



OMBUDSMAN
ASSOCIATION

Promoting independent complaint resolution

CONTENTS

	Page
1. Foreword by the Chair of the Association	1
2. Annual Meeting 2016	2
3. Report against the Business Plan 2016/17	3
a) Supporting and promoting an effective system of complaint handling and redress	3
b) Protecting the role of an ombudsman as the 'best practice' model	4
c) Providing an authoritative voice and promoting best practice	5
d) Supporting open and transparent accountability	7
4. Finances	8
• Finances 2015/16	8
• Finances 2016/17	8
5. Membership	8
• Changes in membership	8
• Forthcoming changes	8
• Executive Committee	9
• Validation Committee	9
6. Members of the Association	10
• List of members as at 31 March 2017	10

The Vision of the Association is that throughout the public and private sectors:

- It is straightforward and simple for people to complain.
- People making a complaint are listened to and treated fairly.
- A complaint is dealt with quickly, fairly and effectively at the earliest stage by suitably trained staff.
- People have access to an ombudsman in all areas of consumer and public services.
- The learning from a complaint is used to improve services.

The objects of the Association are to:

- a) Support and promote an effective system of complaint handling and redress in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Britain's Crown Dependencies and Britain's Overseas Territories.
- b) Encourage, develop and protect the role of ombudsmen in both the public and private sectors as the 'best practice' model for resolving complaints, according recognition through membership.
- c) Provide an authoritative voice and promote best practice and policy for those involved in complaint handling and redress to ensure an effective service for the public.
- d) Support open and transparent accountability and endorse principles of good complaint handling.



Kieran FitzGerald

by the Chair of the Association

The supposed Chinese Curse, “May you live in interesting times”, seems a particularly apt one to quote, considering events of the past year. On a grand political scale there have been elections and referendums, political crises, legislative change and shifting priorities across all the nations and territories that our members operate in. ‘Challenges and opportunities’ does not quite seem to cover it.

On a personal note, the accident I had in June curtailed the contribution I had planned to make to the Association. I’m extremely grateful to the Executive Committee, and the wider membership, for the support and kind words I have received during these early stages of my recuperation. I’m also very grateful to Nick for taking on the role of Acting Chair and helping steer the Association in my absence. The Business Plan for 2016/17, the Association’s first ever, was an ambitious one as we sought to implement the changes that members had called for in the strategic review. The Annual Report sets out in more detail the performance against the Business Plan, and I’m delighted at what has been achieved this year despite those internal and external challenges.

The work of the Interest Groups has always been the lifeblood and main benefit of the Association, and so it is particularly pleasing to see the establishment of the Casework Interest Group to enable members to share best practice on their core business. The reintroduction of the OA Newsletter as a quarterly online publication, alongside the changes to enable staff to receive personalised alerts when new content is posted in the Members’ Area, will further facilitate that sharing.

The Validation Committee have started the re-validation programme of all ombudsman members and Donal has undertaken a significant programme of engagement with a wide range of stakeholders to promote the high standards that the Association’s criteria and Principles represent.

The development of a generic Service Standards Framework was the flagship project for the Association this year. Having external stakeholders on the steering group and undertaking a public consultation has

resulted in a robust framework that members can use to raise their own performance, embed good practice in their organisation, and to demonstrate the quality of the service they provide.

Of course we will not be resting on our laurels, and the key focus for the Association in the coming year will be to build on that project by supporting the ‘professionalisation’ of the caseworker role through the development of a generic Caseworker Competency Framework.

As members will know, I have decided to step down as Chair at the AGM in May 2017. Although I remain as committed as ever to the aims and work of the Association, I do not feel I can give the role of Chair the time and energy it requires. At this time I need to redouble my focus on my recuperation, but I do intend to put myself forward for election to the Executive Committee as a representative of Ombudsman Members. You haven’t got rid of me yet!

