

You've been Quango'd!

Mapping power across the regions

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New Local Government Network (NLGN) is an independent think tank that seeks to transform public services, revitalise local political leadership and empower local communities. NLGN is publishing this report as part of its programme of research and innovative policy projects, which we hope will be of use to policy makers and practitioners. The views expressed are however those of the authors and not necessarily those of NLGN.

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Published by NLGN

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Contents

Summary	4
1 Introduction	6
2 Our Findings	8
3 The principal of fair representation	10
4 The under-represented and unrepresented	14
5 An embarrassment of riches?	17
6 Intra-regional concentrations	19
7 A culture of centralism?	20
8 Going against the grain	22
9 Recommendations	24
Appendix 1 Methodology	27
Appendix 2 Boards surveyed	28
Appendix 3 Top tier data	31
Appendix 4 Regional data	35
Appendix 5 Non-English data	36
Appendix 6 Departmental analysis	37

Summary

Is it fair that just four London Boroughs, with a population of 824,000, have a greater influence on our quango boards than the entire north of England (population 14.5 million)? Historically, power in the UK has been extremely centralised, yet any study of the concentration of power in Britain would be incomplete without attention to the influence held by our unelected public bodies, or 'quangos'.

The New Local Government Network decided to survey 1000 quango board members to discover their primary residential addresses, to see if this simple fact would confirm or confound the assumption that centralism is deeply engrained in the fabric of how we are governed. Our results reveal a depressing tendency for power to gravitate towards Whitehall and Westminster.

In this report we highlight the scale of power held by quangos and the areas of the country that have the greatest sway over this power. While London and the counties immediately surrounding it are home to over half of all quango board members. In contrast, there are vast swathes of England with apparently no voice on our public bodies. It is said that every post is appointed on merit, yet it cannot be the case that 'merit' is overwhelmingly visible in the capital city but rapidly less so elsewhere.

While the picture is clear looking at England as a whole, within each region there are other concentrations of power, postcodes which are clearly more likely to produce the 'great and good' for seats on quango boards.

Our analysis shows that cultural policy is especially metropolitan, with the six most London-centric boards all from the arts, museum and media sector. Each Government Department with responsibility for quangos varies in its propensity for appointing Londoners, although half of the appointments made at DCMS and DIUS are from within the capital city.

It would seem fair for London to take 14.8% of quango seats in England, reflecting the proportion of English residents living in the capital. But is it reasonable to have more than twice the representation than its population share would justify? In this short paper we argue that the principle of fair representation has been lost somewhere along the way in recent decades, and that the concept of 'national diversity' should be considered afresh now that public bodies are such important decision-makers.

We make four recommendations suggesting that a more democratic approach to nominations and appointments is overdue; that the location of public sector bodies is critical and needs review; that applications for posts should be particularly encouraged from under-represented parts of the country; and that each Cabinet Minister should publish annually the residency statistics of appointments they make.

We believe that over time many of the functions currently undertaken by unelected public bodies could shift to delivery by democratically elected local government, rooted in communities and neighbourhoods up and down the country. This report helps to complete the picture of where influence resides in England, and is our attempt at 'mapping' this part of the establishment. If power is to be vested in the hands of the many not the few, the appointment of quango board membership is a good place to start.

1 *Introduction*

Who makes decisions in Britain today? We know that the House of Commons is directly elected, and that the second chamber is going through the longest possible period of transition to – maybe – something more democratic. But there is another, less visible, cadre of decision-makers, a ‘third estate’ where assessments and resolutions are made on a daily basis affecting our lives – decisions that are made by the quangos (“quasi-non-governmental organisations”).

These quangos, or more precisely the array of non-departmental public bodies appointed by Ministers to undertake delegated functions outside the political realm, are immensely powerful. Each Government department sponsors dozens of quangos, and we calculate there to be approximately 405 with UK or English scope across the public sector. Quangos are given budgets and powers by their sponsor departments and left to get on with their work, accountable to their Secretaries of State, and occasionally cross-examined in Parliamentary committees. Public Bodies in the UK spend £123billion¹ of public money, the equivalent of 9.3%² of GDP, more than that spent by democratically elected local government. These quangos publish annual reports and many do a perfectly excellent job.

But in an era where public trust in decision-making is constantly in the spotlight, and where we see British values heralded worldwide as an exemplar of sound democratic practice, are we really confident that these aspects of the public realm are governed and overseen in the best possible manner?

