



Department for
Communities

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Depairtment fur
Commonities

www.communities-ni.gov.uk

Appointment of a Chair and Four Members to The Historic Monuments Council

Candidate Information Booklet

Completed applications must be returned to DfC Public Appointments
no later than **12 noon** (UK local time) **on Monday 24 March 2025**



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Equality of Opportunity and Diversity

The Department for Communities (DfC) is committed to equality of opportunity and welcomes applications from all suitably qualified people irrespective of religious belief, gender, disability, ethnic origin, political opinion, age, marital status, sexual orientation or whether or not they have dependants. We would particularly welcome applications from women, people with a disability, young people and people from minority ethnic groups as they are under-represented across public appointments. An e-version application pack is available from publicappointments@communities-ni.gov.uk. This material will be made available on request in other formats such as Braille, large print, audio etc. All reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate the needs of applicants with a disability.

Privacy Notice

DfC will only process the personal data you provide us for the purpose of recruiting Historic Monument Council Members under the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Object (NI) 1995, and in line with the Commissioner for Public Appointments NI Code of Practice. For more information, please see our Privacy Notice at:

www.communities-ni.gov.uk/publications/supplementary-privacy-notices-dfc-business-areas.

Contact

If you require further information about the appointment process or progress of your application, please contact Public Appointments as below:

028 9081 9417

publicappointments@communities-ni.gov.uk

Public Appointments, Governance Unit Level 5, Causeway Exchange, 1-7 Bedford Street, Belfast, BT2 7EG

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Dear Applicant

Historic Monuments Council - Chair and Member Appointments

Thank-you for your interest in becoming involved with the Historic Monuments Council (HMC) as its Chair or as a Member.

You may already have some idea about the important work of the Council but the following pages will provide you with more information about the role it plays and information can also be found on the Council's website <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/historic-monuments-council>.

HMC provides a range of advice to the Department to support its common purpose of supporting people, building communities and shaping places. Much of this advice is specifically to support the work of the Department's Historic Environment Division, whose aim is to help communities to enjoy and realise the value of our historic environment.

HMC is established on a statutory basis, and the specific matters on which the Department is required to seek their advice are set out in this document. The discussions, deliberations and advisory role of the Council can and do, however, go beyond those specific matters, and the Council acts as strategic advisers in relevant matters. This all supports the work of the Department to treasure the past and thereby to enrich the future, recognising the multiple ways in which our historic environment can support our prosperity, strengthen our society and shape our character.

This is an excellent opportunity for individuals who wish to use their skills and experience as either Chair or Member to make a significant contribution to the protection and development of our unique and important historic environment.

I would strongly encourage anyone with the relevant enthusiasm, knowledge and talent, from any background, to consider applying

The following pen picture has been completed by a current HMC member, Sally Montgomery to give you an understanding of what the role entails.

I hope the information enclosed encourages you to apply for these positions. Please remember to complete the documentation fully and return it by the required closing date.

Kind regards

Paul Price
Director of Historic Environment Division
Department for Communities

Dr Sally Montgomery has been a Member of the Historic Monuments Council since 1 March 2019. Below she gives her thoughts on the role and why she applied:

During the 1990s I worked at the Ulster Museum as the Science Education Officer, and then as the Head of Education. I am an ecologist and educator, not an archaeologist! But I became fascinated by objects that told the stories of people's lives and their ingenuity in developing tools, homes, modes of transports etc. from the earliest habitation to more recent times. This interest expanded as I set up W5 in 2001 as became interested in Harland and Wolff's history, and the surrounding artifacts. I joined the Board of Maritime Belfast, and researched the history of the Great Light, and the Belfast Buoys and developing interpretation for the public. My knowledge of understanding historic landscape has come through my involvement in restoring the Annesley Demesne, Castlewellan. Quite simply I love heritage. I feel strongly that we need to protect, preserve, research and interpretate our heritage for future generations.

In the time I have been on the Council, my knowledge has expanded thanks to the staff of the Historic Environment Division and the Council members. We all have different expertise and interests, and it makes for fascinating discussions. The background papers are always well written, providing a non-archaeologist, like me, with information that develops my understanding of the significance and history of the heritage being discussed.