Kieran FitzGerald

Ombudsman Association Chair
Commissioner, Garda Síochána Ombudsman
Commission

I know that I speak for all members when I say how pleased we all are that Kieran has now returned to work. Whilst it is a huge loss to the Association for him to be stepping down as Chair before the end of his term, I’m delighted that he will continue to be involved as a member of the Executive Committee going forward.

I certainly agree that the Association is in a strong position, with our Principles and membership criteria recognised by governments and organisations across the territories we cover, and beyond, as representing best practice. I very much look forward to further delivering our aims over the coming years.



Nick Bennett

Ombudsman Association Vice Chair
and Acting Chair
Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

FORWARD

Annual Meeting 2016

The 23rd Annual Meeting of the Association took place on 13 May 2016, on the second day of the 2016 Conference, at the Radisson Blu St Helens in Dublin. The Annual Meeting was attended by 67 people, including 23 Ombudsman Members, 11 Complaint Handler Members, and one Corporate Associate Member.

In the opening address Lewis Shand Smith, the Association's Chair, highlighted some of the activities undertaken during that year, including the strengthening of the Interest Groups, the initial work to scope out the Service Standards Framework project, the development of relationships with governments and other stakeholders across the sector, and the work undertaken to support individual members. The full text of the Chair's address can be found in the Members' Area of the website.

Guidance for the Validation Committee

Members received a paper in advance setting out the revised Guidance from the Executive Committee. The Guidance aimed to assist the Validation Committee in making recommendations in respect of applications for membership of the Association, and re-validation of existing schemes, particularly in the context of the Association's principle of non-proliferation – based on the presumption that it is in the interests of consumers for access to redress to be simple and straightforward. Members noted that the Executive would be seeking a legal opinion on the Guidance before implementing it.

Business Plan 2016/17

Members welcomed the Association's first ever Business Plan, which set out the priorities that would be focused on in 2016/17 and the activities that would be undertaken.

Memorandum of Understanding with the International Ombudsman Institute

Lewis Shand Smith and Günther Kräuter, the Secretary General of the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI), signed a memorandum of understanding between the Association and the IOI. The MoU committed both organisations to establish a cooperative relationship to share best practice in complaint handling and redress, and the protection and promotion of human rights and consumer rights.

Executive Committee

Elections for the vacant positions on the Executive Committee took place, with the following elected for a two-year term (2016-18):

Association Chair:

Kieran FitzGerald, Garda Síochána
Ombudsman Commission

Ombudsman Member representatives:

Anthony Arter, Pensions Ombudsman Service
Kathryn Stone, Legal Ombudsman
Caroline Wayman,
Financial Ombudsman Service

Complaint Handler / Associate Member representatives:

Linda Kirwan, Law Society of Ireland
Helen Megarry, The Adjudicator

Below, from left: Günther Kräuter, Lewis Shand Smith with Donal Galligan sign the Memorandum of Understanding

Note: the minutes of the Annual Meeting are in the Members' Area of the Association website. Biographies of Executive Committee members, including photographs, are in the public area of the Association website.



Report against the business plan

The Association's 2016/17 Business Plan grouped the activities for the year under the Association's Objects, highlighting the key priorities as:

- 1) Maintain and increase membership of the Association, establishing it as a necessity for those involved in complaint handling.
- 2) Assist move to 'professionalise' the role of caseworkers through a project to develop a behaviours, knowledge & skills framework for all members.
- 3) Enable members to share best practice on their core business by establishing a 'Casework' Interest Group.
- 4) Support members in managing customers' expectations by developing and agreeing a service standards framework.
- 5) Reinforce the OA's ability to influence stakeholders by reviewing the Strategic Position Statement on Ombudsmen.

a) Support and promote an effective system of complaint handling and redress in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Britain's Crown Dependencies and Britain's Overseas Territories.

Conferences and seminars

During the year the Director was invited to speak at several events on behalf of the Association.

