

DEPARTMENT FOR INFRASTRUCTURE

Public Appointments
Candidate Information Pack

NON-EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR
MEMBER OF BELFAST HARBOUR
COMMISSIONERS
BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

This information pack can be made available in other formats, such as Braille, large print, audio etc. To request this or any other information on the appointment process please contact:

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KEY APPOINTMENT PROCESS STAGES

Stage in Process	Timescale
Closing Date for applications	22 March 2024
Interviews	April 2024
Date of appointments	April 2024

Privacy Notice

The Department for Infrastructure will only process the personal data you provide us for the purpose of recruiting members to the Board of Belfast Harbour Commissioners and in line with the Commissioner for Public Appointments NI Code of Practice. For more information, please see our Privacy Notice at [GDPR Privacy Notices for DfI Business areas | Department for Infrastructure \(infrastructure-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.infrastucture-ni.gov.uk/gdpr-privacy-notice)

Section 1

1. Applications from Belfast City Council are invited for Non-Executive Councillor Members for the Board of Belfast Harbour Commissioners. *{There will be two vacancies however a reserve list may be put in place to fill any further vacancy/vacancies which may arise within 12 months of the date of Appointment.}*

Information about Belfast Harbour Commissioners (BHC) and Belfast Port

Belfast Port

2. Belfast Harbour is Northern Ireland's principal maritime gateway and logistics hub, serving the Northern Ireland economy and increasingly that of the Republic of Ireland. Around 66% of Northern Ireland's seaborne trade and 27% of the entire island's roll-on/roll-off trade is handled at the harbour, handling around 24.5 million tonnes of cargo per annum, and receiving over 5,600 commercial vessels each year.
3. The published 2022 accounts for BHC showed a turnover of £77.2 million and a profit before taxation of £32.7 million. The fixed assets of the company were valued at £559 million.

Belfast Harbour Commissioners

4. The Board of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners was first constituted by the Belfast Harbour Act 1847 as an independent corporate body with the underlying purpose of operating, maintaining and improving the Port of Belfast.
5. The powers and duties of the Board are limited to those conferred by the various Belfast Harbour Acts and Orders 1847-2002, and any relevant public general Acts such as the Harbours Act (NI) 1970. In common with other Northern Ireland and Great Britain ports similarly constituted, the Port of Belfast is generally referred to as a 'Trust Port'.

Constitution of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners

6. The Constitution of the Commissioners is set out in Schedule 1 of the Belfast Harbour Order (Northern Ireland) 2002. The Order provides for the following:
 - The Commissioners shall consist of not less than ten and no more than 15 persons who shall be appointed by the Department for a period of four years or such lesser period as the Department may determine. The Commissioners shall include the person appointed as Chief Executive Officer to the Commissioners.
 - The Department shall designate one Commissioner as Chair and may designate another Commissioner as Deputy Chair.
 - A maximum of four of the Commissioners shall be members of Belfast City Council, appointed by the Department following consultation with the Council, and shall be eligible to serve as Commissioners for a period coterminous with membership of the Council and up to four years.
7. There are currently fourteen Commissioners including the Chair, Chief Executive, and three members of Belfast City Council.

Key Priorities

8. The vision of BHC is to “offer leading edge facilities and services to our Port, Property and Operating Business customers and to contribute significantly to the economic development of Northern Ireland”.
9. As stated in the Harbour Authority’s Annual Report, future strategy will be to invest “in the Harbour undertaking to deliver sustainable financial returns according to investment criteria”. £118.9m is currently committed to future projects.
10. Belfast Harbour has ambitious plans to further develop and improve the port to ensure it services its customers and the local economy in the most efficient way. This will include

investing in new operational equipment, upgrading of facilities, infrastructure maintenance and improvements to maintain efficient and competitive port operations.

11. Belfast Harbour also intends to substantially invest in regeneration, by enhancing its property business by further developing the Harbour Estate in City Quays, Sydenham Business Park, Titanic Quarter.