I believe that the Boards of all public bodies should have members representative of the community they serve. We all have different experiences and skills we bring to the Board table. I would encourage anyone with an interest in the wide remit that the historic monuments cover to put their name forward. Help everyone to love our heritage.

Section 1

Background Information



1. The Department for Communities (DfC) wishes to invite applications for the appointment of a Chair and four Members to the Historic Monuments Council (HMC). The appointments are expected to begin on 1 June 2025 and will be for a term of five years.

HMC Background Information

2. HMC is an Advisory Non-Departmental Public Body sponsored by the Department for Communities (DfC). It consists of a Chair and up to 14 Members who possess a range of interests and expertise related to the conservation, management, protection and promotion of the historic environment.
3. HMC was established in 1971 with the responsibilities of the Council principally laid out in Article 22 of the Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (NI) Order 1995. The purpose of the Council is to advise the Department on the exercise of its powers under this Order.
4. The aim of HMC is to provide independent advice to the Department on a range of matters such as:
 - Acquisition, disposal, management and conservation of monuments in State Care and significant proposals relating to such monuments;
 - The Scheduling of historic monuments and Scheduled Monument Consent;
 - Maritime industrial and defence heritage;
 - Historic Parks, Gardens and Demesnes;
 - Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest;
 - The management of historic monuments, archaeological objects and the associated records, archives and collections;
 - Planning and development issues affecting historic monuments and their setting; and
 - Policy and guidance.
5. Members of the Council have an important role therefore in guiding the Department on how best to preserve, promote and present. It maintains close links with the Historic Buildings Council (HBC), an advisory Council to DfC, and from time-to-time with the Council for Nature, Conversation and the Countryside which is an advisory Council to the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.
6. Meetings of the HMC are usually held in 2 Titanic Boulevard, Titanic Quarter Belfast. Occasionally meetings are held in other locations, such as the offices of local councils, to facilitate engagement on specific issues.
7. The Chair, and the Council, are fully supported by a Secretariat consisting of DfC officials within Historic Environment Division (HED). They will assist the Chair in the running of the Council, by making meeting arrangements, preparation of agendas, issuing of papers etc.

8. Further information about the Council can be found at <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/articles/historic-buildings-council>

Governance Arrangements

9. Good governance is essential to the achievement of an organisation's strategic objectives and demonstration of accountability and transparency in the use of public funds. It is therefore an area of focus for HMC which is committed to high standards of corporate governance and have established a governance framework which reflects all relevant good practice guidance.

Public Appointments Information

10. All appointments to HMC are regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments Northern Ireland (CPA NI) and this competition may be examined by CPA NI for compliance with its Code of Practice.

11. The NI Executive has introduced targets for the equal representation of men and women on public body boards.

12. If you are interested in applying for this competition, further information about public appointments, including how to complete an application form, can be found at www.nidirect.gov.uk/public-appointments.
13. CPA NI periodically hosts a series of free, half-day workshops that aim to explain the Public Appointments process. Further information on these workshops, can be found at: <https://www.publicappointmentsni.org/workshops>. If you are unable to attend a workshop, the CPANI website hosts useful public appointment information.

Section 2

Role Profile



HMC Chair - Role and Responsibilities

14. The HMC Chair has a responsibility to ensure that the Council fulfils its statutory role as an advisor to the Department, and to work with HED in achieving its business plan targets and contributing to the wider work of the Department and the NI Executive.
15. The Chair also has a number of specific leadership responsibilities including:
 - Leading HMC members in using their knowledge and expertise to contribute to the management and protection of the historic environment, through their advice to the Department;
 - Representing the views of the HMC to the Department and other relevant bodies;
 - Issuing responses on behalf of the HMC to relevant consultations which impact on the historic environment or heritage assets;
 - Co-ordination of members participation in sub-committees, Historic Environment stakeholder groups and meetings;
 - Ensuring good governance of the Council in line with the Department's requirements;
 - Ensuring efficient running of meetings, supported by the Secretariat; and,

The Chair will also undertake those duties identified below for Members.

