

## COMMITTEE ON EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY EOC 01-02(p.7)

**Date:** Wednesday 30 January 2002

**Time:** 9.30am

**Venue:** Committee Room 3, National Assembly Building

**Title:** Extracts from 'Motivation of Public Appointees: A Scoping Exercise'.  
Teresa Rees - July 2001

### **1. Introduction**

1. This paper makes some suggestions as to how we may discover more about what motivates people to apply for and take up public appointments, with a view to identifying ways of broadening the field of applicants. There are many opportunities for public service through such appointments. However, the range of applicants, in terms of socio-economic and demographic characteristics, tends to be rather narrow. Many potentially excellent public appointees are not applying. These factors raise concerns about the representativeness (broadly conceived) of the boards of public bodies. They also suggest that public bodies are missing out on the valuable input that a more diverse membership would provide.
2. The National Assembly for Wales commissioned this paper at the behest of the Committee on Equality of Opportunity and in conjunction with Dame Rennie Fritchie, the GB Commissioner for public appointments. The National Assembly for Wales and the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA) share a commitment to widening access and participation in public service.
3. The paper is timely, in that 2001 is the United Nations Year of Volunteering.

### **2. Terms of reference**

1. The terms of reference for this paper are to establish the parameters for research on the motivation of public appointees. More specifically, they specify the purpose of this exercise as being:
  - i. to identify the reasons that motivated people currently in public appointments apply for and accept appointments and to establish whether there are significant differences between gender, age, race and disability groups;
  - ii. to identify the reasons why people who are suitably qualified, particularly those from

- under-represented groups, do not apply for public appointments; and
- iii. to suggest ways in which the information from i) and ii) can be used to attract more people from under-represented groups to apply for appointments, and to assess the feasibility and benefits of doing so.
1. The terms of reference include establishing how such a brief should be addressed, and estimating the likely cost and timescale.

## 7. Summary of recommendations

### Task 1: Why people serve:

1. A *literature review* on ‘motivations and prompts for volunteering’ by an expert in the field, supplemented with interviews with a few key people (such as a representative from the National Centre for Volunteering). Estimated time: two months. Estimated cost: £3,000.
2. A series of *focus groups* from a selected cross-section of current public appointees, stratified by the three Tiers, to identify key prompts and motivations for volunteering for and staying in a public appointment. Estimated time: three months. Estimated cost: £10,000.
3. A *structured questionnaire survey* of a stratified sample of existing public appointees exploring their motivations and prompts. The sample should control for different tiers of public appointment. Information to be collected should include a history of the individuals’ public service, socio-economic and demographic variables, motivations and prompts, and how the respondents found out about the opportunity. Estimated time: three months. Estimated cost: £8,000.

### Task 2: Why people don’t serve

4. Commission questions about active citizenship to be inserted in a *regular omnibus survey* of the general public and request analysis of data to include cross-tabulation with socio-economic and demographic characteristics. Time: three months (depending on phasing)  
Cost: would need to be negotiated, unknown but not expensive.
5. *Consultation with organisations that assist formally in the recruitment process*. The consultation will concentrate on representative organisations, nominating bodies and search agents. Time 5 months. Cost: £6,000.
6. *Telephone interview survey* of equality agencies and special interest groups concerned with individuals who are under-represented in public appointments, such as Race Equality Committees, Disability Wales and Wales Assembly of Women. Time: 6 weeks. Cost £2,500.

Task 3: Ways to encourage people from under-represented groups:

7. *Developing public service pathways*, to boost the progression of people from minor to more major appointments.
8. *Certificating skills and competencies illustrating 'fitness to serve'*, to overcome problems of lack of confidence, knowledge and skills.
9. *Modernising ways of doing business in public bodies* to remove barriers from disabled people and those with caring responsibilities and transport problems.
10. *Encouraging independent assessors and public appointees to foster interest in and knowledge about public service* in a specific geographical area or among members of a particular under-represented group.