Governance Arrangements

12. BHC is committed to high standards of Corporate Governance consistent with the requirements of a Trust Port. This covers all financial reporting issues, the control environment, and any governance matters.
13. For further information please consult the Annual Report, please see link below:
 - [Belfast-Harbour-Annual Report](#)

Section 2 – Role Profile and Person Specification

14. The Non-Executive Members of the Board, together with the BHC Chair, have corporate responsibility for ensuring that Belfast Harbour Commissioners complies with all relevant statutory or administrative requirements.
15. The role will be to work as a member of the Board to bring experience and judgement to bear on issues of strategy, performance, and governance. Members should bring wide experience and critical detachment to the work of the organisation and be prepared to constructively challenge and assist executive management in the development of strategic objectives and policies.
16. The Board member will be expected to:
 - Contribute to the work of the Board in embedding Belfast Harbour’s Business Plan which sets out the overall strategic direction for the Port.
 - Make a full contribution to the business of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners Board, including the formulation of strategy for the organisation.
 - Participate in any training or facilitated workshops relating to Board business.
 - Work to ensure that Belfast Harbour complies with relevant legislation, licence, and governance arrangements.
 - Respect and abide by the rules of confidentiality that apply to the business of Belfast Harbour as a commercial organisation.
 - Support the Chair to challenge and scrutinise the Chief Executive and management team to ensure that Belfast Harbour achieves its objectives and targets and achieves value for money and efficiency in its operations.
 - Help to improve the value and quality of service provided to customers and ensure that these are key priorities for Belfast Harbour.
 - Carry out the tasks associated with membership of Committees of the Board.
 - Comply with the UK Corporate Governance Code and the “seven principles of public life”.
 - Ensure appropriate representation of the views of Belfast Harbour to the general public and all other stakeholders.
 - Use their judgement and experience to safeguard the public interest in relation to Belfast Harbour.

17. Councillors will be expected to demonstrate at interview, an understanding of the role of a board member, a high standard of probity and integrity and an understanding of the seven principles underpinning public life. Potential or perceived Conflicts of Interest will be explored at interview.
18. An understanding or experience of corporate governance will also be explored at interview.
 - **Governance is about the leadership, direction, and supervision of an organisation. It means making sure that the organisation is well run (or governed) and carries out the work it was set up to do.** Councillors may talk through an example/s from their community involvement or voluntary work, as well as those experiences found within the employment field. Councillors can use examples from working or personal life.
19. Councillors will also be asked to confirm if they have sufficient time to fulfil the requirements of the role.

Period of Appointment

20. The appointment will be for a maximum of four years from the date of appointment. The appointment will only remain valid while the person so appointed remains a member of Belfast City Council.
21. An offer of a second term may be possible, subject to evidence of an appropriate standard of performance having been achieved during the initial period in office and evidence of continued adherence to the seven principles of public life.

Training

22. Appropriate induction training will be provided to the new appointee, and they will be expected to attend.

Time Commitment and Remuneration

23. The remuneration is £15,761 per annum based on anticipated attendance of up to two business days per month. The new Members will be expected to attend the full monthly Board meetings and other ad hoc meetings as required. Board meetings may vary in time commitment from month to month. The appointment may involve a commitment both inside and outside of normal working hours, including representing the Belfast Harbour Commissioners at occasional evening engagements. Meetings are normally held at the Harbour Commissioners Office, Corporation Square, Belfast BT1 3AL.

Expenses

24. Following appointment, reasonable travelling expenses and subsistence will be paid to attend meetings in accordance with BHC's processes. Any additional costs associated with childcare, dependents or having a disability will also be considered to enable the Member to attend meetings. All remuneration and expenses are subject to deduction of income tax and national insurance.

25. The appointment is not pensionable.

Code of Practice

26. Belfast Harbour Commissioners aligns to the governance requirements of the DFT Ports Good Governance Guidance, as applicable. To ensure that public service values remain at the heart of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners, Members are required, on appointment, to demonstrate high standards of corporate and personal conduct and the Principles of Trust Board Membership as set out in paragraph 3.17 of the DFT Ports Good Governance Guidance.

Section 3 – Application and Selection Process

Diversity in Public Appointments

27. The Department of Infrastructure is committed to the principles of public appointments based on merit with independent assessment, openness, and transparency of process. The Department is also committed to equality of opportunity and welcomes application forms from all suitably qualified applicants irrespective of religious belief, gender, race, political opinion, age, disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or whether they have dependants.
28. The Department is committed to taking measures to improve the diversity of its Boards. Women, younger people, ethnic minorities, and people with disabilities are currently underrepresented on the Board and applications from these groups would be particularly welcome.
29. This appointment is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland (CPA NI) and the competition may be examined by CPA NI for compliance with the Commissioner's Code of Practice.

Application Procedure

30. Application forms or further information about the process can be obtained from Jennifer Macrory at the address on the cover of this document or by e-mailing a request to: publicappointmentsunit@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk.
31. Hard copy or electronic versions of the application form are acceptable. You must not reformat the electronic application form. CVs, letters, or any other supplementary material in place of, or in addition to, completed application forms will not be accepted.
32. Applications should be fully completed and as clearly as possible using black ink or Arial typescript minimum font size 12. All sections of the application form should be completed.