In this short paper we seek to explore one specific question: are the people who govern our quangos representative of the country as a whole? The results of our survey of 1000 quangocrats in the UK are startling. They reveal a gap between those in charge and those in receipt of the services for which they are

¹ Public Bodies 2006, Cabinet Office

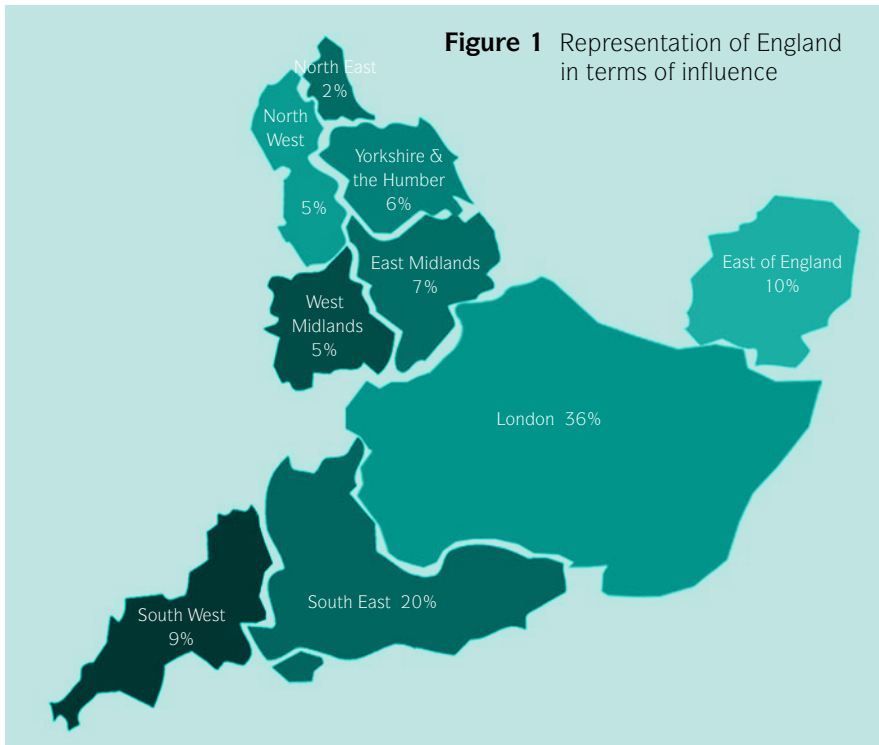
² Based on HMT Money GDP for 2006-07

responsible. As a think tank dedicated to campaigning for greater devolution of power from the centre, we admit openly our predilection for more democratic accountability, particularly through local government. We make a series of recommendations which we believe could put right some of the most glaring inadequacies of the current arrangements. We argue that there is an important principle that has perhaps been forgotten for too long, the principle of 'national diversity' which should see every corner of the country represented at the decision-making table, with an equal say in public affairs.

2 Our findings

Quangocrats are often characterised as “the great and the good”, and though they are in a special and privileged position, their appointment is strictly regulated according to a code of conduct enforced and monitored by the Commissioner for Public Appointments, currently Mrs Janet Gaymer, CBE. The Commissioner has to ensure that Ministers and officials make their appointments according to merit and in as fair and transparent a manner possible.

Great steps forward have been made in recent years in ensuring closer attention to gender and ethnic diversity on the boards of public bodies, and the appointment of individuals with a physical disability.



While the Commissioner can keep an eye on patterns and trends in these public appointments, and insist that a Code of Practice is closely followed, she does not make decisions on individual appointments – these are in the hands of Ministers accountable to Parliament.

The centre of gravity in quango power is clearly the capital city, with 36% of NDPB board influence. The illustrative map of English quango power in figure 1 shows clearly that the influence of regions diminishes the further they are from London, with the North East especially undersized. The proportion of influence is exaggerated beyond the share of population in London and the South East and below what might be expected in most other regions.

3 *The principle of fair representation*

Because the UK constitution has evolved gradually over time, new developments in executive governance can move forward without being fully rooted in the optimum amount of accountability. A desire to see swift 'business-like' decisions is entirely laudable. It was in part the motivation behind the 'Next Steps' initiatives of the 1980s and 1990s where large units of the civil service were established as arms-length agencies, freer from Ministerial intervention on a daily operational basis (in theory, at least).

It may be that, in part, the moves by the Thatcher administration to repackage and float off discreet organisation chunks of the state into these public bodies was a deliberate prelude to privatisation – which indeed proved to be the case for some corners of the public sector, such as the Stationery Office or British Rail.

Yet while the privatisation legacy threw a spotlight on the nature of organisational change for those parts of the public realm actively placed into the free market, there remained a sizeable chunk of the state in the 'netherworld' that is neither democratically open nor privately operated. These public bodies and arms-length agencies have a major impact on the services received by taxpayers and consume vast budgets allocated via their sponsor departments. While in theory Ministers hold their conduct to account, there is often a sense in which arms-length agencies are too distant from public gaze – the practice of 'outsourcing' accountability to the Chief Executives of these agencies away from Parliamentary oversight has long been a source of controversy. Britain's quangos have therefore evolved without always ensuring satisfactory levels of accountability to counter-balance the size and nature of their importance in decision-making.

Some argue that 'policy' is led by elected Ministers and that it is merely the 'operational' aspects of service delivery that are delegated to these public

bodies. In reality, it is impossible to draw a distinct line between where policy ends and 'operations' begin, and as such we should assume that quangos ought to err on the side of openness, transparency and accountable governance.

The good news is that all public bodies have a governing 'board' that oversee their work, mimicking the board structure in the corporate world. Executive Board members are employed in leadership positions within the agencies, and Non-executive Board members provide challenge and oversight from a more external perspective. While there is a separate discussion to be had later about the extent to which board members could be more democratically selected, there is a clear argument made that board-led governance of public bodies is reasonable and proportionate in the circumstances where Ministers have historically chosen to structure public services in this manner.

