMERS

Objective	Targets	Measures	Actions
<p><b>To promote public confidence in recruitment to the NICS</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Raise profile of the Commissioners' roles and responsibilities through a Communications Strategy</li> <li>• To ensure appointments are made on merit</li> <li>• To ensure exceptions to the merit principle comply with the Code</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful implementation of the Communications Strategy</li> <li>• Compliance with the Recruitment Code</li> <li>• Effective Chairing of all SCS Competitions</li> <li>• Compliance with the exceptions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the Communications Strategy</li> <li>• Audit Departments</li> <li>• Monitor appointments</li> <li>• Oversee each stage in Chairing SCS competition recruitment processes</li> <li>• Completion of evaluation report after each competition</li> <li>• Approve appointments relating to needs of NICS</li> <li>• Determine relevant Government programmes</li> <li>• Monitor exceptions to the merit principle</li> </ul>
<p><b>To provide timely responses to queries from the public and ministers</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that accurate and timely advice is given to the public and ministers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timely responses</li> <li>• Number of complaints</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor response time</li> <li>• Investigate issues</li> <li>• Obtain legal advice where necessary</li> <li>• Consult with Commissioners when necessary</li> </ul>

Objective	Targets	Measures	Actions
<p><b>To provide timely advice to NICS Departments/NIO</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure that accurate and timely advice is given to Departments /NIO on interpretation of the Code/remit of Commissioners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Timely responses</li> <li>Feedback from Departments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor response time</li> <li>Investigate issues</li> <li>Obtain legal advice where necessary</li> <li>Consult with Commissioners when necessary</li> <li>Respond as appropriate</li> </ul>
<p><b>To approve SCS appointments within specified timescales</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To ensure that the SCS recruitment process meets the requirements of the New Recruitment Code</li> <li>To ensure that SCS approvals are completed in the agreed timescale for each stage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approve against agreed criteria</li> <li>Feedback from audit programme</li> <li>Delays identified and action taken to ensure timely responses</li> <li>Feedback/complaints from Departments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitor competitions and address any problems as appropriate</li> <li>Recommendations from audit reports implemented</li> <li>Scrutinise SCS competitions at each stage and query as necessary</li> <li>Process within agreed timescales</li> </ul>
<p><b>To progress Code of Ethics appeals with minimum delay</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To encourage and contribute to the development of a revised NICS Code of Ethics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Endorsement of a revised NICS Code of Ethics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liaise with DFP through Ethics working group and PSG Sub-Group</li> <li>Prepare and agree with Commissioners new procedures for appeals in line with the revised Code when available</li> </ul>

Objective	Targets	Measures	Actions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process all new appeals in line with agreed procedures</li> <li>• Prepare revised appellant leaflet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appellants complaints processed in a timely way</li> <li>• Feedback from applicants/Departments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider complaint, investigate, report and make recommendations as appropriate</li> <li>• Draft new leaflet in line with revised Code when available</li> </ul>
<p><b>To promote equality of opportunity and good relation duties under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor the implementation of the new Recruitment Code</li> <li>• To carry out a 5 year review on the Commissioners' Equality Scheme by 14 June 2006</li> <li>• Prepare report on implementation of 2005-06 Equality Scheme by 30 September 2006</li> <li>• To agree and publish a Good Relations Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliance with key changes of the Recruitment Code through Audit and charring SCS competitions</li> <li>• Timely submission of review of scheme to Equality Commission</li> <li>• Timely submission of report to Equality Commission</li> <li>• Publication of an agreed Good Relations Strategy on the website</li> <li>• Development of relationships with Section 75 groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit programme completed by 31 March 2007</li> <li>• Feedback from SCS competitions</li> <li>• Preparation of reviewed scheme</li> <li>• Preparation of report</li> <li>• Commissioners approval</li> <li>• Submit to the Equality Commission</li> <li>• Preparation of report</li> <li>• Commissioners approval</li> <li>• Submit to the Equality Commission</li> <li>• Agree Strategy</li> <li>• Implementation of the Communications Strategy</li> </ul>

## OCSC- Processes

Branch Objective	Targets	Measures	Actions
<p><b>To ensure the Commissioners have effective support and advice to enable the achievement of their statutory role and responsibilities</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that all necessary support and advice is provided to Commissioners accurately and within appropriate timescales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement of Business Plan</li> <li>• Effective communication</li> <li>• Feedback from Commissioners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise regularly with the Chairperson and Commissioners</li> <li>• Provide advice/ information on a timely basis</li> <li>• Process remuneration claims within 5 working days of receipt</li> <li>• Arrange meetings, briefing etc on a timely basis</li> <li>• Obtain relevant legal advice</li> <li>• Arrange meetings, including introductions for new Chair and Commissioners</li> </ul>
<p><b>To support and assist the new Chairperson and Commissioners in developing their role</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To develop good working relationships with senior management of NICS/NIO/Ministers/ other Commissioners etc</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective working relationships with key stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To monitor progress on award of e-HR contract and, as necessary, arrange meeting with contractor</li> <li>• To monitor progress on RPA and arrange briefings as appropriate</li> <li>• To liaise with NIO on progress of political talks to restore devolution</li> </ul>