HMC Members - Roles and Responsibilities

16. Members will be expected to assist the Chair in ensuring the Council fulfils its statutory responsibilities. Members will also be expected to attend six half day council meetings per year. These meetings cover a range of issues within the HMC's remit, as described above in Section One. Papers will be provided in advance of the meeting, via the Secretariat, and Members will offer comments, guidance and advice in discussion with the Departmental representatives at the associated meetings.
17. Members are likely to be asked to participate in some the following:
 - Representing HMC on sub-committees;
 - Participating in working groups which bring together key representatives from across the heritage sector in Northern Ireland, for instance to take forward the Archaeology 2030 strategic approach (**NI Heritage Delivers - Archaeology 2030: A Strategic Approach for Northern Ireland**);
 - Attending relevant meetings with external groups or bodies, such as local councils, to represent the HMC. Members will be asked to report back at Council meetings; or
 - Reviewing specific consultation documents, such as Local Development Plans, and preparing a draft response for the Council in relation to those consultations.

18. The HMC produces an end of term report every five years. Members will be expected to contribute to the report.

19. Field trips are occasionally held to inspect monuments or to consider issues such as planning applications, works proposed to State Care monuments or designations of Areas of Significant Archaeological Interest.

20. In addition, individual Members shall act in accordance with their wider responsibilities, namely:

- attending and constructively participating in all meetings of the Council and, where appropriate, having prepared by reading relevant papers;
- analysing and reviewing complex issues, weighing up conflicting points of view, reaching sound and reasoned decisions and being able to communicate such;
- formulating positive working relationships with other Council members and other relevant stakeholders, including acting as an ambassador for the Council, eg by attending events;
- complying at all times with the Terms and Conditions of Appointment, Code of Conduct and the rules relating to the use of public funds and Conflicts of Interest;
- acting impartially in good faith and in the best interests of the HMC at all times; not misusing information gained in the course of public service for personal profit or for political gain, nor seeking to use the opportunity of public service to promote private interests or those of connected persons or organisations;

- complying with the Council's rules on the acceptance of gifts and hospitality, and of business appointments.

Integrity and Conflicts of Interest & Conflicts of Loyalty

21. DfC must ensure that the individuals appointed are committed to the principles and values of public service. These principles are: Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership and are described more fully at Annex A. Any private or personal interests that a potential appointee may have and that may be relevant to the work of the Council must be declared publicly.

22. DfC must take account of actual, or perceived, conflicts of interest or conflicts of loyalty. Conflict of loyalty is a particular type of conflict of interest, in which an individual's loyalty or duty to another person or organisation could prevent the individual from making a decision only in the best interests of the organisation.

23. Therefore, applicants must disclose in their application form information or personal circumstances which, if they were to be appointed, could lead to a conflict of interest or be perceived as such. Conflicts of interest may not be a barrier to appointment but both real and perceived conflicts must be discussed with all candidates by the Selection Panel. This is to ensure that the public can have confidence in the Board's independence and impartiality and the integrity of the potential appointees.

24. Please refer to Annex B for further information on this subject. The Northern Ireland Audit Office has issued a Good Practice Guide on Conflicts of Interest which can be viewed at: <https://www.niauditoffice.gov.uk/publications/conflicts-interest-good-practice>.

Remuneration and Time Commitment

25. The Chair and Members are not paid positions but individuals are entitled to an allowance for travelling and other out-of-pocket expenses, including a subsistence allowance payable in line with standard civil service rates and arrangements. Expenses incurred in relation to the care of dependants will also be reimbursed where appropriate.
26. Members currently contribute on average up to one day per month of their time. The Chair usually commits on average up to two days per month of their time.

Appraisal

27. The Chair will be appraised on an annual basis by a senior official in the Department in line with Departmental policy.
28. Members will be appraised on an annual basis by the Chair (and prior to any reappointment taking place). Members will be made aware that they are being appraised, the standards against which they will be appraised, and will have an opportunity to contribute to and view their report.

Previous Appointments to HMC (the Two Terms Rule)

29. Under the CPA NI Code of Practice, applicants who have served two terms as HMC Chair or Member are not eligible to apply for a third term for the same position. Any previous time served as Chair or Member will be taken into account. Those who have served as Member for two terms are still eligible to apply for the Chair position. If you are unsure if this applies to you, please contact DfC using the contact details at paragraph 32.

Section 3

Person Specification



Person Specification

30. Applications are welcome from a wide range of individuals who have an interest in public service. If you have an interest in heritage, historic monuments or archaeological objects, you may wish to apply to join HMC. The Department wishes to recognise less traditional career paths and experiences such as community involvement or charitable and voluntary work, as well as those experiences found from within the business community or sectors relevant to the work of the Council.