The bad news, revealed by our survey of over 1000 board members, is that they do not adequately reflect the population from across England. Over the past ten years there has been growing concern about the tendency for public appointments to revert to what Dame Rennie Fritchie (the former Commissioner for Public Appointments) called the "pale, stale, male" segment of the population. The Government has been explicitly keen to see a better representation of women and ethnic minorities on the boards of public bodies, and some positive progress has been made. The Office for the Commissioner for Public Appointments (OCPA) has published data in order to monitor the membership of non-departmental public body boards:

Figure 2 Percentage make-up of all quango boards along Gender, ethnicity and disability.

Year	01-02	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07
Male	61	61	64.4	61.8	63.4	63
Female	39	39	35.6	38.2	36.6	37
BME	8.6	8.9	8.4	9	8.6	9.4
Disabled	2.9	2.7	3.2	4.1	4.4	6.5

Although OCPA monitor according to self-defined personal and physical characteristics, they do not monitor appointments on the basis of residency of those appointed. Keeping track of where appointees reside seems to us absolutely crucial, because our democracy is rooted in geography and locality. Ensuring that all corners of the country have a voice in decision-making is the cornerstone of representation in the House of Commons. The constituency-based electoral system has widespread support and is unlikely to change, even if there were gradual moves towards a more proportional voting system.

It seems odd, then, that monitoring and best practice does not extend to ensuring a fair share of board memberships are spread equally across the nation. We appear somehow content to see grotesque over-representation of some neighbourhoods in this area of national governance, while other localities struggle to get a look-in at all.

The party political battle in Britain beyond General Elections focuses entirely on local government – or the devolved assemblies in Scotland, Wales and London. However, stepping back for a moment and considering the impact of the public realm on the public, local government accounts for barely 15% of total public expenditure. A far greater share of public expenditure is the responsibility of Public Bodies, and yet there is little party political battle over the appointments to their boards. Quango expenditure accounts for 21.1% of total public spending.³ On this basis alone it would seem vital that those overseeing the decision of this enormous resource are rooted in a diverse variety of communities and backgrounds, as well as being appointed on merit.

There are several local public bodies to which local democracy does not yet extend. In particular, the composition of Primary Care Trusts, Regional Development Agencies, Regional Skills Councils and Police Authorities are determined (by and large) by Ministers in Whitehall rather than by

³ Based on Published figures. NDPB spend from Public Bodies, Cabinet Office 2006. Total spend from HMT PESA07

local residents. However, although we would prefer greater democratic accountability here, the board compositions of these local quangos do at least tend to come from the communities and areas they oversee. It would be ludicrous for a PCT to be composed of a governing board which did not predominantly reside within the area it affected. Thankfully, we have not found evidence of any widespread problem with local or regional quangos. Our investigation has therefore focused on those public bodies with a nationwide remit. And it is in these wider ranging bodies that we feel a problem is evident.

The need for greater fairness in the appointment process is clear. Different regions and areas of the country have widely varying needs. Policy makers should of course use hard evidence to inform their decisions, but in reality we know that policy is often informed by the personal experiences, judgements and intuition of the individuals in the hot-seat. It really does matter who makes the final decision. If a great tranche of public decisions are made by individuals from a disproportionately select perspective then we should not be surprised if those decisions are distorted or inappropriate. This is an issue that goes beyond political correctness; it should be at the heart of good governance that those who take decisions are best placed to know the effect of their decisions on all consumers and service users.

4 *The under-represented and unrepresented*

Our snapshot of 1000 quango board members provides a telling insight into those parts of the country who appear to be either voiceless or are heard so rarely that they cannot possibly expect to have their needs advocated effectively. We compared the share of population from each local authority area against the share of quango board members who reside in each locality.

The contrast between those parts of the country who have more than their fair share of residents in positions of influence on public bodies with those parts of the country achieving only a fraction of their share is revealing.

Nearing the bottom of the list - ten barely represented areas:

1. LB Croydon
2. Bradford
3. Sandwell
4. East Riding of Yorkshire
5. LB Hillingdon
6. Cornwall
7. Wirral
8. Redcar and Cleveland
9. Rotherham
10. Bolton

Yorkshire, the North East of England and the North West are under-represented to a significant degree. Bradford District, for example, has barely over a tenth of what it might normally expect in terms of seats on national public bodies. This is despite Bradford being the fourth largest metropolitan authority by population size in England with nearly 500,000 residents.

Interestingly, there are pockets of London that are also under-represented, including the boroughs of Croydon, Hillingdon and Newham, perhaps reflecting the fact that while London may well be the richest city in the country it also has corners of significant deprivation. So too, it appears, there are parts of Greater London deprived a voice in our public bodies.

Worse, there are 23 local authority areas entirely lacking any residential representation among the 1000 quango members we surveyed. The North West has the largest number of quango 'deserts', with large areas such as Wigan, Tameside, Bury and Halton possibly lacking any residents fortunate enough to have been appointed to the board of any public bodies. It cannot be the case that there are no individuals of sufficient calibre or merit from these parts of the country able to undertake board roles. There must be an alternative explanation. Great swathes of the West Midlands and the South West are also left out in the cold. Perhaps this is a function of their distance from the capital city?