- The Director attended the fourth annual Civil Justice Conference on Consumer ADR/ODR in Oxford on 18-20 April 2016, speaking during the session entitled 'Trust', on what the Association can do to help build and maintain the trust of the public in our members.
- The Director took part in a panel discussion on the ADR Directive on BBC Radio 4, *Money Box Live*, on 2 November 2016, alongside Andy Allen, Chartered Trading Standards Institute; James Walker, Resolver; and Dr Naomi Creutzfeldt, University of Westminster. The Director highlighted the Association's membership criteria and stressed the need for consumers to be able to access an ombudsman

in all sectors. www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b080w5pm#play

- The Director spoke at the Westminster All Party Parliamentary Group on ADR on 30 January 2017 to explain the role of public services ombudsman in the UK. It provided the opportunity to remind parliamentarians of the role of ombudsman schemes, in contrast to the fee paying mediation alternatives, and to highlight the ombudsman reform proposals.

The Director also attended a number of relevant conferences and seminars during the year, taking the opportunity to engage with participants to highlight the value of effective complaints handling and redress, the work of our members, and the Association's Principles and membership criteria.

- Human Rights Conference; Belfast, 25-27 May 2016.
- European Network of Ombudsman Conference; Brussels, 13-14 June 2016.
- BSI Consumer & Public Interest Network Conference; Edinburgh, 20 July 2016.
- Westminster Policy Forum seminar, *the future of the legal services market – regulation, innovation and the future of the Legal Services Act*; London, 12 September 2016.
- Westminster Business Forum seminar, *the future of consumer law and alternative dispute resolution in the UK*; London, 14 September 2016.
- Scottish Government roundtable on alternative dispute resolution, Glasgow, 29 November 2016.
- UK Administrative Justice Institute workshop on researching users' perspectives of administrative justice; London, 26 January 2017.
- Rail sector roundtable on proposals to establish a Rail Passengers Ombudsman; London, 22 February 2017.
- UK Department for Business (BEIS) workshop on the Consumer Green paper; London, 24 February 2017.

Consultations and legislation

Alongside engaging with government officials, parliamentarians, and other stakeholders at seminars and conferences, the Association also responded to public consultations during the year on *Improving the Consumer Landscape* in the UK and the proposals to establish a public services ombudsman for Jersey: www.ombudsmanassociation.org/association-consultation-responses.php



Equality & Human Rights Commission – Access to Justice

Following initial discussions that the Director had with the Equality & Human Rights Commission (EHRC) at the Human Rights Conference in Belfast, the EHRC established an Access to Justice Reference Group. The Group, which includes the Director and representatives from the Association's public services members, explored how EHRC can work more closely with the ombudsman community to ensure that human rights issues are identified and reflected in the work of ombudsman schemes where appropriate.

Several meetings of the Reference Group have taken place throughout the year, and having further refined their proposals, the EHRC will utilise a workshop at our Conference in May 2017 to engage with the Association's wider membership.

UK Administrative Justice Forum

The Administrative Justice Forum was set up to bring an independent perspective to bear on policy and practice to inform the work of the UK Ministry of Justice.

The Director attended three meetings of the Forum during the year, and a roundtable event which explored the customer experience of the administrative justice system across the UK. The Forum considered a number of topics during the year, including cross-government complaint handling, the negative impact that the introduction of tribunal fees has had on access to justice, and court and tribunal reform in England and Wales.

The meeting in March 2017 was the last of the Forum in its present format, but it was announced that a successor body will be established to continue to provide input to the Ministry of Justice, chaired by Lord Justice Ryder, Senior President of Tribunals, and with the secretariat provided by JUSTICE.

Caseworker Competency Framework

Initial work was undertaken during the year to take forward the work on developing a Caseworker Competency Framework, building on the early work done during the Strategic Review on a draft Behaviours, Knowledge & Skills Framework. The Director attended caseworker training in Dublin and in London to observe what training is currently undertaken, and scoped out with the HR Interest Group and with Niki Maclean how to take the project forward. A secondment will be advertised to deliver the project in 2017/18.

b) Encourage, develop and protect the role of ombudsmen in both the public and private sectors as the 'best practice' model for resolving complaints, according recognition through membership.