Application Form Selection Criterion

31. Candidates will be expected to demonstrate in their application form specific example(s) that show they are able to satisfy the following essential criterion and have the skills, experience and knowledge required.

Essential Criteria – Chair & Member

Communication and influencing skills

This is about your experience of using communication and interpersonal skills to influence others.

Examples of the type of evidence which the selection panel will be looking for are outlined below. You do not have to describe activities which meet each and every one of these bullet points:

- Building relationships with a range of stakeholders to achieve set objectives and standing by decisions reached.
- Experience of providing a challenge function within a team.
- Using influencing skills to persuade others to your point of view.
- Communicating effectively with others to articulate a specific case.
- Ability to work with others for a joint purpose, objective or aim.

Section 4

How to Apply and Contact Details



How to Apply and Contact Details

32. All applications must be made on the form provided. Hard copy or electronic versions are acceptable. Completed application forms can be delivered by email, hand or post to:

Email:

publicappointments@communities-ni.gov.uk

Public Appointments
Governance Unit
Department for Communities
Level 5
Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7EG

Telephone: 028 9081 9417

If you have any queries regarding the appointment process or any other aspect of this competition, please contact Ruth McNeill via the above contact details.

33. In your application form, you may use examples from your working or personal life, e.g. part-time or leisure activities, including any voluntary or community work you are or have been involved in. Make sure you take full advantage to provide practical evidence and examples of how you consider you meet the requirements for this appointment. Further advice can be found within the application form.

34. To ensure equality of opportunity for all applicants:

- CVs, letters, or any other supplementary material in place of, or in addition to, completed application forms will not be accepted;
- Applicants must ensure their completed application form is legible, whether this is completed electronically or written;
- Applications will not be examined until after the closing deadline;
- The number of words is limited to 400 per criterion.

35. **It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that their application form is complete.**

Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form

36. The DfC is required to monitor a number of areas including gender, ethnic origin, community background and disability of applicants to ensure that equal opportunities measures are effective. Applicants are therefore asked to complete the Equal Opportunities Monitoring form included in the application pack. The information is purely for monitoring purposes. It is not made available to the selection panel and does not play any part in the decision-making process.

Timeframe for Process

37. **The deadline for receipt of all applications is 12 noon (UK local time) on Monday 24 March 2025** with delivery instructions at paragraph 32. 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 not be accepted.**
38. Applicants who send their application form electronically are also required to meet the closing deadline for receipt in this office. The date and time at which the electronic application was received as recorded by the Department's IT system will be used to determine whether an application sent electronically is received before or after the closing date/time.
39. Once your application has been received, it will be acknowledged within 3 working days.

Sifting and Shortlisting of Applications

40. The selection panel will meet to consider applications by 16 April 2025 and will carry out a sift exercise, against a numerical rating scale, to assess how the skills, knowledge, experience and other qualities presented in your application meet the selection criterion as detailed in paragraph 31. Applications provided to the selection panel will be anonymised, which means that it will not include your name or personal details.

41. Only those applications that meet the acceptable standard for the essential criterion will be considered for interview. If a high number of applications are received and shortlisting is required only the top scoring candidates will progress to interview. All candidates sifted out will be provided with feedback based on the selection panel's agreed assessment of their application, if requested, as well as having the option of asking for a review of the selection panel's decision.

Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS)

42. The aim of the GIS is to provide applicants with a disability the opportunity to demonstrate their abilities beyond the initial application stage. Applicants with a disability who meet all of the essential criteria at the sift stage will automatically be offered an interview. Their application will not be subjected to any short-listing which may take place. Further information on this scheme can be found in Section 6 of the application form.

Interviews

43. Interviews are expected to take place on 7 & 8 May 2025 at Causeway Exchange, 1-7 Bedford Street, Belfast. The selection panel members are:
- Paul Price: HED Director, DfC (Chair);
 - Rhonda Robinson: HED Principal Archaeologist, DfC (Panel Member); and
 - Dolores O'Reilly: Commissioner for Public Appointments NI Independent Assessor (Independent Panel Member).

