



## Belfast City Council

<b>Report to</b>	<b>Strategic Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Appointments to the Belfast Education &amp; Library Board</b>
<b>Date:</b>	18th May, 2012
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager (ext 6314)
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	

<b>1</b>	<b>Relevant Background Information</b>
1.1	Members will recall that, at the meeting on 19 <sup>th</sup> August, 2011 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).
1.3	The names of the Members to be nominated were sought through the Party Leaders on the Council and only six names were received. The Democratic Unionist Party, which was entitled to nominate three of its Members, indicated that it was prepared to nominate only one Member as it maintained that the Minister should appoint that Member in line with the Council's system of proportionality on the appointment of Members to Outside Bodies. Accordingly, the remaining two choices fell to Sinn Fein (choice 9) and SDLP (choice 10).

<b>2</b>	<b>Key Issues</b>
2.1	Correspondence has been received from the Department of Education indicating that, following the selection process, which involved the completion of application forms by the nominees, an eligibility sift of applications against the criteria and, for those who met the eligibility criteria, a conversation with a purpose, the

	outcome was that three of the nominees did not progress beyond the eligibility sift stage and one candidate withdrew from the process.
2.2	This has resulted in only four eligible candidates remaining in the process and the Minister for Education has asked for the current pool of candidates to be augmented before he makes his choice of candidates to be appointed. The Department is therefore requesting the Council to submit an additional four nominations, who will be required to undergo the same selection process as that set out above. It should be noted that those Councillors who were previously nominated and who did not progress beyond the eligibility sift would not be eligible for re-nomination.
2.3	If the Council follows the same process as that established in October, 2012 then the additional four nominations will be as follows:
2.4	Choice 11 – Democratic Unionist Choice 12 – Sinn Fein Choice 13 – Democratic Unionist Choice 14 – Alliance
2.5	However, if the Democratic Unionist Party maintains its previous position of only submitting one candidate (which it has already done as part of the process in October, 2011), then the nominations from the Parties willing to supply names would fall to:
2.6	Choice 12 – Sinn Fein Choice 14 – Alliance Choice 15 – Ulster Unionist Choice 16 – Sinn Fein

<b>3</b>	<b>Resource Implications</b>
3.1	None.

<b>4</b>	<b>Equality and Good Relations Implications</b>
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.

<b>5</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
5.1	The Committee is recommended to seek the names of four additional nominees for positions on the Belfast Education and Library Board from the political parties as set out in Section 2.4 above. If, however, the Democratic Unionist Party indicates that it does not wish to supply the names of any additional nominees, then the names will be sought from the political parties as set out in Section 2.6

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 also 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).
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<b>6</b>	<b>Decision Tracking</b>
Stephen McCrory, Democratic Services Manager  June, 2012	