



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Date:	Friday, 9th January, 2009
Subject:	Board of the Library Authority
Reporting Officer:	Mr. Liam Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services (extension 6325)
Contact Officer:	Mrs. Julie Lilley, Members' Liaison Officer (extension 6321)

Relevant Background Information

The Council has received from the Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure correspondence regarding the process for the making of appointments to the Board of the new Northern Ireland Library Authority. A copy of the Minister's correspondence along with an explanatory covering letter was issued to the Members prior to the Christmas holiday.

The Minister is asking each Council to provide, by 30th January, completed application forms from between two and four Councillors who wish to be considered for appointment and who meet the specified criteria.

The appointment of Members is covered by the Libraries Act which provides for reserved places for the Local Government sector but does not give Councils direct nominating rights. As places are therefore not guaranteed, the Council's nominees cannot be determined using the proportionality process.

Key Issues

Appointment to the Board would provide Members with the opportunity to become involved in an innovatory arrangement which aims to deliver a robust and responsive library service relevant to the needs of a modern society. Given this and the fact that there is no sustainable manner by which the Council could differentiate between interested Members, it is considered reasonable for the Council to submit to the Minister all completed applications which are received.

To date expressions of interest have been received from four Members.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee agrees to authorise:

- the submission to the Minister of all completed application forms received from Members for appointment to the Board of the Library Authority.