44. Candidates invited to interview will be assessed as follows:

- Member candidates: They will be assessed against two essential criteria 'Providing Effective Advice' and 'Relevant Experience' as detailed below. They will not be asked questions in relation to 'Communication and Interpersonal Skills' as this was only tested at the application stage.
- Chair candidates: They will be assessed against three essential criteria 'Providing Effective Advice', 'Relevant Experience' and 'Leading to Deliver Results' as detailed below. They will not be asked questions in relation to 'Communication and Interpersonal Skills' as this was only tested at the application stage.

45. Details of the criteria being assessed at interview, depending on the position you apply for, are:

1. Providing Effective Advice (Member and Chair positions)

This is about your ability to analyse information from a variety of sources to provide effective advice to others.

Examples of the type of evidence which the selection panel will be looking for are outlined below. You do not have to describe activities which meet each and every one of these bullet points:

- Identifying relevant information sources, collecting new data where necessary, and coordinating a response.

- Weighing up information from a range of competing sources to identify the best option.
- Asking challenging questions in order to provide confident recommendations.
- Ability to make a recommendation in a timely manner demonstrating the ability to explain thought and reasoning behind conclusions reached.
- Using information to develop effective solutions for difficult problems.

2. Relevant Experience (Member and Chair positions)

This is about the skills which you possess that the Council would benefit from.

Examples of the type of expertise which the selection panel will be looking for are outlined below, with candidates indicating on their application form which one are they are applying against:

- a) Archaeological fieldwork, research, or consultancy
- b) Artefact conservation or curation
- c) Maritime, industrial or defence heritage
- d) Heritage management
- e) Local History
- f) Legislation and policy development or implementation
- g) Planning (development management and related policies)
- h) Climate change and potential impacts on the historic environment

- i) Structural engineering
- j) Education
- k) Media and Marketing or
- l) Tourism
- m) Land management (such as farming, forestry, construction industry etc)

3. Leading to Deliver Results (Chair only)

This is about your ability to lead and motivate a team, creating effective relationships, to deliver results.

Examples of the type of evidence the selection panel will be looking for are outlined below: You do not have to describe activities which meet each and every one of these bullet points:

- Setting objectives for a team or organisation and leading to ensure that they are met
- Planning activities for a team or organisation and overseeing their implementation to achieve results
- Prioritising actions and allocating resources to achieve efficient and effective delivery
- Leading by setting a vision and motivating a team to achieve it
- Managing conflict and resolving difficult situations to facilitate a team to function and achieve outcomes.
- Ability to communicate as a leader
- Ability to reach important decisions within a team, standing by those decisions reached.

46. The interview will be criteria based which means that all the questions asked by the selection panel will be linked to the criteria. You will be asked to provide specific examples and the selection panel will evaluate your answers. Candidates invited for interview are eligible for reimbursement of reasonable travelling expenses incurred within the UK and Ireland only.
Candidates are asked to advise DfC Public Appointments if they anticipate difficulties attending on the dates specified.

47. The selection panel will score candidates at interview against an agreed pass mark and those found to have achieved the pass mark will be recommended for appointment. All candidates will be updated on the outcome of their interview, with feedback on their performance provided upon request. The Minister for Communities has stipulated that appointments will be made on the basis of an unranked (alphabetical) list of candidates.

48. A 'candidate summary' will be agreed by the panel. This will provide an objective analysis of each candidate's skills and experience, based on the information provided by each candidate during the appointment process and the panel's assessment of that candidate, and inform the final appointment decision. The summaries will be presented in an unranked order to the Minister.

49. Those candidates who are unsuccessful at interview and do not have their name presented to the Minister, will be advised in writing of the outcome of their interview

which will include detail on how to request feedback on their performance. Candidates who are successful at interview, and will be considered for appointment, will be advised in writing.

Appointment

50. The candidates, whose applications are successful, and who are appointed by the Minister, will have their appointment confirmed formally in writing. Those candidates not selected by the Minister, will also be advised in writing of the outcome.
51. Prior to names being presented to the Minister, a cross-departmental check will be carried out on the probity and performance of candidates who currently hold or have held public appointment roles. Any information that indicates that a candidate's performance and / or probity have been unsatisfactory will be noted in the candidate summary.
52. The Minister for Communities will be asked if they wish to create reserve lists for the Chair and Member positions to fill any unforeseen vacancy that may arise within 12 months from the date of the Minister's decision.