33. Information documents and application forms can be provided in alternative formats. Any applicants who require assistance should contact Jennifer Macrory. All reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate the needs of Councillors with a disability.
34. Application forms should be submitted by post, email or in person to arrive with Jennifer Macrory by **12 Noon Friday 22 March 2024** (see contact details on cover sheet).

Selection Process

35. All nominees submitted by the Council will be interviewed by a selection panel comprising of three members, two officers from the Department, and an Independent Member.
36. The Selection Panel will explore issues of probity, conflict of interest, time commitment and understanding or experience of corporate governance with each nominee. A written record will be made of the discussions for each nominee. An applicant summary will be prepared to provide the decision maker with information about each nominee.

The process listed below under Presentation of Results are correct at the launch of this competition. However, it should be noted they may be subject to change. Candidates will be informed of any change.

Presentation of Results to the Permanent Secretary/Minister

37. If a Minister for the Department for Infrastructure is in place by the conclusion of the selection process they will be asked to sanction the competition and to state their preference for the presentation of the outcome of interviews, i.e. ranked or unranked list, and also if they would like to create of a reserve list to cover any unforeseen vacancies that arise within 12 months of the date of the decision to appoint.
38. If a Minister is not in place at the conclusion of the selection process, the Permanent Secretary will be asked how they would like the list of suitable candidates to be presented.
39. The Minister or the Permanent Secretary will then be presented with a list of appointable candidates (ranked/unranked depending on their previously declared preference) along

with an applicant summary which will provide an objective analysis of each applicant's skills and experience, based on the information provided by each applicant during the appointment round and the selection panel's assessment of that applicant. If the Permanent Secretary is the decision maker, then the resulting appointments may be reviewed by an incoming Minister.

Timetable / Time Frame

40. The deadline for receipt in all cases is **12 Noon on Friday 22 March 2024**. Applications will be individually date-stamped, and the time of receipt formally recorded. It is the responsibility of the applicant, taking into account their chosen method of delivery, to ensure that sufficient time is allowed for their application to arrive with the Department on or before the deadline. **Late applications will only be considered under exceptional circumstances.** Please ensure that posted applications bear the correct amount of postage as any shortfall may lead to a delay in delivery, causing you to miss the deadline. Applicants who send their application form electronically are also required to meet the closing deadline for receipt in this office.
41. Interviews are expected to be held during April 2024, with the successful nominees confirmed as soon as possible thereafter.

Disqualified Candidates

42. There are no statutory disqualification criteria for this post.

Probity and Conflicts of Interest

43. The Department must ensure that any individual appointed is committed to the seven principles of conduct underpinning public life and values of public service. **These principles are: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership.** The successful candidate will be asked as part of their appointment to sign a declaration committing to the seven principles.

44. The information pack includes copies of the leaflets entitled “Probity and Conflicts of Interest – Guidance for Candidates” and an information leaflet from the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments (NI) about “Conflicts of Interest, Integrity and Making a Complaint”. These provide information on these issues, including some examples to help applicants evaluate whether they have a real, perceived, or potential conflict.
45. The Department must take account of any actual or perceived conflict of interest. Therefore, applicants, in their application form, must disclose information or personal connections which, if they were to be appointed, could lead to a conflict of interest, or be perceived as such. Failure to do so could lead to the appointment being terminated.
46. It is very important that all applicants provide appropriate details on their application form of any interests which might be construed as being in conflict with the appointment for which they have applied. If it appears, from the information provided on the form, that a possible conflict might exist, or arise in the future, this will be fully explored with the applicant with a view to establishing whether it is sufficiently significant to prevent the individual from carrying out the duties of the post. The Panel will do this at interview stage.

Other Public Appointments

47. Departments have a duty to satisfy themselves, as far as practicable, that those they appoint to the Boards of public bodies will carry out their duties in an efficient and effective manner. The Department for Infrastructure will, therefore, be checking with other Departments if there are any probity or performance issues associated with applicants who hold other public appointments. Similar information will be provided by the Department on request about all associated board members.

The Two Terms Rule

48. According to the CPANI Code, those who have served two terms in the same position on the same board cannot apply through open competition for a third term. If any applicant has served two terms in this position, their application will be discounted at the sift stage.

Double Paying

49. Applicants who already work in the public sector need to be aware that, if appointed, they will be asked to obtain confirmation from their employer that any remuneration due and time worked for this position are truly additional to their existing job role and is not a duplication with salaried employment (unless allowed under the terms and conditions of employment); and
50. in the interests of minimising the potential for double paying to occur the Department reserves the right to contact your employer regarding your candidature.
51. Former Civil Servants are subject to rules on the Acceptance of Outside Business Appointments, Employment or Self-Employment for a period of up to two years after leaving the NI Civil Service. Individuals in this category, who wish to apply, should check their eligibility to do so with their former Department.

