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## Sustainable Development Commission

### Appointment of new Chair

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Information pack for applicants

The closing date for the receipt of applications for this post is:  
**9am, 17<sup>th</sup> November 2008**



**Sustainable**  
Development Commission



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru  
Welsh Assembly Government



Office of the  
**First Minister and  
Deputy First Minister**  
[www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk](http://www.ofmdfmi.gov.uk)



The Scottish  
Government



Department for Environment  
Food and Rural Affairs

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**Annex A:** List of Commissioners

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The following documents will be provided on request, details inside:

- Application form
  - Guidance notes
  - Diversity monitoring
  - Political activity question
  - PAU benefits leaflet
  - OCPA complaints leaflet
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# 1. Sustainable Development Commission

## What is the Sustainable Development Commission?

The Sustainable Development Commission (SDC) is the Government's independent adviser on sustainable development, reporting to the Prime Minister, the First Ministers for Scotland and Wales and the First Minister and deputy First Minister for Northern Ireland. Through advocacy, advice and appraisal, it helps put sustainable development at the heart of Government policy.

The SDC's role is to act as a catalyst for change by consistently demonstrating how the principles of sustainable development can be used to help find lasting solutions to some of the crucial issues of our times. It is viewed as a key part of the landscape for embedding sustainable development principles in government at all levels.

At UK level, the 2005 sustainable development strategy called *Securing the Future*, led to a substantial expansion in the size and budget of the SDC to enable it to perform an expanded role as the Government's independent "watchdog" on sustainable development. *Securing the Future* also paved the way for the recruitment of the SDC's Chief Executive through external competition. The SDC is formally sponsored at UK level by the Cabinet Office, although in practice day-to-day sponsorship in Whitehall is delegated to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. The Secretary of State for Defra accounts for the SDC's business to Parliament in Westminster.

In both Scotland and Wales the SDC is expanding, with the active support and funding of both administrations. In Northern Ireland the new administration is reviewing the sustainable development strategy originally developed under Direct Rule.

Further to the developments discussed above, the SDC is soon to become an *executive* non-departmental public body (NDPB) established as a company limited by guarantee. The SDC is currently an *advisory* NDPB and this change will be the culmination of a process set out in the UK Government sustainable development strategy and the UK sustainable development framework *One Future: Different Paths*. This framework agreed the shared priorities and common goals for the Devolved Administrations (DAs) and the UK Government and how each authority would work together on sustainable development. In response, through either a sustainable development strategy or a Memorandum of Understanding, each of the four administrations agreed a working relationship with the SDC to suit their own approach to sustainable development and governance. The status change process will serve to formalise these working arrangements, particularly in the SDC's role as a watchdog or scrutineer.

The current chair, Jonathon Porritt, has been the key player in the first nine years of the SDC since its formation in 2000. He steps down in July 2009, and we are looking for a new and exceptional individual to take on the mantle. The SDC is now a mature organisation and is about to become an executive NDPB, so the challenges for the new Chair, and the balance of skills required, will be very different from those which were needed in its pioneer phase.

## Aims and objectives

The SDC's Strategy *A Catalyst for Change* sets out three high level outcomes with respect to the UK Government and DAs. These are to help:

- Build the **organisational capability** – the attitudes, knowledge, skills, and resources to put sustainable development into practice through their policies and programmes;
- Achieve **breakthroughs in the key areas of policy** which will have the greatest immediate impact upon progress towards sustainability;
- **All administrations be held to account** for their progress on their strategic objectives for sustainable development and mainstream this scrutiny function within other public sector monitoring and audit bodies.

In order to achieve these aims, the SDC:

- Produces **in-depth, evidence-based, public reports** on contentious environmental, social and economic issues, such as food policy, tidal power and sustainable communities;
- Is a **strong advocate for sustainable development**, advising Ministers, policy-makers and stakeholders across Government and responding to Government policy consultations as appropriate;
- **Encourages, stimulates and shares good practice** between the administrations in Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales and at UK level;
- **Champions sustainable development in public**, and works to find new ways to **engage citizens** in its own projects and in its advice to Government;
- Helps to hold Government to account by virtue of its **scrutineer role**, the exact nature of which varies from the UK level to Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

The SDC's two-year work programmes with the four nations identify clear outcomes to be achieved across UK Government and the DAs. They include projects in the policy areas of: energy, transport, the built environment, sustainable consumption and business, regional and local government, engagement, health, education, skills and young people, as well as capability building and, to varying degrees, scrutiny/watchdog work.

