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- Sunday Life**
  - Home
  - News**
  - Sport
  - Features
  - Archive
- Other Services**
  - Jobs
  - Training
  - Dating
  - Gaming
  - Reader Offers
- Other Titles**
  - Belfast Telegraph
  - Ireland's Saturday Night

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[Home](#) > [News](#)

### News

## Politicians snub retirement party

Sunday, November 04, 2007

By Joe Oliver

Police Ombudsman Nuala O'Loan is at the centre of a shock 'snub' mystery following a farewell function to mark her retirement from the controversial post.

Representatives from all the major parties were invited to join her staff and 150 guests at the gathering.

But only a handful of locally-elected politicians turned up - and that meagre number included her husband Declan.

The absence of anyone from the DUP, Ulster Unionists and Sinn Fein quickly became a major talking point among those attending the function - at the Harbour Commissioners' offices in Belfast.

One guest told us: "We didn't know if there was some sort of boycott or if they simply hadn't received their invitations.

"But their absence was very noticeable."

Mrs O'Loan is due to officially quit her post tomorrow(correct) after nearly seven ground-breaking and bruising years investigating the police.

Chief Constable Hugh Orde, Security Minister Paul Goggins and Policing Board chairman Des Rea all spoke at last week's function in Mrs O'Loan's honour.

Alliance Party leader David Ford, SDLP Assembly member Alex Attwood and North Antrim MLA Mr O'Loan were the main political representatives.

A spokesman for the DUP said of the party's absence: "We are inundated with requests for functions like this and we can't attend all of them."

A UUP spokesman told Sunday Life: "There were diary commitments that prevented our representatives on the Policing Board being represented."

And Sinn Fein MLA Alex Maskey said: "There was no question of any snub or slight by my party."

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