Figure 3 Top-tier authorities with no representation

Blackpool	North East Lincolnshire
Bracknell Forest	North Lincolnshire
Bury	North Tyneside
Darlington	North Somerset
Dudley	Plymouth
Halton	Stoke-on-Trent
Hartlepool	Swindon
LB Havering	Tameside
Isle of Wight	Torbay
Kingston-upon-Hull	Wigan
Medway	Wolverhampton
	Wokingham

While there is not a clear correlation between areas of deprivation and areas unrepresented on public bodies (for instance, Bracknell Forest and North

Somerset are not typically regarded as suffering acute poverty even though they do, of course, have their own difficulties), there is a sufficient association between these factors to give rise to suspicions that the poorer the area you live in, the less likely you are to climb to the heights of quango board membership.

If the purpose of public policy is, in part, to help overcome inequalities and lift people out of poverty with new opportunities, it would seem wise to ensure that those helping oversee the enactment of such policies are rooted - at least in part - in the communities they endeavour to serve. At present, there is a sense in which decisions taken affecting the least well off are made by those residing in the more affluent parts of the country.

5 *An embarrassment of riches?*

There are some neighbourhoods where large numbers of residents seem to have seats around the table of our public bodies. We looked at the ratio of board memberships per capita, and were able to discern those parts of the country that had high levels of influence proportionate to their population size.

The London Boroughs of Westminster, Kensington and Chelsea, Camden and Islington (population 824,000⁴) together punch above their weight as a 'gang of four' boroughs amply represented in the highest echelons of public decision-making. Between them they have 148 board members and their residents represent 15.6% of England's quango power (see Appendix 1), a larger share than the entire north of England which has 119 board members and a population of 14.55 million.

Ten most over-represented areas

1. LB Westminster
2. RB Kensington and Chelsea
3. LB Camden
4. LB Islington
5. LB Richmond-upon-Thames
6. LB Tower Hamlets
7. LB Haringey
8. Rutland
9. Oxfordshire
10. LB Lambeth

Eight of the most over-represented areas are London Boroughs – a 'G8' within the UK, perhaps. It is hardly a surprise that so many Londoners are represented on the boards of quangos when clearly the location of the headquarters of most of our public bodies are in the capital city, the centre of the nation's Government. Given the gravitational pull of London we should expect a tendency towards over-representation. However, is it really reasonable to see some residential areas with more than ten times their fair share of influence in public policy? Should the Greater London region really have two-and-a-half times more quango board posts than its population size would merit? London wields 36% of England's influence on quango boards – adding in the counties that directly border Greater London, this area controls 50% of the quango power in England.

Figure 4 Regional over or under representation

	Region	Score
Over-represented	London	2.49
	South East	1.25
Under-represented	East	0.96
	South West	0.87
	East Midlands	0.78
	Yorkshire and the Humber	0.58
	West Midlands	0.50
	North East	0.47
	North West	0.40

(A score of 1 indicates representation in proportion to population. A score of two would mean the area has twice the representation its population demands, 0.5 would mean an area has half the representation its population demands)

It is clear that a distorted picture has emerged over years of public appointments. With no clear tracking or policy to counteract these trends, we must assume that such inequalities will be perpetuated in the future.

6 *Intra-regional concentrations*

This study also reveals some interesting trends about the centres of power not just across the country as a whole, but also within each region. Although London is amply represented, this is not spread equally across the city but concentrated in the central Boroughs. Residents of the main four of Westminster, Camden, Kensington & Chelsea and Islington take 47% of the seats held across the 32 boroughs.

In the North West of England, a third of quango board members live in Cheshire. Surrey has a quarter of the South East's quango board residents. In Yorkshire there are several centres of concentrated influence, with a quarter living in Sheffield and another quarter from North Yorkshire. In the South West region, half of quango board members live in Wiltshire and Gloucestershire, with the city of Bristol holding over four times the influence of Cornwall on quango boards.

In the East Midlands it is Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire who dominate with 58% of that region's power base. Birmingham is the best represented area in the West Midlands. The counties in the East of England that are closest to the capital (Hertfordshire and Essex) have 47% of region's seats on quango boards.

Just as there are well-off and less-well-off parts of each region, so too this is the case with concentrations of power. While the greatest deformity in quango governance is the London-centricity of its membership there are other second-order distortions within each region.

7 *A culture of centralism?*

Our survey shows that the six most London-centric Public Bodies are all from the 'cultural' sector. We accept that the capital city is bound to have high concentrations of cultural, media and sporting facilities which in turn need careful oversight as major national institutions, but need the picture really be like this?

Figure 5 Most London-centric boards

National Portrait Gallery	93%
Victoria & Albert Museum	92%
British Council	80%
Channel 4	75%
UK Film Council	70%
British Museum	70%

Perhaps the reason for the predominantly London-based memberships of the country's largest galleries and museums is the physical proximity of their collections to those who have responsibility for them. However, we are not convinced that this should be a sufficient justification for such an acute metropolitan intensity on what should be national public bodies. Our survey demonstrates beyond doubt that it is Londoners who drive forward the UK's cultural decisions and policies. The capital city reigns not only in terms of political power, but especially when it comes to decisions on media, broadcasting, fine art and music. Despite 2008 seeing Liverpool as the European Capital of Culture, the city sends none of its residents to the boards of these prestigious cultural bodies.