## Governance

It is worth acknowledging that the Sustainable Development Commission does not fit easily into any fixed organisational or governance template, though the normal principles of good governance apply. Its success depends in part on the role played by Commissioners, in part on the role played by the Secretariat, and in the future the part to be played by the Board. The success of the SDC has depended and will depend on the co-operation between the three. After the completed change of status to an executive NDPB (in the form of a company limited by guarantee), the SDC will be formed of those three parts as follows:

### 1. The Board of Directors

A Board of Directors will be appointed to manage the business issues of the company. This Board will be chaired by the SDC Chair and as set out in the SDC

Articles of Association and Memorandum of Understanding; the Directors of the company will include the Chair, Chief Executive, two non-executive directors and other roles to be agreed by the Members<sup>1</sup> of the SDC. The Board will have a maximum of eleven Directors and one or more of the Commissioners may also be Directors.

## **2. The Commission**

The SDC currently has 17 Commissioners who make up the Commission (for a full list see Annex A). They are all experts in particular aspects of sustainable development and have come from academic, scientific, business and NGO backgrounds. They are appointed by the Prime Minister, in agreement with the First Ministers for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland and the deputy First Minister for Northern Ireland. Commissioners include the SDC Chair, and four Vice-Chairs who each focus on developing relationships with one of four the administrations in Whitehall, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The role of the Commissioners is to use their knowledge and experience to steer and inform the work areas of the SDC and to be an ambassador for the SDC. They are also appointed to provide a source of creative, evidence-based advice to Ministers, Government Departments, the Devolved Administrations, and the rest of the public sector in the UK.

Plenary Meetings of the Commissioners are held six times per year and are chaired by the SDC Chair. It is important for applicants to note the dual role of the SDC Chair in relation to the Board of Directors and the Commission. The qualities and experience that are required to fulfill this role are outlined in the next section.

## **3. The Secretariat**

The Commissioners are complemented by the SDC secretariat which is led by the Chief Executive Andrew Lee, and consists of around 60 staff spread across London, Cardiff, Edinburgh and Belfast. The secretariat includes the management team, heads of branch, policy analysts, communications staff and posts covering finance and administration.

## **Further information**

For further information please visit the SDC website at: [www.sd-commission.gov.uk](http://www.sd-commission.gov.uk) or contact by email at [enquiries@sd-commission.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@sd-commission.org.uk) or phone 020 7270 8498.

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<sup>1</sup> The first Members of the SDC, as a company limited by guarantee, will be the Secretary of State for Defra, the First Minister for Scotland, First Minister for Wales and the First Minister and deputy First Minister for Northern Ireland.

## 2. Being the Chair of the SDC

### Description of role

The Chair will play a pivotal role in bringing SDC influence to bear on all aspects of government, and thereby act as a leading and influential agent for sustainable development in the UK.

The Chair is directly responsible to the ministers specified in the previous section and, along with the Devolved Vice-Chairs as appropriate, takes the lead in communications between the SDC and these ministers.

More specifically, with the SDC secretariat and the Commissioners the Chair will:

- oversee the development, delivery and review of the SDC's strategy, and ensure that it is both challenging and clearly adds value to government;
- develop a strong, mutually supportive working relationship with the Chief Executive, and hold him to account for the day to day management of the SDC secretariat and operations;
- lead the SDC in establishing strong and influential working relationships with senior stakeholders at the Chief Executive Officer/Chair level in government/public sector as primary audiences, and civil society organisations and business as appropriate;
- ensure that in all its work the SDC acts consistently, with integrity, and draws upon a robust evidence base, achieving traction and leverage with government through an appropriate mix of challenge and inside-track influence;
- act as principal ambassador for the SDC in a wide variety of different contexts, in the media and across society at large;
- clear and measurable annual objectives are agreed for all Commissioners, and performance appraised against these objectives, and he or she must assess the performance of individual board members and Commissioners when being considered for re-appointment;

Specifically as chair of the Board, the Chair also has an obligation to ensure that:

- the resources of the SDC, in all parts of the UK, are deployed to maximum effectiveness and efficiency in accordance with grant aid provision and agreed Memoranda of Understanding;
- the Board has a balance of skills appropriate to directing the SDC's business, (as set out in the Government Code of Good Practice on Corporate Governance and in the SDC's own Memorandum of Understanding and Articles of Association);
- Board members are fully briefed in terms of appointment, duties, rights and responsibilities;
- he or she, together with the other Board Members, receives appropriate training on financial management and reporting requirements and on the cultural differences that exist between private, third and public sector practice;
- the responsible Ministers are advised of the SDC's needs when Commissioner vacancies arise;

- there is a code of practice for board members in place and that is consistent with the Cabinet Office model Code.

## Qualities and experience required

Successful candidates will be able to demonstrate the full range of skills necessary to operate as the independent Chair of this now well established organisation.