Membership criteria

In September, opinion was sought from Counsel on the Executive Committee's Guidance to the Validation Committee on applying the Association's Guiding Principles with regard to membership applications.

Following receipt and consideration of that advice, the Validation Committee initiated the programme of re-validation of existing Ombudsman Members, which it is envisaged will be completed in 2019.

The Director had a number of meetings and interaction with members regarding the re-validation process, and with potential future members on the application process, during the year.

Legal Database

The Legal Interest Group engaged with Dr Richard Kirkham during the year on the proposed Legal Database project, which will gather in one place all case law information about our members. The Director supported the successful bid for funding from the Nuffield Foundation, providing input to the application and a letter of support from the Association, and accepting an invitation to join the project's Advisory Group.

Review of Strategic Position Statement

The Strategic Position Statement was originally adopted by the membership in 2013 to set out the Association's position on a number of issues regarding ombudsman schemes, enabling the Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary / Director to represent the Association with confidence.

A review of the statement was carried out through the Policy Network in spring 2017 and the proposed changes will be put to the AGM in May for agreement.

c) Provide an authoritative voice and promote best practice and policy for those involved in complaint handling and redress to ensure an effective service for the public.

Interest Groups

The Association had seven Interest Groups active during the year. The Groups facilitate communication between schemes and enable staff to share ideas and issues of concern, and disseminate good practice. Meetings are held at the offices of member schemes, and the Association is very grateful for those facilities being made readily available. The notes and presentations from the Interest Group meetings can be found in the Members' Area of the website.

Casework Interest Group

The inaugural meeting of the Casework Interest Group took place in November 2016 at the Office of the Ombudsman in Dublin. The meeting was extremely well attended with over 30 delegates in attendance, representing 26 members, and colleagues from the Channel Islands Financial Ombudsman joining via Skype.

The Group's focus will be on improving the casework of members in order to improve the service provided to service users. The Group, which is chaired by Jane Brothwood, Head of Office at the Adjudicator's Office, will be establishing sub-working groups to explore different topics such as: quality assurance; casework processes; developing shared policies on common practices; early intervention; and finding the right balance in the tension between 'quality vs quantity'.

Communications Interest Group

The Communications Interest Group brings together communications professionals and those with an interest in PR/Communications matters in member schemes. It is currently chaired by Matt Wilson, Press Officer, Advertising Standards Authority.

The Group met twice, in September 2016 (hosted by the Pensions Ombudsman Service) and March 2017 (hosted by the Advertising Standards Authority). The Group act as the commissioning group for content for the OA Newsletter. Activity during the year included: a campaign on Twitter in April 2016, using the hashtag #ombudsmanlife to give stakeholders a flavour of a typical

day; discussions on the use of plain English; and sharing best practice on intranets and engaging staff.

First Contact Interest Group

The First Contact Interest Group provides a forum for discussion on advice services and initial complaint assessment issues. Group members have a common interest in effectively communicating the role of Ombudsman schemes, managing expectations, reducing premature complaints, providing support and guidance to complainants and testing customer service. The Group is chaired by Carol Neill, Advice Team Manager at the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

The Group met in May 2016 (at the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman) and in November 2016 (at the Adjudicator's Office). The Group shared practice on data protection, the approach taken to disclosure of staff names in work correspondence, advice regarding social media profiles and support with regard to harassment. The Group also discussed the challenges regarding moving to a paperless / paper light office, and customer service benchmarking between organisations. The Group also received a presentation on managing expectations and discussed the activities each scheme undertakes, including more timely updates and contact via telephone, Skype, or face-to-face.

Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Interest Group

The EDHR Interest Group last met in June 2016 at the Financial Ombudsman Service. The Group received a presentation on the different models that can be used to deliver change in an organisation, and also discussed current equality activities and challenges within their own organisations.