Departmental trends

The preponderance of Londoners in cultural quangos is evident across other public bodies who report to the Department of Culture Media & Sport

(DCMS). Our survey finds over half the influence on DCMS quango is held by Greater London residents (50.5%). A snapshot of the situation across Government reveals interesting trends about how each Department chooses individuals to govern their public bodies and we have detailed these at Annex 6. DCMS is surpassed by the Department of Innovation, Universities and Science (DIUS) where over 52% of quango board membership resides within the M25 beltway, while we could find no board members in DIUS who live in Yorkshire. Although Londoners hold 62% of board posts in the Foreign Office public bodies we surveyed, our sample of two boards was too limited here to draw wider conclusions about their predilection for appointments. London also dominates the senior figures working in the quangos of the Ministry of Justice (37%), perhaps reflecting the institutionally centralist nature of the legal world. Yet in fields where we might expect a more widespread presence from across the country there are also interesting results - at the Department of Health, for instance, where 43.4% of their board posts are held in the capital city. We found that only at DEFRA is there a broadly representative spread of board members from across all areas in England.

Departmental performance on 'national diversity' varies significantly, reflecting the separate procedures and arrangements that each part of Government and each Minister has in making public appointments. While it is possible for the Cabinet Office and OCPA to encourage greater consistency and better practice across the departments, their traditional independence and 'silo' nature makes it difficult for a general policy approach to be taken. Instead, it is clear that any change in the practice of appointing individuals from a broader base across England would need to be driven by each Secretary of State themselves, sending a strong message to the divisions and teams within their own departments.

8 *Going against the grain*

While London clearly takes the upper hand around the board tables of most public bodies, there are exceptions to this rule. Interestingly, there appear to be at least seven quangos where London is not represented at all.

Figure 6 Quangos with no London presence

British Potato Council
Coal Authority
Home Grown Cereals Authority
Horticultural Development Council
Milk Development Council
Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
Valuation Tribunal Service

Given the rural and agricultural nature of many of these bodies, it is less surprising that London has no voice on the Milk Development Council, the Coal Authority or the British Potato Board. These are not obscure quangos of little significance, but they are specialist areas and a small niche in an otherwise varied range of public bodies.

There are also some exemplars of best practice from among the array of public bodies we surveyed, and in the spirit of highlighting success, we list in Figure 7 those organisations with what we would describe as the 'Most Representative boards' in the country.

These seven public bodies have clearly sought to select a diverse and varied membership to make up their boards, with at least five English regions distinctly represented and a London representation broadly proportionate

Figure 7 Most representative boards

Body	English Regions	London percentage
Higher Education Funding Council for England	8	7%
Natural England	7	6%
National Institute for Biological Standards and Control	5	10%
Environment Agency	5	10%
Reemploy	7	22%
Centre for Integrated Transport	7	23%
National Employment Panel	6	11%

to its population. Ensuring that all corners of the country are represented around the table is clearly vital for the Environmental Agency and Sport England to conduct their work successfully. We would not wish in any way to see the diminution of appointment of board members by merit, but this concept should be compatible with the concept of 'national diversity' as demonstrated by the public bodies above.

9 Recommendations

Democratisation

In the course of reviewing the nature of Public Bodies across the UK, we have concluded that there is unexplored scope for a greater democratic input into the selection and appointment of quango boards.

We welcome the Summer 2007 'Governance of Britain' Green Paper which raised the prospect of greater scrutiny over key public appointments. The Government is right to invite the House of Commons Select Committees to undertake pre-appointment hearings for the Chairs of some bodies including regulatory boards, commissions, inspectorates and ombudsmen. However, we believe that the Government could go further still.

It would be reasonable, when seeking to fill vacancies, not only for the Chair but also ordinary board membership of national public bodies to advertise this fact to the widest possible set of stakeholders from across the country. This should go beyond newspaper advertisement and could take the form of an **invitation to Council Leaders and MPs to make specific nominations for appointment to public bodies**. Dispersing the selection process across the country would be a refreshing way to broaden the potential pool of candidates, rather than continuing with the current arrangements which evidently advantage those closest to the centre of power. The Cabinet Office should invite a department to pilot a 'Nationwide Nominations Process' to test for cost and viability.

In the longer term we believe that many national public bodies could be better composed if they properly reflected the nations, regions and counties of the UK. The next wave of local government reforms should therefore consider whether, on the principle of subsidiarity, **some of the functions currently vested with national quangos might be better undertaken either at regional or preferably at local government level**. Local

authorities, as multi-functional elected bodies, are closer to the sharp end of service delivery and could be better attuned to the needs of service users. Arguments have been already made that some functions – for instance, those of the Child Support Agency or Rural Payments Agency – might have been performed better if vested with local government. We believe that shifting this balance of power away from national towards local agencies would also more likely result in stronger performance.