Publicising Appointments

52. A Press Release will be published to announce the appointment. The Commissioner for Public Appointments also requires that announcements about successful candidates should contain details of any recent political activity. Consequently, should you be appointed, you will be required to complete a political activity form. Details of any political activity, together with some of the information that you have provided in your application form, will be made public in the press announcement. This applies particularly to any other public appointments you may hold and to any significant political activity recently undertaken by you. The Press Release will include:
 - Your name;
 - A short description of the body to which you have been appointed;
 - A brief summary of the skills and knowledge you bring to the role;
 - The period of appointment;
 - Any remuneration associated with the appointment;
 - Details of all other public appointments held and any related remuneration received;and
 - Details of any political activity declared in the last 5 years

Section 4 - Equal Opportunities Monitoring and Complaints Procedure

Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

53. The Department is committed to providing equality of opportunity. The Department monitors applications to ensure that equal opportunities measures are effective in its appointments processes. Applicants are therefore asked to complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form attached to the application form. The information is purely for monitoring purposes. It is **not** made available to the selection panel and does **not** play a role in the decision-making process. The information will be analysed independently by staff in the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency and will be treated in strict confidence.

Complaints Procedure

54. The Department is committed to getting this appointment process right first time. However, if you are not entirely satisfied with any aspect of our service, please tell us and we will do our best to resolve the matter. Our aim is to resolve any complaint quickly and you are invited initially to bring any concerns you may have to the official named below. However, if you still feel dissatisfied after this approach, you may initiate a formal complaint in writing. Please direct your concerns in the first instance to:

Head of Public Appointments Unit
Department for Infrastructure
Room 4-08, Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
Belfast
BT2 8GB
Email: gavin.irwin@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

If you remain dissatisfied you may then write to:-

Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland (CPA NI)
Dundonald House
Annexe B

Stormont Estate
Upper Newtownards Road
Belfast
BT4 3SB
Email: info@publicappointmentsni.org

Annexes

REIMBURSEMENT OF TRAVEL EXPENSES

Interview for: _____ **Venue** _____

Interview time: _____ **Interview date:** _____

Claim forms must be submitted within **one month** of attendance at interview. Please complete in Capital Letters

Name	Address	
Total number of miles claimed @ Public Transport mileage rate, currently (25.7p per mile) Insert No. of miles: <input data-bbox="469 958 636 1037" type="text"/>	Details of Return Journey	Official use
<u>Public Transport Fares</u> (Bus, Rail, Air - attach receipts) <i>Only receipted fares will be considered for reimbursement</i>		
Other (attach VAT Receipts) <i>Only receipted expenses will be considered for reimbursement</i>		
Total Claimed		Total Recommended

DECLARATION: I declare that I necessarily incurred all of the above expenses to attend the above interview and that the information provided is accurate and complete.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

DATE RECEIVED: _____

CLAIM CHECKED: I confirm that to the best of my knowledge, the facts given in this claim are correct. I recommend payment of: £ _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

RECOMMENDED FOR PAYMENT

Signed: _____ Date: _____

NOTES:

Claim forms must be fully completed and original receipts for travel and other expenses must be attached.

Any claim that does not include the necessary information and/or receipts will be returned to the candidate.

Claims that are complete will be processed and payment made within 30 working days of the date of receipt.

If you have any query on your entitlement to make a claim, please contact:

Jennifer Macrory

PROBITY & CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

GUIDANCE FOR CANDIDATES

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the information contained in the leaflet “CPA NI Guidance on Conflicts of Interest, Integrity and how to raise a complaint” which provides examples of the types of issues that may give rise to conflicts of interests.

Standards of behaviour

Ministers expect that the conduct of those they appoint to serve on the Boards of public bodies will be above reproach. Everyone who puts themselves forward for a public appointment must be able to demonstrate their commitment to the maintenance of high standards in public life.

The Seven Principles Underpinning Public Life

In 1995, the Committee on Standards in Public Life defined seven principles, which should underpin the actions of all who serve the public in any way. These are:

Selflessness - Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or other friends.

Integrity - Holders of public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties.

Objectivity - In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of public office should make choices on merit.

Accountability - Holders of public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office.

Openness - Holders of public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.

Honesty - Holders of public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership - Holders of public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

As part of the selection process, you will be tested on your commitment to maintaining high standards in public life with particular emphasis on probity issues and conflicts of interest.

What is a conflict of interest?