Branch Objective	Targets	Measures	Actions
<p><b>To effectively and efficiently manage the Commissioners meetings with the support of the secretariat</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide papers at least one week in advance of meeting</li> <li>• Provide responses to queries within one day of receipt where all information is available</li> <li>• Prepare draft minutes of meetings within one week</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful meetings with clear outputs</li> <li>• Feedback from Commissioners on quantity and quality of information</li> <li>• Achievement of objectives</li> <li>• Constructive responses to decisions</li> <li>• Draft minutes prepared and sent to Chair</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare all relevant papers and distribute at least one week prior to meeting</li> <li>• Prepare draft and issue papers</li> <li>• Liaise with Departments' legal advisers on specific requests/issues</li> <li>• Seek feedback on an annual basis from Commissioners</li> <li>• Implementation of the Communications Strategy</li> <li>• Prepare draft minutes</li> </ul>
<p><b>To produce an Annual Report on time</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agree report content and format by 30 April 2006</li> <li>• Draft report by 15 May 2006</li> <li>• Obtain stats from recruitment points by 1 May 2006</li> <li>• Finalise report by 31 May</li> <li>• Publish and distribute report by 30 June 2006</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completed Annual Report</li> <li>• Published and distributed by due date</li> <li>• Feedback from stakeholders/recipients</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise with publishers</li> <li>• Agree front cover and layout with designers</li> <li>• Agree content and layout with Commissioners by 1 May</li> <li>• Proof final draft by 15 May 2006</li> <li>• Confirm database for recipients</li> <li>• Distribute report by 30 June 2005</li> <li>• Evaluate feedback</li> </ul>

Branch Objective	Targets	Measures	Actions
<p><b>To develop and establish an effective approach to auditing NICS recruitment practices against the new Recruitment Code and to complete an agreed Audit Programme</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To establish and implement a new approach to auditing the new Code with NICS by 30 September 2006</li> <li>• To ensure that reports are completed by agreed timescales</li> <li>• Each audit report reviewed within one week of receipt</li> <li>• To prepare papers for Commissioners on issues arising from the audits as required</li> <li>• To identify and implement any action required as a result of agreed audit recommendations within agreed timescale</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NICS audits successfully carried out using the new process</li> <li>• Completion of agreed number of audits/thematic reports</li> <li>• Feedback from audited departments</li> <li>• Feedback from consultants</li> <li>• Issues considered and discussed</li> <li>• Recommendations implemented to Commissioners' satisfaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agreement with NICS on the new approach</li> <li>• Pilot the new approach</li> <li>• Agree priority areas with Commissioners</li> <li>• Agree timetable with Auditors/CPG/ Departments</li> <li>• Oversee/ manage audits</li> <li>• Consider audit reports</li> <li>• Provide report to Commissioners and dissemination of key issues to practitioners</li> <li>• Consultation with relevant parties</li> <li>• Preparation of relevant papers</li> <li>• Action recommendations as appropriate</li> </ul>

Branch Objective	Targets	Measures	Actions
<b>To continually review processes for improvement including electronic records management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To review SCS approval process in light of the NICS new Recruitment Guidelines on SCS appointments</li> <li>• Identify any process which needs to be developed/reviewed as appropriate</li> <li>• To develop branch records to make best use of OASIS by 31 March 2007</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise/review process implemented as appropriate</li> <li>• New processes mapped out and recorded</li> <li>• Effective electronic record management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct process mapping exercise for each key area</li> <li>• Record mapping process</li> <li>• Integrate into business plan as appropriate</li> <li>• Keep the team up-to-date with Oasis filing system</li> <li>• Develop and maintain usage of the system</li> </ul>
<b>To monitor and report on exceptions to the merit principle</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure compliance with the exceptions to the merit principle</li> <li>• Monitor and report exceptions to the merit principle in the Annual Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adherence to the exceptions to merit principle</li> <li>• Feedback to NICS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure Commissioners' approval as necessary</li> <li>• Monitor and advise NICS as appropriate on a monthly basis</li> <li>• Address areas of non-compliance</li> </ul>
<b>To improve and update the web site</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To improve website access and layout and make it more user friendly by 30 September 2006</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website up-to-date and fit for purpose</li> <li>• User feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liaise with website designer</li> <li>• Identify modification options</li> <li>• Agree and manage design modifications</li> <li>• Up-date regularly</li> </ul>

