



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Appointments to Belfast Education & Library Board
Date:	19 th August, 2011
Reporting Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager (ext 6314)
Contact Officer:	

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Correspondence has been received from the Department of Education requesting that the Council submit the names of at least two Councillors for each of the four positions on the Belfast Education and Library Board. The Minister for Education will make the appointments of the four Councillors following the submission of application forms and the holding of interviews, in line with the process approved by the Commissioner for Public Appointments.
1.2	The Committee will recall that appointments to the interim Belfast Education and Library Board were made in March 2011. However, following the Local Government Elections in May, 2011 it is now necessary for the Council to consider again the nomination of Members for appointment.

2	Key Issues
2.1	This matter was discussed at the meeting of Party Leaders on 25 th May when the allocation of places on Outside Bodies was being determined and it was decided that, due to the uncertainty which existed at that time as to the Department for Education's intentions, the nomination of Members to the Board should be dealt with by the Committee as a separate matter.
2.2	A similar approach was taken by the Party Leaders in relation to the appointment of Members to the Belfast Harbour Commissioners. That matter was decided at the Committee's meeting on 16 th June when it was agreed that a one-off d'Hondt exercise should be used to select eight nominees.

2.3	<p>In keeping with that principle, a similar one –off d’Hondt exercise should be used for the nomination of Members to the Belfast Education and Library Board. This would result in the eight names coming from the Parties as set out below:</p> <p>Sinn Fein – choices 1, 3 and 7 DUP – choices 2, 5 and 8 SDLP – choice 4 Alliance – choice 6</p>
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3	Resource Implications
	None.

4	Equality and Good Relations Implications
	None. The identification of those Parties entitled to nominate Members for consideration for appointment is based upon the Council’s accepted system of proportionality.

5	Recommendations
5.1	In order to ensure a consistency of approach, the Committee is recommended to employ a one-off d’Hondt process for these appointments which would provide for three Sinn Fein nominations, three DUP nominations and one nomination each from the SDLP and Alliance.
5.2	Similarly, in order to be consistent with the approach taken when considering appointments to the Interim Belfast Education and Library Board in 2009 and those to the Belfast Harbour Commissioners in June, 2011, the Committee is recommended to advise the Department of Education that the application of the Council’s system of proportionality would provide for the first four of those eight choices being two Sinn Fein representatives (choices 1 and 3), one DUP representative (choice 2) and one SDLP representative (choice 4).

6	Decision Tracking
	<p>Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager</p> <p>2nd September, 2011</p>