A decision was subsequently taken to mainstream the work of the Group into that of the other Interest Groups, with equality, diversity and human rights issues being picked up in the day-to-day activities of all staff.

Human Resources Interest Group

The HR Interest Group met in May (at the Independent Police Complaints Commission) and in October 2016 (at the Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner), chaired by Niki Maclean, Director at the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. Alongside the regular employment law updates, the Group also discussed several issues of interest or concern to members, including wellbeing of staff, leadership, HR benchmarking, shared

The Casework Interest Group's focus will be on improving the casework of members in order to improve the service provided to service users.

parental leave, flexi-time arrangements, and recruitment assessment, sharing the policies that each has in place. The Group also discussed the different HR databases that each of their schemes use and the common problems that they encounter. The Group also discussed and provided advice on how best to take forward the Caseworker Competency Framework project.

Legal Interest Group

The Legal Interest Group, which is chaired by Katrin Shaw, Director of Policy, Legal and Governance, Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, met in April 2016 (at the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education) and in October 2016 (at the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales).

Alongside the standing items of updates on legislative changes and jurisprudence, the Group discussed the implications of JR 55 and judicial review more widely, and the approach taken by schemes to information requests.

The Group engaged with Dr Richard Kirkham on the Legal Database project, which had secured funding from the Nuffield Foundation. The Group committed to updating the database, which will be hosted on the OA website and publically available, on an ongoing basis.

The Group also developed Data Protection Guidance in conjunction with the Information Commissioner's Office to assist members in complying with their obligations under the UK's Data Protection Act 1998. The Guidance was circulated to OA members in January 2017.

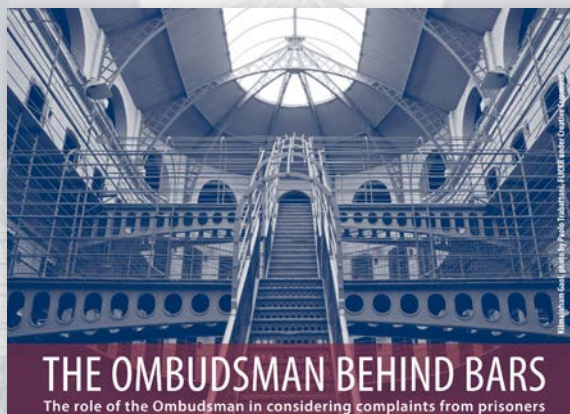
Overseas Members Network

The first meeting of the Overseas Members Network took place in December 2016, via Skype, with colleagues from Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Gibraltar and the Turks & Caicos Islands all participating.

The establishment of the forum was warmly welcomed by participants. The Gibraltar Public Services Ombudsman agreed to chair the meetings and provide secretariat support. It was agreed that they would continue to meet via videoconferencing and also meet face-to-face sporadically when the opportunity arose.

Dublin Conference 2016

The 2016 Ombudsman Association Conference was held on 13-14 May. The Conference was immediately preceded by a fringe event organised by the Office of the Ombudsman, *'The Ombudsman behind bars'*, which explored the need for an independent system to consider complaints from prisoners.



The Conference was the best attended of any outside Loughborough, and included plenary presentations on changing corporate behaviour, human factors, unconscious bias and bias reduction, and the refugee crisis. Workshops also took place on planning systemic investigations, single portals and 'one-stop shops', and how to effectively implement an extension of remit.

The full programme and presentations from all the plenary sessions and workshops can be found in the Members' Area of the website.

OA Newsletter

The relaunched quarterly online newsletter was published in December 2016 and March 2017. The newsletter is aimed at those who deal with casework, highlighting the latest activities of the Association's members and developments in the sector.



Seminars

A seminar on Vulnerability took place at the offices of the Financial Ombudsman Service in London on 18 October 2016. The seminar was attended by over 50 delegates, representing 23 members, and explored the concept and definitions of vulnerability, and what members can do to ensure their services are both accessible and easy to use for those who are

The newsletter is aimed at those who deal with casework, highlighting the latest activities of the Association's members and developments in the sector.



vulnerable, including reasonable adjustments and effectively setting boundaries. The presentations from the seminar can be found in the Members' Area of the website.

