

Public Appointments Unit



Mr John Walsh
Chief Executive
Belfast City Council

Issued via email to:
walshjohn@belfastcity.gov.uk

Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
BELFAST
BT2 8GB
Email: publicappointmentsunit@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

Our ref.:

Date: 30 January 2024

Dear Mr Walsh

Appointment of Councillors to the Board of Belfast Harbour Commissioners (BHC)

I am writing to invite you to submit a number of Council nominees to be considered by the Permanent Secretary for the Department for Infrastructure (DfI), for appointment to the Board of Belfast Harbour Commissioners.

The recruitment process will be run under the Northern Ireland (Executive Formation Etc) Act 2022. Should the Assembly return before the end of the recruitment/selection process we will write to you to provide an update of any change to this process.

These Councillor appointments are not positions of responsibility as defined under the 2014 Local Government Act, which require to be shared across the parties using d'Hondt or Saint-Lague formula of the Single Transferrable Vote method. They are appointments to be made by DfI after consultation with the Council, and in compliance with the Commissioner for Public Appointment Northern Ireland (CPANI) Code.

The Belfast Harbour Order (NI) 2002 provides that a maximum of four Commissioners shall be Members of Belfast City Council. There are currently three Councillors in post and one vacancy. One Councillor has served two terms of appointment and cannot be reappointed after 31 March 2024. The remaining two Councillors are due to complete their first term of appointment on 31 March 2024 and the DfI Permanent Secretary has decided that he is minded to reappoint them for a further term to ensure continuity on the Board. If both eligible Councillors accept the reappointments, we will be recruiting for two vacancies with the terms due to commence from 1 April 2024.

The Non-Executive Members of the Board, together with the Chair, have corporate responsibility for ensuring that Belfast Harbour Commissioners complies with all relevant

statutory or administrative requirements including requirements in respect of the use of public funds. 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 criticise and assist executive management in the development of strategic objectives and policies.

New appointees 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 Port at occasional evening engagements. Meetings are normally held at the Harbour Commissioners Office, Corporation Square, Belfast, BT1 3AL.

To provide the Permanent Secretary with a choice of nominees, as required by the Commissioner for Public Appointment Northern Ireland (CPANI), the Department invites your Council to nominate at least six Councillors to be considered for appointment.

The Commissioner for Public Appointments also requires that public appointees should serve no more than two terms in the same position and no more than ten years in total. Please ensure that those who you are considering nominating have not previously served 10 years / two terms on the Board of Belfast Harbour Commissioners as they will not be eligible for interview.

I enclose copies of the Information Booklet and Application and Monitoring Form for completion by each nominee to be considered for appointment. Full details of the process are set out in the Information Booklet.

The date of appointment will be 1 April 2024 and will last for as long as the appointee remains on the Council, up to a maximum of four years.

Nominees should complete the short application form. They will be invited to attend an interview at a date to be confirmed. The interview panel will comprise two departmental officials and an independent assessor allocated by CPANI. The interview will explore nominees' understanding and experience of corporate governance and the role of a board member. Integrity, conflicts of interest and the time commitment involved in the appointment will also be discussed. The panel will draft a record of these discussions to be sent to the Permanent Secretary to help him decide who to appoint.

Finally, DfI wants to improve diversity on our Boards. We would particularly welcome nominations from the following under-represented groups: women; younger people; people with disabilities; and people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

I should be grateful if you could arrange for the completed application form for each nominee to be returned no later than **12 noon on Friday 22 March 2024** to:

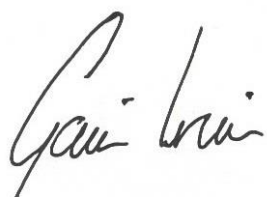
publicappointmentsunit@infrastructure-ni.gov.uk

or

Jennifer Macrory
DfI Public Appointments Unit
Clarence Court
10-18 Adelaide Street
Belfast BT2 8GB

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gavin Irwin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'G'.

GAVIN IRWIN
DfI Public Appointments Unit