Progress Stocktake of Lyons Independent Review of Public Sector Relocation

It is four years since the conclusion of Sir Michael Lyons' report into the relocation of Government function from London and across the country. Although he identified 20,000 posts which might be more efficiently located outside the capital (and at lower cost), it is not entirely clear how much progress has been made.

We recommend that the Treasury undertake a Progress Stocktake of Public Sector Relocation to explore in particular whether sufficient numbers of Public Bodies have taken all necessary steps towards relocation. As well as dispersing the staffing profile of the public sector more equitably across the country, we would argue that such an approach is also vital to dispersing power and influence in non departmental public bodies. If more quangos were located more diversely, it is probable that the board memberships of those bodies would also become more diverse.

A Cabinet Office 'National Diversity Strategy'

We recommend that Ministers consider changing the guidance for departments in the appointment process for public bodies – including legislative change if needs be – **to ensure that 'national diversity' is added to the concept of equality of opportunity to be pursued in the public appointments process.** If gender, ethnicity and age profile are monitored and safeguarded in the appointments process, we believe it is now reasonable to see the concept of 'national diversity' also embedded in Ministerial selections.

We recommend that the Office for the Commissioner of Public Appointments should immediately monitor and report annually on the trends in primary residence of those appointed to NDPBs. We would ask that this annual report be put before the Public Administration Select Committee by Cabinet Office Ministers so that these issues can be aired and questioned more thoroughly than at present. All advertisements for new posts should make clear that applications from under-represented parts of the country would be particularly welcomed. The Commissioner for Public Appointments should also develop a proactive outreach strategy to ensure that greater awareness of public body vacancies is raised, targeted at parts of the country from where the fewest appointments are made.

Departmental Trends

Despite the best efforts of OCPA and Cabinet Office Ministers, individual Government departments can continue with their own approach, which is the cause of slow progress on gender and ethnic diversity over the past 15 years. As such, we recommend that the concept of 'national diversity' in public appointments must be driven more forcefully within each separate Government department. The appointments of each Cabinet Minister to public bodies should be published annually and the relative performance of each tracked against the residency of the individuals appointed. By shining a spotlight onto the choices and appointments made by each Minister, we believe that a swifter shift towards a fairer set of public appointments would be achieved.

Appendix 1 *Methodology*

The data for this research was collected between the beginning of December 2007 and the end of January 2008. Despite initial requests, not all public bodies were willing to volunteer the local authority area in which their board members live. We therefore used the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act to collect information on 1003 Board memberships.

The survey identified 1003 board members of NDPBs with remits covering either England or the whole of the UK. From this group 98 board members were from Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and further afield. These numbers were too small for a full statistical analysis of the distribution of board membership across these three nations of the UK. Erring on the side of caution the report therefore limits itself to reaching detailed conclusions on the distribution of NDPB membership across England alone.

Further research may well identify parallel power imbalances both within and between the nations of the UK. The conclusions of this report reveal centralising forces that make this more likely. However, a definitive conclusion should await additional polling data.

Lastly NDPB boards vary in size. It was important to ensure that our conclusions were not distorted by large boards which happen to be unrepresentative of the general pattern of appointments. To this end the report adopts a 'power share' model. Each board member was allocated a 'power share' representing the percentage of that board's total membership that one person holds. So for example on a board with ten members, each member would receive a 0.1 share of influence. This power share was then applied to each of the 77 boards surveyed.

Appendix 2 *Boards Surveyed*

Arts and Humanities Research Council
Audit Commission
BBC Trust
British Council
British Library
British Museum
British Nuclear Fuels Plc
British Potato Council
British Transport Police
British Waterways
CABE
CAFCASS
Centre for Integrated Transport
Channel 4
Civil Aviation Authority
Coal Authority
Competition Commission
Criminal Cases Review Commission
Design Council
Energywatch
English Partnerships
Environment Agency
ESRC
Forensic Science Services Ltd
Gambling Commission
Gangmaster Licensing Authority
General Social Care Council
General Teaching Council for England
HBLB (Horserace Betting Levy Board)
HEFCE (H. Education Funding Council)
Heritage Lottery Fund
HGCA (Home Grown Cereals Authority)
Horticultural Development Council
Housing Corporation

Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority
ICO (Information Commissioners Office)
Imperial War Museum
Independent Living Funds
Independent Regulator of NHS Trusts
IPCC (Independent Police Complaints Commission)
Kew
Learning and Skills council
legal services commission
Milk Development Council
Museums Libraries and Archives
National College for School Leadership
National Forest Company
National Institute for Biological Standards and Control
National Maritime Museum
National Police Improvement Agency
National Portrait Gallery
Natural England
National Consumer Council
Natural Environment Research Council
NESTA
NHS Logistics Authority
Nuclear Decommissioning Authority
Ofgem
Ofwat
Pensions Regulator
Remploy
Royal Armouries
Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution
Royal Mail Holdings Plc
Sport England
Standards Board for England
Statistics Commission
Student Loans Company
Sustainable Development Commission
The Big Lottery Fund
The Churches Conservation Trust
Training and Development Agency for Schools

UK Film Council

UK Atomic Energy Authority

Valuation Tribunal Service

Victoria and Albert Museum

Westminster for Democracy

Appendix 3 *Top tier data*

Over/under representation score

Percentage of English population resident in an area

Percentage of English quango board members resident in an area

'Power share' percentage

This is a percentage of the English quango voting power held by residents of the authority area. Board member voting power was calculated by dividing one by the number of board members.