Publicising Appointments

53. A press release will be published to announce the appointments with the appointees required to complete a political activity form and approve a short biography for publication. The biography will be based on information provided by the candidate throughout the competition process.

54. The press release will include:

- The appointee's name;
- A short description of HMC;
- A brief summary of the skills and knowledge they bring to the role;
- The length of the appointment term and detail on remuneration;
- Details of all other ministerial public appointments held and any related remuneration received; and
- Details of the appointee's response to the political activity question.

Diversity in Public Appointments

55. DfC is committed to equality of opportunity and welcomes applications from all suitably qualified people irrespective of religious belief, gender, disability, ethnic origin, political opinion, age, marital status, sexual orientation or whether or not they have dependants. We would particularly welcome applications from women, people with a disability, young people and people from minority ethnic groups, as these groups are under-represented in public appointments.
56. All public appointments must be made on the basis of merit. Only those individuals judged to best meet the requirement of the post will be recommended to the Minister for appointment. The final decision on appointment will rest with the Minister for Communities.

Induction and Training

57. Those appointed will be expected to attend appropriate induction and training courses, as a condition of your appointment. Further information will be provided upon appointment.

58. Every effort will be made to provide whatever reasonable support is needed to help appointees carry out their duties.

Complaints

59. If you wish to make a complaint about any aspect of this appointment's process, you should in the first instance contact DfC's Head of Governance Public Appointments who will manage your complaint:

FAO Head of Governance and
Public Appointments
Department for Communities
Level 5, Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street
Belfast, BT2 7EG

Email: CGU@communities-ni.gov.uk

Telephone: 028 90819192

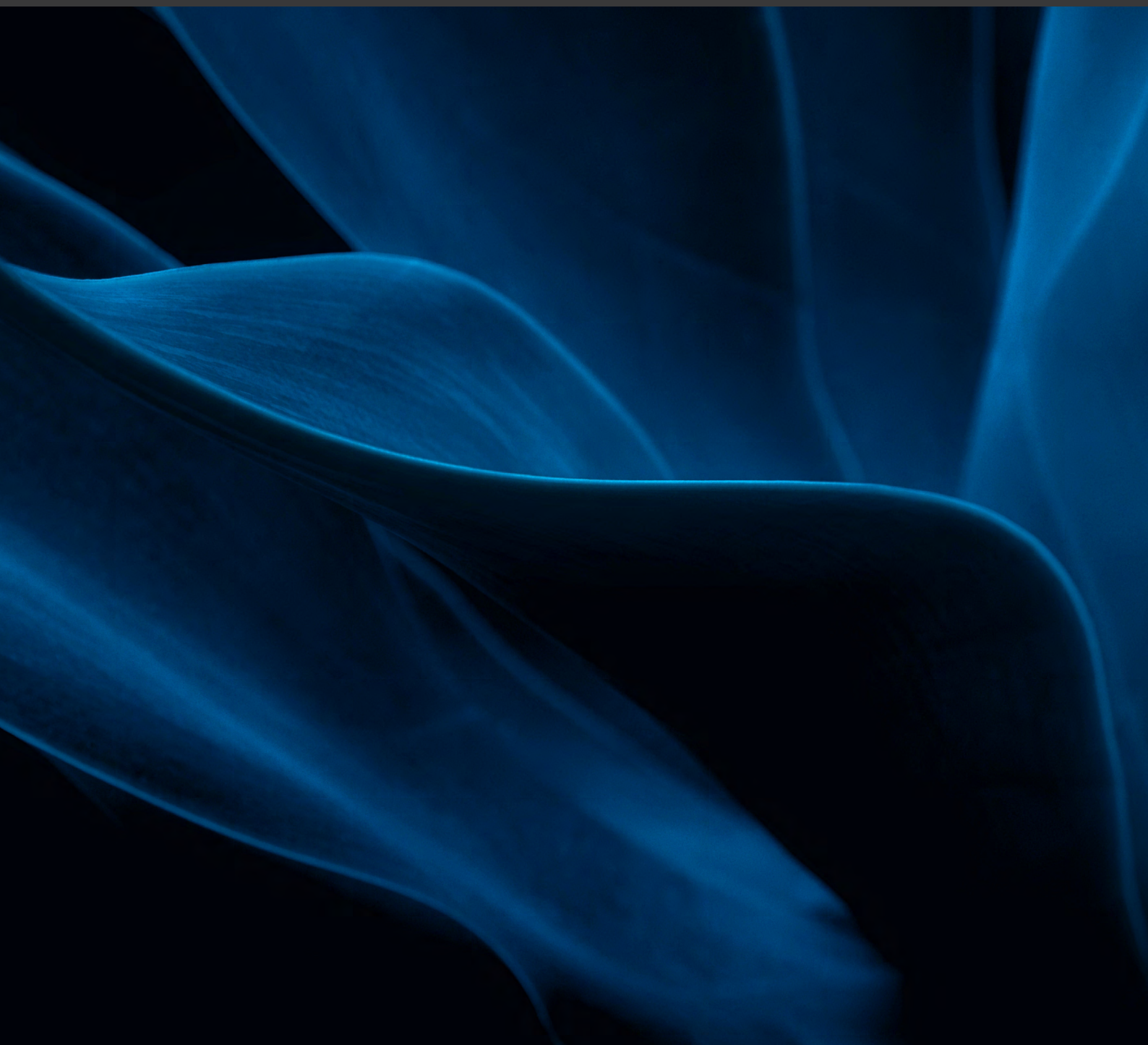
60. You may contact the Commission for Public Appointments NI at:

