

Mr Stephen McCrory
Democratic Services Manager
Belfast City Council
Chief Executives Office
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BELFAST
BT1 5GS

Ports & Public Transport Division
Room 3.19A
Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8GB
Telephone Number: 028 9054 0040

6th June 2011

Dear Stephen,

Appointments to Belfast Harbour Commissioners

I refer to my letter dated 27 April 2011 outlining the Department's intention to revise the process for appointments to the Trust Ports to address concerns expressed by the Commissioner for Public Appointments (NI).

The Belfast Harbour Order (NI) 2002, provides that a maximum of four Commissioners shall be members of Belfast City Council. In a change to the appointment process, Councils are now invited to provide at least two nominations for each position to which they are entitled. Accordingly, the Department now invites your Council to nominate eight members whom it wishes to be considered by the Regional Development Minister, Danny Kennedy MLA for appointment to the Belfast Harbour Commissioners.

I attach a copy of the application pack which contains the form that should be completed by each individual whom the Council wishes to be considered for appointment.

Please note that the normal period of appointment to a trust port board is four years. The Commissioner for Public Appointments requires that public appointees should serve no more than two terms, except in exceptional circumstances, and no more than ten years in total. The Commissioner appreciates the particular difficulty that can be caused by councillors serving short periods of appointment because of local government elections and may be willing to relax this rule. Permission for a councillor to serve more than two terms, though, would have to be formally sought by the Department.

However, I would ask Council to note when considering its nominations, that the ten year rule is absolute.

In a further revision of practice to comply with the requirements of the Commissioner for Public Appointments, all nominees submitted by the Council will be interviewed by a panel comprising of two Departmental officials and an independent member. This interview will explore issues of probity, conflict of interest and understanding of corporate governance. A written record will be made of these discussions for each nominee. All of these records shall be submitted to the Minister who alone is responsible for determining who should be appointed.

It is intended that interviews should be held in early August.

I should be grateful if the completed application form for each nominee would be returned to:

Raymond McCullough, Ports and Public Transportation Division, DRD,
Clarence Court, 10-18 Adelaide Street, BELFAST BT2 8GB by Friday 24 June
2011.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should this present any difficulty.

I am copying this letter to Peter McNaney, Chief Executive, in response to his of 25 May 2011 setting out the Council's proposed timeline for making its nominations.

Yours sincerely



PETER BARBOUR

c.c. Peter McNaney
Chief Executive