Public Appointments require the highest standards of propriety, involving impartiality, integrity, and objectivity, in relation to the stewardship of public funds and the oversight and management of all related activities. This means that any private, voluntary, charitable, or political interest which might be material and relevant to the work of the body concerned should be declared.

There is always the possibility for real or perceived conflicts of interest to arise. Both are a problem, as the perceived inference of a conflict may, on occasions, be as damaging as the existence of a real conflict.

No-one should use, or give the appearance of using, their public position to further their private interests. This is an area of particular importance, as it is of considerable concern to the public and receives a lot of media attention. It is important, therefore, that you consider your circumstances when applying for a public appointment and identify any potential conflicts of interest, whether real or perceived.

Surely a perceived conflict is not a problem, as long as I act impartially at all times?

The integrity of the individual is not in question here. However, it is necessary for the standing of the individual and the board that members of the public have confidence in their independence and impartiality. Even a perceived conflict of interest on the part of a board member can be extremely damaging to the body's reputation and it is therefore essential that these are declared and explored, in the same way as an actual conflict would be. The fact that a member acted impartially may be no defence against accusations of potential bias.

What should I do if I think I have a conflict of interest?

You will find a section on conflicts of interest in the application form for you to complete. This asks you to consider and declare whether or not you have a real, or perceived, conflict. If you are unsure if your circumstances constitute a possible conflict, you should still complete this section, in order to give the Selection Panel as much information as possible.

If I declare a conflict, does this mean I will not be considered for appointment?

No - each case is considered individually. If you are short-listed for interview, the Panel will explore with you how far the conflict might affect your ability to contribute effectively

and impartially on the Board and how this might be handled, if you were to be appointed. For example, it may be possible to arrange for you to step out of meetings where an issue is discussed, in which you have an interest. However, if, following the discussion with you, the Panel believes that the conflict is too great and would call into question the probity of the Board or the appointment they can withdraw your application from the competition. The summary of the outcome of the interview process, which is put to the Ministers, will include clear written reference to any probity issues or perceived or actual conflicts of interest connected to any candidate put forward as suitable for appointment. It will include sufficient information to ensure that the Ministers are fully aware of any of these matters and can make an informed decision.

What happens if I do not declare a known conflict, which is then discovered by the Department after my appointment?

Again, each case would be considered on its merits, but the Department may take the view that by concealing a conflict of interest, you would be deemed to have breached the seven principles of conduct underpinning public life and may terminate your appointment.

What happens if I do not realise a potential conflict exists?

This situation may arise where the applicant is not familiar with the broad range of work which a body covers and therefore does not realise that a conflict might exist. In some cases, the Panel, with their wider knowledge of the body, might deduce that there is a potential conflict issue, based on the information on employment and experience provided by the candidate in the application form. They will then explore this at interview with the candidate.

What happens if a conflict of interest arises after an appointment is made?

This could arise for two main reasons. The first is that the member's circumstances may change, for example, they may change jobs and in doing so, a conflict with their work on the board becomes apparent. The second is where a member is unfamiliar with the range of the work of the body, but after appointment, it becomes clear that a conflict exists where none had been envisaged during the appointment process.

In both cases, the issue should be discussed with the Chair of the board and the Chief Executive of the body concerned, in consultation with the Sponsoring Department, to decide whether the member can continue to carry out their role in an appropriate manner and each case is considered individually.

It may be that the conflict is such that it would be impractical for the member to continue on the board, if they would have to withdraw from a considerable amount of the body's routine business. In such cases, the member may be asked to stand down from the body.

You may be asked to sign a declaration of commitment to the above principles as a condition of your appointment.

APPLICANT SUMMARIES

Candidate No [insert]
[Insert Candidate Name]
The panel’s consensus view as to how [insert name] meets the relevant criteria
Integrity, Probity and Conflicts of Interest
Time Commitment

**APPOINTMENT OF NON-EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR MEMBERS TO THE
BOARD OF TRUST PORTS**

MARKING FRAME FOR INTERVIEW

Rating	Brief Descriptor	Level of Evidence provided in respect of Essential Criteria
5	Good	The evidence provided significantly exceeds requirements for effective performance in this competency area for a Non-Executive Director.
4	More than acceptable	The evidence provided meets and partially exceeds the requirements for effective performance in this competency area for a Non-Executive Director
3	Acceptable	The evidence provided meets the base requirements for effective performance in this competency area for a Non-Executive Director
2	Less than Acceptable	The evidence provided only partially meets the base requirements for effective performance in this competency area for a Non-Executive Director
1	Poor	The evidence provided does not meet base requirements for effective performance in this competency area for a Non-Executive Director.