Email: info@publicappointmentsni.org

Telephone: 028 905 24820

Section 5

Other Relevant Information



Double Paying (Candidates from the Public Sector)

61. Applicants who already work in the public sector need to be aware that:
- they may be ineligible for consideration for this appointment if in DfC's view there is a conflict of interest, the perception of a conflict or a potential conflict, between the appointment and their existing commitments; and,
 - they will be asked to confirm that they have permission from their employer to take up an appointment if one is offered and the employer will be asked to confirm this.
 - there is a general guiding principle that an individual should not be paid twice from the public purse for the same period of time. As a result applicants who already work in the public sector may not be entitled to claim remuneration including expenses for this position if the duties are undertaken during a period of time for which they are already paid by the public sector. If in doubt contact your employer for advice.

In the interests of minimising the potential for double paying to occur the Department reserves the right to contact your employer regarding your candidature.

Former Civil Servant

62. Any former civil servant applying for this position must comply with the relevant approvals from section 6.1 Annex 4 of the NICS HR Handbook – Standards of Conduct, i.e. for SCS to seek approval for any appointment up to two years following leaving the service, and following one year for G6 and below. This should be ascertained in advance of any application being submitted.

Nationality Requirements

63. The Department has no public appointments which are restricted to UK nationals only. However, there is a mandatory requirement to ensure that those appointed do not contravene immigration legislation:
- Republic of Ireland (RoI) citizens may be appointed to any post.
 - Commonwealth citizens who have immigration status allowing them to work in the UK may be appointed to any post.
 - There is an onus on non-UK and non-RoI citizens to provide proof of their right to work in the UK and an onus on the appointer to check that.

Therefore, it is the responsibility of the individual to provide evidence that they have the appropriate permission if being offered a post. The Department will check the individual's passport, share code or other documents, if necessary, to confirm if they can legally work in the UK.

ANNEX A

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The Seven Principles of Public Life

Public appointees are expected to uphold the seven principles of public life as set by the Committee on Standards in Public Life:

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

ANNEX B

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Integrity and Conflicts of Interest – Guide for Candidates

This guidance should be read in conjunction with the information contained in the leaflet “Guidance on Conflicts of Interest, Integrity and How to Raise a Complaint” produced by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments, Northern Ireland, which provides examples of the types of issues that may give rise to conflicts of interests.

All candidates who put themselves forward for a public appointment must be able to demonstrate their commitment to the principles and values of public service. One of the issues which might arise in relation to this is that of conflict of interest.

What is a conflict of interest?

1. 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.
2. 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?

3. 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?

4. 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?

5. 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.
6. The report on the outcome of the interview process which is put to the Minister and/or Department will include clear written

reference to any perceived or actual conflicts of interest or integrity issues connected to any candidate put forward as suitable for appointment. It will include sufficient information to ensure that the Minister and/or Department is 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?

7. 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?

8. This situation may arise where the candidate 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?

9. 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.
10. 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 or not the member can continue to carry out their role in an appropriate manner and each case is considered individually.
11. 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 board.

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