### Essential:

1. A deep understanding of and commitment to sustainable development, with evidence of having applied the principles of sustainable development in previous roles;
2. Ability to articulate those principles and make the environmental, social and economic case for change to a range of audiences with differing priorities;
3. The ability to combine a strategic view of the political landscape with experience of how the machinery of government operates at the highest levels;
4. A senior-level influencer able to work effectively with Ministers and senior officials across the UK government and the Devolved Administrations;
5. A proven ability to develop a strong, mutually supportive working relationship with the Chief Executive, and holding him or her to account for the day to day management of the SDC secretariat and operations;
6. An understanding and proven record of organisational leadership and the ability to maintain motivation and direction towards the SDC's goals;
7. A proven track record in dealing with the media and demonstrable excellence in public speaking and other representational roles.
8. Previous experience in a non-executive director role, ideally as Chair;
9. The ability to oversee an organisation with multiple functions and complex, challenging relationships in a multiple-stakeholder environment crossing the public and private sectors.

### Desirable

1. Direct experience of working in two or more sectors, including government/public sector, third sector and/or business.
2. Some experience of working across the new devolved landscape of Government within the UK.

**The successful candidate will add significant value to the SDC as Chair of the Board and Commissioners and will demonstrate the ability to be creative, incisive, objective, challenging and constructive.**

## Terms and conditions of appointment

### Period of appointment

Appointments are given for three years and are restricted to two terms. Any re-appointment is subject to satisfactory performance assessment and will be at the discretion of Ministers.

The appointee may resign at any time by giving 6 months notice in writing to the Members of the Board and Defra as the sponsor department. The Members<sup>2</sup> may terminate the appointment under certain conditions, which will be notified to the successful candidate on appointment.

## **Working methods and procedures**

### **Time input**

To be discussed with candidates, but within the range of 2 – 3 days a week.

The successful applicant will be notified of their selection early in March 2009 and will take over from Jonathon Porritt when his term expires at the end of July. To ensure a successful transition period, applicants are advised to expect some requests to be made on their time between March and July. Remuneration for this will be made as appropriate.

### **Remuneration**

Remuneration is expected to be £400 per diem but is subject to review.

### **Working Practices**

Currently Plenary Meetings of the SDC occur six times each year and take place over one or two consecutive days. These Plenary meetings are held in London, Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast, and sometimes in other locations in England, Wales and Scotland.

The Board of the SDC will meet between four and six times per year.

All meetings are held in accommodation that is fully accessible for those people with disabilities. The SDC would also make any reasonable adjustments, including meeting exceptional costs, providing material in different formats etc to assist a person with disabilities in travelling to and participating in such meetings.

### **Resources and Funding**

The budget is managed by the Chief Executive. Budgeted expenditure for the SDC in 2009/10 is approximately £3.5m.

Around 68% of income comes from the UK Government via Defra, 3% from the Welsh Assembly Government, 10% from Scottish Executive and 3% from the

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<sup>2</sup> The first Members of the SDC, as a company limited by guarantee, will be the Secretary of State for Defra, the First Minister for Scotland, First Minister for Wales and the First Minister and deputy First Minister for Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland Assembly. The remaining 16% comes from full cost recovery of services, mainly to other government departments

Approximate staff numbers in the Secretariat (full time equivalents): 60

### Location of Offices

The SDC has a main office in London, with other offices in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast.

## 3. Applying for a post

### The Commissioner for Public Appointments

The Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA) regulates and monitors ministerial appointments to public bodies to ensure that they are made on merit after fair and open competition. More information about the role of the Commissioner and her *Code of Practice* is available from [www.ocpa.gov.uk](http://www.ocpa.gov.uk)

A copy of the leaflet setting out the OCPA complaints procedure is enclosed where this pack is sent in hard copy; otherwise it too may be seen at their web site.

A copy of the seven principles of public life which all Ministerial appointees are expected to adhere to is at Annex B.

### How to respond

All candidates are required to complete the following forms:

- Application form
- Diversity Monitoring Questionnaire
- Political Activity Question

**Please note that CVs will not be accepted as an alternative to completing the application form, but they will be considered as supporting evidence.**

For an informal and confidential discussion, please call Veredus: Steve Guest on 020 7932 4308, Yvonne Frayling on 020 7932 4358 or Roger Russell on 020 7932 4263.

Completed application forms and CVs can be sent to Jaimi Shanahan at Veredus on [jaimi.shanahan@veredus.co.uk](mailto:jaimi.shanahan@veredus.co.uk). Alternatively, they can be sent to:

Jaimi Shanahan  
Veredus  
17 Rochester Row  
London  
SW1P 1RP

All applications must be received by the closing date, **9.00am on Monday 17th November 2008. Late applications will not be considered.**

Welsh language versions of this information pack or alternative versions in Braille, Type-Talk are available by contacting Veredus as above.