Area	Number of quango board members from our survey	Over/under representation score	'Power share' as percentage
Blackpool	0	0	0
Bracknell Forest	0	0	0
Bury	0	0	0
Darlington	0	0	0
Dudley	0	0	0
Halton	0	0	0
Hartlepool	0	0	0
LB Havering	0	0	0
Isle of Wight	0	0	0
Kingston-upon-Hull	0	0	0
Medway	0	0	0
North East Lincolnshire	0	0	0
North Lincolnshire	0	0	0
North Tyneside	0	0	0
North Somerset	0	0	0
Plymouth	0	0	0
Stoke-on-Trent	0	0	0
Swindon	0	0	0

Tameside	0	0	0
Torbay	0	0	0
Wigan	0	0	0
Wolverhampton	0	0	0
Wokingham	0	0	0
LB Croydon	2	0.142	0.09
Bradford	1	0.149	0.14
Sandwell	1	0.171	0.09
East Riding of Yorkshire	1	0.171	0.11
LB Hillingdon	1	0.184	0.09
Cornwall	2	0.193	0.19
Wirral	1	0.197	0.12
Redcar and Cleveland	1	0.211	0.06
Rotherham	1	0.224	0.11
Bolton	1	0.233	0.12
Trafford	1	0.247	0.10
County Durham	2	0.255	0.24
LB Newham	2	0.287	0.14
Staffordshire	4	0.303	0.48
Warrington	1	0.315	0.12
Liverpool	2	0.316	0.26
South Gloucestershire	1	0.319	0.16
Bournemouth	1	0.325	0.10
Poole	1	0.336	0.09
Birmingham	6	0.347	0.67
Telford and Wrekin	1	0.35	0.11
Middlesbrough	1	0.356	0.09
LB Barking & Dagenham	1	0.368	0.12
LB Enfield	1	0.37	0.20
Coventry	3	0.373	0.22
Leeds	6	0.381	0.55
Derbyshire	7	0.4	0.76
Lancashire	9	0.403	0.90
Knowsley	1	0.405	0.12
LB Redbridge	2	0.408	0.20
Bexley	1	0.475	0.20
Shropshire	2	0.489	0.27
Sefton	2	0.513	0.27

LB Bromley	2	0.518	0.30
RB Kingston upon Thames	1	0.52	0.16
Brighton and Hove	3	0.537	0.26
Devon	9	0.537	0.76
Oldham	1	0.559	0.24
LB Harrow	3	0.566	0.23
Rochdale	2	0.57	0.23
Cumbria	5	0.592	0.56
Calderdale	2	0.602	0.23
Manchester	5	0.603	0.52
Suffolk	8	0.647	0.87
Kirklees	4	0.668	0.51
Barnsley	3	0.673	0.29
Northamptonshire	7	0.673	0.86
Lincolnshire	8	0.685	0.90
Wakefield	3	0.691	0.42
Stockton-on-Tees	2	0.709	0.26
Essex	18	0.719	1.87
LB Hackney	3	0.753	0.30
Dorset	4	0.753	0.58
LB Brent	3	0.769	0.40
Kent	18	0.824	2.18
Solihull	3	0.861	0.33
LB Lewisham	4	0.931	0.46
Norfolk	14	0.948	1.51
Warwickshire	10	0.966	0.96
LB Barnet	8	0.972	0.61
East Sussex	10	0.985	0.95
Nottinghamshire	15	0.989	2.00
Bedfordshire	5	1.012	0.78
Leicestershire	15	1.019	1.80
Peterborough	3	1.035	0.32
Blackburn with Darwen	1	1.045	0.28
West Sussex	15	1.054	1.56
LB Waltham Forest	4	1.065	0.45
Bristol	8	1.07	0.84
Somerset	9	1.075	1.07
LB Sutton	3	1.109	0.39

Bath and NE Somerset	4	1.12	0.38
Cheshire	16	1.152	1.51
North Yorkshire	11	1.204	1.36
Northumberland	5	1.219	0.72
Milton Keynes	7	1.313	0.57
Hampshire	26	1.316	3.19
LB Hammersmith and Fulham	4	1.329	0.43
Herefordshire	4	1.335	0.45
Sheffield	10	1.341	1.35
Buckinghamshire	12	1.347	1.26
Worcestershire	13	1.471	1.56
Hertfordshire	30	1.499	3.04
Cambridgeshire	18	1.721	1.94
York	6	1.742	0.64
LB Hounslow	7	1.801	0.75
LB Ealing	9	1.92	1.12
LB Southwark	9	1.952	1.01
LB Wandsworth	11	2.13	1.14
Wiltshire	16	2.135	1.83
Gloucestershire	20	2.333	2.58
LB Merton	9	2.349	0.89
Surrey	46	2.416	5.02
LB Greenwich	11	2.882	1.23
LB Lambeth	13	2.885	1.50
Oxfordshire	35	2.975	3.60
Rutland	2	3.238	0.23547
LB Haringey	12	3.287	1.42128
LB Tower Hamlets	11	3.415	1.39167
LB Richmond upon Thames	15	4.762	1.639971
LB Islington	28	8.842	3.146697
LB Camden	40	9.62	4.196865
RB Kensington & Chelsea	36	9.952	3.389499
City of Westminster	44	11	4.883253
City of London	6	47.623	0.72897

* There is a total of 857 board member in column one. This is because 48 board members did not have their top tier authority area disclosed. However we were able to obtain their regional data.