A seminar jointly organised with the International Ombudsman Institute (Europe), and the Centre for Welsh Politics and Society at Aberystwyth University took place at Aberystwyth University on 28 October 2016. The seminar, *The Ombudsman in a decade of public policy change*, provided a forum for critical discussion of the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Bill in the broader context of comparative insights into the Ombudsman experience in other parts of the UK and Europe.

2017 Conference

The 2017 Conference, *Holding up a mirror*, will take place at the Burrell Court Conference Centre, Loughborough University, on 25-26 May 2017. Full details of the event can be found on the Association's website, where the presentations and notes of discussions will be made available.

Members' Area of the website

The Members' Area of the website provides a vast resource of information, containing the notes of the various Interest Groups, dates of forthcoming Association events and activities, and presentations from conferences and seminars. Work has been undertaken to make the area more user friendly by enabling the staff of member schemes to sign up for personalised alerts when new content is posted. Work has also been completed to make the website 'mobile responsive'.

Speakers at the Aberystwyth seminar, from left: Jim Martin, Peter Tyndall, Nick Bennet, Tom Frawley, and Rafael Ribo.

d) Support open and transparent accountability and endorse principles of good complaint handling.

OA Service Standards Framework

The flagship project for the Association this year was the development of a generic Service Standards Framework. The British Standards Institute were contracted to provide project support and facilitate the development of the draft. A Steering Group was established consisting of representatives from the Association's members and consumer groups, including Citizens Advice Scotland, the Citizens Information Board (Ireland), the Chartered Trading Standards Institute, and the Legal Services Consumer Panel. Ombudsman Services kindly seconded Kay Roberts to the role of 'Technical Author' to draft the standard.

The Steering Group met three times to consider drafts at different stages of the project, including to review the responses and suggested amendments from the full public consultation that took place with members and stakeholders in January/February 2017.

Having external stakeholders on the Steering Group and undertaking a public consultation has resulted in a robust framework that members can use to raise their own performance, embed good practice in their organisations, and to demonstrate the quality of the service they provide.

The final document will be published in May 2017. Further work will be carried out in 2017/18 to explore how members can best capture, measure and report on their performance against the service standards.



FINANCES

Finances 2015/16

Total income for 2015/16, including membership subscriptions and conference fees, was £180,848 (€228,809). Expenditure was £122,858 (€155,440), thereby increasing the Association's overall reserves to £132,062 (€167,084).

(Note: figures shown in Euros are calculated at the exchange rate on 31 March 2016 of 1.265 Euros to the Pound Sterling.)

Finances 2016/17

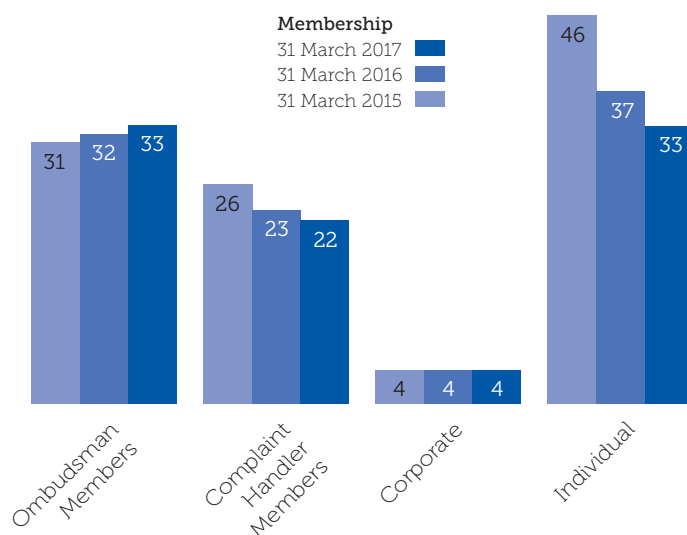
Total income for 2016/17, including membership subscriptions and conference fees, was £170,994 (€199,875). Expenditure was £183,500 (€214,493). The deficit for the year had been forecast and was sustainable in the context of the large reserves that had been accrued. The Association's overall reserves at 31 March 2017 were £119,555 (€139,749).