## **Selection Process**

### **Selection Panel**

An Independent Assessor provided by OCPA will scrutinise the entire process and sit on the Selection Panel to help ensure a process of independent and open assessment.

The Panel will be chaired by Bill Stow, Director General for Strategy and Evidence at Defra. The other members will include a representative from the Devolved Administrations, the Director for Strategy and Sustainable Development at Defra and a representative from a Government Department other than Defra.

### **Selection Process**

The Selection Panel will decide, from the information provided in the application form and any CV, which candidates most closely match the range of criteria specified for appointment to the role of Chair. Those candidates will then be invited to attend an initial interview with Veredus executive recruitment that will occur between **25<sup>th</sup> of November and 5<sup>th</sup> of December**.

Based upon reports from Veredus on first round interviews, the Panel will then decide a short list of candidates to invite to a final interview on **12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> January 2009**. At that stage, short-listed candidates will be offered the opportunity to have a meeting with the outgoing Chair and/or Chief Executive. This is not part of the decision making process and is solely designed to provide candidates with the opportunity to gain further context and information about the SDC.

Interviews will take place at Defra's offices at Nobel House, Smith Square SW1P 3JR, and the interview should last in the region of 1 hour. If selected for interview, candidates will be asked to prepare a five minute presentation. This should be made without the use of visual aids. We will notify candidates of the topic in the letter inviting to interview.

The Selection Panel will make recommendations to UK Ministers and the appointment will be made after obtaining the agreement of the First Ministers for Scotland and Wales, the First Minister and deputy First Minister for Northern Ireland and with final approval from the Prime Minister.

Regarding interview days, candidates will be able to claim for reasonable travel expenses incurred and costs for care arrangements where necessary.

## How we will handle your application

The advertisement gives you details of the position, elaborated in this application pack

- We will acknowledge receipt of your application form and other documents.
- Veredus will assist the selection panel to decide the long-list of candidates who will attend the first round of interviews. Successful applicants at this stage will be notified by the **25th of November** and first round interviews will be conducted by Veredus between the **25th of November and the 5th of December**.
- The Selection Panel will then decide of those candidates to invite to final interview and those individuals will be notified in the week commencing **8th of December**.
- References will then be taken up if candidates are selected for interview.
- The final interviews will take place on the **12th and 13th of January 2009**.
- All candidates will be notified of the outcome of their application and offered feedback.

## Equal opportunities and diversity

**All public appointments are based on the principle of merit.**

This appointment will be governed by the principle of public appointment based on merit with independent assessment and transparency of process. Candidates may come from a wide range of backgrounds and experience.

The Government is committed to improving the diversity of their public bodies and welcome applications irrespective of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religion, religious beliefs or similar philosophical belief, age, gender re-assignment or community background.

Defra and /or the SDC would be pleased to make all reasonable adjustments to assist candidates at interview should they have disabilities; and if appropriate similarly to assist the successful candidate on appointment to the role.

Defra and the SDC will work with the new Chair after appointment to identify appropriate training to enable him or her to become fully engaged in the work of the SDC and the duties of the role.

## Dealing with your concerns

For queries about your application or the recruitment process, please contact Steve Guest or Yvonne Frayling at Veredus: [Steve.Guest@veredus.co.uk](mailto:Steve.Guest@veredus.co.uk) or [Yvonne.Frayling@veredus.co.uk](mailto:Yvonne.Frayling@veredus.co.uk)

## Annex A

### Current Commissioners

List of current commissioners:

<b>Commissioner</b>	<b>Specialism</b>
<b>Jonathon Porritt</b>	Chair
<b>Jan Bebbington</b>	Vice Chair, Scotland
<b>Bernard Bulkin</b>	Climate Change, Energy and Transport.
<b>Lindsey Colbourne</b>	Engagement and communications
<b>Anna Coote</b>	Health
<b>Peter Davies</b>	Vice Chair, Wales
<b>Stewart Davies</b>	Business
<b>Ann Finlayson</b>	Education
<b>Tess Gill</b>	Employment - particularly discrimination, industrial law, and human rights.
<b>Tim Jackson</b>	Economics
<b>Alan Knight</b>	Global commerce and consumer products
<b>Tim Lang</b>	Natural resource and land use
<b>Alice Owen</b>	Regional and local issues
<b>Anne Power</b>	House and communities
<b>Hugh Raven</b>	Scotland and Agriculture
<b><a href="#">Waheed Saleem</a></b>	Education and Young People
<b>Rebecca Willis</b>	Vice Chair, Policy

## **Annex B**

### **The Seven Principles of Public Life**

#### **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.