Appendix 4 *Regional data*

Region	Total number of Quango board members	Over/under representation	Power Share' (%)
North West	49	0.407	5.34
North East	21	0.471	2.3
West Midlands	47	0.501	5.15
Yorkshire	49	0.58	5.71
East Midlands	54	0.785	6.55
South West	75	0.876	8.58
East	96	0.963	10.34
South East	186	1.258	19.83
London	328	2.494	35.85

Appendix 5 *Non-English data*

Country	Number of Quango Board members
Scotland	60
Wales	23
Northern Ireland	10
Other	5

Appendix 6 *Departmental Analysis*

DBERR

South East	2.6527	28.60%
London	2.5805	27.80%
East Midlands	1.0346	11.20%
South West	1.005	10.80%
East	0.7031	7.60%
West Midlands	0.4888	5.30%
Yorkshire	0.3446	3.70%
North West	0.3266	3.50%
North East	0.1296	1.40%

DCLG

London	1.4125	28.40%
South East	0.675	13.60%
Yorkshire	0.648	13%
North West	0.5375	10.80%
East	0.5305	10.70%
East Midlands	0.475	9.50%
South West	0.436	8.80%
North East	0.1885	3.80%
West Midlands	0.071	1.40%

DCMS

London	8.993	50.50%
South East	2.842	16%
South West	1.6345	9.20%
East	1.311	7.40%
North West	0.7655	4.30%
West Midlands	0.6985	3.90%
Yorkshire	0.5665	3.20%
East Midlands	0.566	3.20%
North East	0.417	2.30%

DCSF

London	2.023	34.30%
South East	1.308	22.10%
East	0.793	13.40%
North West	0.556	9.40%
South West	0.402	6.80%
Yorkshire	0.231	3.90%
West Midlands	0.231	3.90%
East Midlands	0.219	3.70%
North East	0.142	2.40%

DEFRA

South East	2.9292	26.30%
London	1.9674	17.60%
East	1.7106	15.30%
South West	1.4059	12.60%
East Midlands	1.1699	10.50%
Yorkshire	0.8895	8%
West Midlands	0.525	4.70%
North West	0.3595	3.20%
North East	0.192	1.70%

DfT

London	0.774	27.30%
South East	0.697	24.60%
South West	0.587	20.70%
East	0.258	9.10%
Yorkshire	0.154	5.40%
East Midlands	0.148	5.20%
North East	0.077	2.70%
North West	0.071	2.50%
West Midlands	0.071	2.50%

DIUS

London	1.591	52.20%
South East	0.714	23.40%
South West	0.272	8.90%
East Midlands	0.177	5.80%
East	0.1	3.30%
North West	0.077	2.50%
West Midlands	0.077	2.50%
North East	0.04	1.30%
Yorkshire	0	0.00%

DoH

London	1.6275	43.40%
East	0.8625	23%
East Midlands	0.425	11.30%
Yorkshire	0.4055	10.80%
South East	0.1625	4.30%
West Midlands	0.143	3.80%
North West	0.125	3.30%
North East	0	0.00%
South West	0	0.00%

DWP

South East	1.269	34.90%
London	0.903	24.80%
East	0.601	16.50%
Yorkshire	0.303	8.30%
East Midlands	0.295	8.10%
North West	0.133	3.70%
West Midlands	0.108	3.00%
South West	0.025	0.70%

FCO

London	1.031	62.60%
Yorkshire	0.308	18.70%
East	0.154	9.30%
North East	0.077	4.70%
West Midlands	0.077	4.70%


Home Office

London	1.216	31%
West Midlands	1.117	28%
North West	0.381	10%
South West	0.314	8%
South East	0.304	8%
East	0.2	5%
North East	0.167	4%
East Midlands	0.134	3%
Yorkshire	0.1	3%

Ministry of Justice

London	0.7	37%
North West	0.5	26%
North East	0.2	10%
South East	0.2	10%
Yorkshire	0.2	10%
East	0.1	5%





Is it fair that a handful of London Boroughs wield greater influence over national quangos than the entire north of England?

In this report we highlight the institutional bias that exists in appointments to public bodies, a phenomenon with significant ramifications for the way we are governed today.

Our survey of over 1000 quango board members shows those parts of the country barely represented, and looks at which departments and policy areas are most dominated by London and the South East.

We also make recommendations about the location of quango HQs, how local democracy could take over quango powers, why Ministerial appointments need greater scrutiny and how the concept of “national diversity” needs adding to equal opportunity appointment processes.