(Note: figures shown in Euros are calculated at the exchange rate on 31 March 2017 of 1.168 Euros to the Pound Sterling.)

Membership of the Association at 31 March 2017, as compared with a year ago, is as follows:

Members	31 March 2017	31 March 2016
Ombudsman Members	33	32
Complaint Handler Members	21	23

Associate Members	31 March 2017	31 March 2016
Corporate	4	4
Individual	33	37
Total	88	96



MEMBERSHIP

Personnel changes

There have been several changes at 'office holder' level amongst the Association's members during 2016/17:

Rosemary Agnew was appointed Scottish Public Services Ombudsman.

Rob Behrens was appointed Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman.

Elizabeth Denham was appointed UK Information Commissioner.

Mick King was appointed Local Government Ombudsman.

Dilip Tirathdas was appointed Gibraltar Public Services Ombudsman.

Changes in Membership

We were pleased to welcome two new Ombudsman Members to the Association during the year: the Service Complaints Ombudsman for the Armed Forces, and the Motor Ombudsman. Unfortunately the Complaints Commissioner for the British Virgin Islands decided not to renew their membership due to financial constraints.

As anticipated, the number of Complaint Handler Members fell slightly as a result of legislative changes; the function of the Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Ombudsman passed to the newly formed Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman, and the Service Complaints Commissioner for the Armed Forces became an Ombudsman Member.

We did welcome some new Individual Associate Members, although several chose not to renew their membership, either because they had recently retired from all work or had left the post that was complaints related.

Forthcoming changes to Membership

The Gambling Commission's application to become a Corporate Associate member is expected to be approved in 2017/18.

The Director has also been engaging with a number of organisations and stakeholders who have expressed an interest in applying for Association membership, or in establishing an ombudsman in a sector where one does not currently exist. The Director will continue to promote the benefits of Association membership when engaging with both existing and proposed dispute resolution organisations.

As previously indicated, legislative proposals in Ireland to merge the Financial Services Ombudsman Bureau and the Pensions

Ombudsman will, in due course, reduce the number of Ombudsman Members once completed. Similarly, proposals in the UK on public sector ombudsman reform will also further reduce the number of Ombudsman Members if implemented. In addition, the Parliamentary & Health Service Ombudsman, which traditionally held two memberships to reflect their two separate statutory roles, has opted for one overall membership going forward.

Executive Committee

The role of the Executive Committee is to manage the Association on behalf of members. The membership of the Committee during 2016/17 was:

Kieran FitzGerald (Chair)

Garda Síochána Ombudsman
Commission

Nick Bennett (Vice-Chair/Acting Chair)

Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

Anthony Arter

Pensions Ombudsman Service

Kevin Grix

The Furniture Ombudsman

Mick King

Local Government Ombudsman
(January–March 2017)

Linda Kirwan

Law Society of Ireland

Jane Martin

Local Government Ombudsman
(April–December 2016)

Helen Megarry

The Adjudicator, HMRC, Valuation
Office & Insolvency Service

Michael Morgan

Tenancy Deposit Scheme

Kathryn Stone

Legal Ombudsman

Peter Tyndall

Ombudsman & Information
Commissioner, Ireland

Caroline Wayman

Financial Ombudsman Service

Donal Galligan

Director, Ombudsman Association

The Executive Committee met five times during 2016/17:

- 22 April 2016
- 15 July 2016
- 30 September 2016
- 2 December 2016
- 10 February 2017

The minutes of the Executive Committee can be found in the Members' Area of the website.

