



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Appointments to Belfast Education & Library Board
Date:	7 th October, 2011
Reporting Officer:	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager (ext 6314)

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	At the meeting on 19 th August, the Committee agreed to employ a one-off d'Hondt process for the nomination of eight Members to fill the four places on the Belfast Education and Library Board. This resulted in three Sinn Fein nominations, three DUP nominations and one nomination each from the SDLP and Alliance.
1.2	The Committee agreed also 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).

2	Key Issues
2.1	The names of the Members to be nominated have been sought through the Party Leaders on the Council and, to date, six names have been received. However, the Democratic Unionist Party, which was entitled to nominate three of its Members, has indicated that it is prepared to nominate only one Member as it maintains that the Minister should appoint that Member in line with the Council's system of proportionality on the appointment of Members to Outside Bodies.
2.2	This position is consistent with the one adopted by the Democratic Unionist Party in November, 2010 when the Council was considering the nomination of Members for consideration for appointment to the Interim Belfast Education and Library Board. At that time, the Department of Education insisted that the Council submit the names of eight candidates in order for it to meet its obligations under the process agreed with the Commissioner for Public

	Appointments and the Committee agreed in November to allocate the remaining two places to the Parties who had the next two choices under the d'Hondt table.
2.3	If the same process is applied in these circumstances, then the remaining two choices would fall to Sinn Fein (choice 9) and SDLP (choice 10).

3	Resource Implications
	None.

4	Equality and Good Relations Implications
4.1	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	Given that the Democratic Unionist Party has decided to nominate only one Member for consideration for appointment to the Board, the Committee is recommended to allocate the remaining two nominations to the Parties holding the next two places on the d'Hondt table. That is, Sinn Fein (choice 9) and SDLP (choice 10).
5.2	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 the 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
Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager	
2 nd November, 2011	