## OCSC: RESOURCES

Branch Objective	Targets	Measures	Actions
<p><b>Maintain a minimum of 6 Commissioners and successfully manage the transition of integrating the new Chairperson and new Commissioners to ensure a continuing balance of diversity and competence levels</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To implement a succession plan to ensure the appointment of a new Chairperson and 3 new Commissioners within the designated timetable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful implementation of plan</li> <li>• Appointment of suitable Chair/Commissioners</li> <li>• Smooth transition of replacement of Commissioners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assist RIR in the appointment of the new Chairperson and 3 new commissioners</li> <li>• Follow the timetable outlined in the plan</li> <li>• Induction of new Chair/Commissioners</li> </ul>
<p><b>Maintain staff levels required for the effective discharge of the Commissioners' functions</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To maintain appropriate staffing levels within the secretariat</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement of OCSC business plan, Communications Strategy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular team meetings</li> <li>• Agreed FJP's</li> <li>• Regularly review of business plan</li> <li>• Implementation of the Training and Development Plan</li> <li>• Regular feedback</li> </ul>
<p><b>To deploy and manage resources to secure good value for money</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To live within our budget set for the financial year</li> <li>• Measure actual spends against forecast</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To have achieved objectives within allocated budgets as follows –</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide regular reports to Commissioners</li> <li>• Regular contact with Divisional Liaison Officer</li> </ul>

Branch Objective	Targets	Measures	Actions				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% scrutiny of bids, business cases and in-year expenditure</li> <li>• To meet all response dates for Estimates, in-year monitoring and other financial exercises</li> <li>• Delivery of timely, accurate and complete reports and submissions for the Divisional Coordinator/FSD within 2 days of FSD deadline</li> </ul>	<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><i>2006/07</i></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><i>2007/08</i></td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>315K</b></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><b>315K</b></td> </tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timely submissions</li> <li>• Timely submissions</li> <li>• Accurately completion of submissions</li> </ul>	<i>2006/07</i>	<i>2007/08</i>	<b>315K</b>	<b>315K</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Check monthly reports by FSD deadline</li> <li>• Complete August and December Monitoring Rounds by FSD deadline</li> <li>• Request and complete FIS forms as required</li> <li>• Attend financial information seminars to gain understanding of operations and processes</li> </ul>
<i>2006/07</i>	<i>2007/08</i>						
<b>315K</b>	<b>315K</b>						

## OCSC: ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING AND GROWTH

Branch Objective	Targets	Measures	Actions
<p><b>To provide effective strategic leadership and direction to the OCSC secretariat</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To manage and implement the 2006/07 Business Plan</li> <li>• Establish FJP within 15 working days of new reporting year</li> <li>• All staff understand their individual contribution</li> <li>• To induct new staff and agree PDP within 2 months</li> <li>• Perform 95% of PAIs within 5 working days of the end of the agreed period</li> <li>• Establish an agreed 2007/08 Business Plan by 1 April 2007</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement of targets outlined in the business plan</li> <li>• Monitor progress and re-prioritise as appropriate</li> <li>• Performance Improvement</li> <li>• 2007/08 Business Plan agreed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quarterly review of business plan</li> <li>• Establish FJP's by 1 April 2006 and review in-year</li> <li>• Meet with staff regularly and re-prioritise as necessary</li> <li>• Provide support, recognition and guidance to the team</li> <li>• Induct new team members and agree PDP</li> <li>• Commence Business Planning process</li> <li>• Secure agreement</li> </ul>

Branch Objective	Targets	Measures	Actions
<p><b>To provide induction training and continuous professional development for the Commissioners</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To continue to provide appropriate development plans for Commissioners</li> <li>• To ensure implementation of the Training and Development Plan</li> <li>• To ensure that networking opportunities are maximised</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective induction of new Chair and Commissioners</li> <li>• Increased understanding of role</li> <li>• Increased knowledge of related legislation and developments</li> <li>• Implementation of the Training and Development Plan</li> <li>• Commissioner feedback</li> <li>• Feedback from other bodies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and implement training needs of the new Chair and Commissioners</li> <li>• Identify and attend training events</li> <li>• Arrange training identified in plan</li> <li>• Evaluate training</li> <li>• Arrange development/information seminars</li> <li>• Arrange visits and guest speakers</li> </ul>
<p><b>To maintain a well managed, trained and motivated secretariat</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of Training and Development Plan</li> <li>• To ensure completion of PDP's within 15 working days of 1 April 2006</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training delivered /evaluated</li> <li>• Progress against Personal Development Plans</li> <li>• Improved performance</li> <li>• Increased skills and competences for the team</li> <li>• Production of Management info relating to Training and Development needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training events arranged and evaluated</li> <li>• Complete PDPs</li> <li>• Individual appraisal</li> <li>• Quarterly Reviews</li> <li>• Training Plan monitored and evaluated</li> </ul>