Validation Committee

The role of the Validation Committee is to advise the Executive Committee on whether applications for Ombudsman and Complaint Handler Membership should be approved.

During 2016/17 the Validation Committee started the re-validation programme of existing Ombudsman Members, which it is envisaged will be completed in 2019.

The recently updated guidance from the Executive Committee is being taken into account both during the re-validation programme and when considering applications from new members. In particular this relates to the Association's Guiding Principles regarding fragmentation of redress schemes within a single industry.

The Validation Committee's membership during 2016/17 was:

Chair

Nick Bennett

Ombudsman Association Vice-Chair

Representing Ombudsman Members

Anthony Arter

Pensions Ombudsman Service

Independent Members

Margaret Doyle

Dr Chris Gill

Professor Mary Seneviratne

The three current independent members of the Association's Validation Committee were appointed in September 2015 for a two-year term, following a public call for expressions of interest. The Association is most grateful to the members of the Validation Committee for making themselves available as required.

The recently updated guidance from the Executive Committee is being taken into account both during the re-validation programme and when considering applications from new members.

MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION AT 31 MARCH 2017

Ombudsman Members

1. Bermuda Ombudsman
2. Channel Islands Financial Ombudsman
3. Complaints Commissioner for the Cayman Islands
4. Complaints Commissioner, for the Turks & Caicos Islands
5. Financial Ombudsman Service, UK
6. Financial Services Ombudsman Bureau, Ireland
7. Financial Services Ombudsman, Isle of Man
8. The Furniture Ombudsman
9. Garda Síochána Ombudsman Commission
10. Gibraltar Public Services Ombudsman
11. Health Service Ombudsman for England
12. Housing Ombudsman Service
13. Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education
14. Independent Police Complaints Commission
15. Legal Ombudsman, England and Wales
16. Local Government Ombudsman, England
17. The Motor Ombudsman
18. Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman
19. Ombudsman and Information Commissioner, Ireland
20. Ombudsman for Children, Ireland
21. Ombudsman for the Defence Forces, Ireland
22. Ombudsman Services
23. Parliamentary Ombudsman, UK
24. Pensions Ombudsman Service, UK
25. Pensions Ombudsman for Ireland
26. Property Ombudsman
27. Property Ombudsman: Scotland
28. Public Services Ombudsman for Wales
29. Removals Industry Ombudsman
30. The Retail Ombudsman
31. Scottish Public Services Ombudsman
32. Service Complaints Ombudsman for the Armed Forces
33. Waterways Ombudsman

Complaint Handler Members

1. Adjudicator, HM Revenue and Customs, Valuation Office, and the Insolvency Service
2. Advertising Standards Authority
3. An Coimisinéir Teanga (Irish Language Commissioner)
4. Barristers Professional Conduct Tribunal, Ireland
5. Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland
6. Disclosure and Barring Service (Independent Complaints Monitor)
7. Financial Services Complaints Commissioner
8. Greffier of the States of Jersey
9. IDRS Limited
10. Immigration Services Commissioner
11. Independent Case Examiner for DWP
12. Independent Complaints Reviewer (for Land Registry, The National Archives, Northern Ireland Youth Justice Agency and Children's Commissioner for Wales)
13. Independent Football Ombudsman
14. Information Commissioner
15. Law Society of Ireland
16. Lay Observer for Northern Ireland
17. Police Investigations & Review Commissioner, Scotland
18. Press Ombudsman, Ireland
19. Scottish Legal Complaints Commission
20. The Dispute Service Limited
21. Welsh Language Commissioner

Corporate Associate Members

1. Brown Jacobson LLP, Solicitors
2. Resolver
3. Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
4. Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh



Ombudsman Association

PO Box 343

Carshalton

SM5 9BX

T: 020 8642 6143

M: 07442 496024

donal.galligan@ombudsmanassociation.org

www.ombudsmanassociation.org

@OmbudAssoc

'Ombudsman Association' is the public name of the British and Irish Ombudsman Association