

## Freedom of Information Act (FOI) 2000 – Department for Regional Development (DRD) – Appointment Process for the Ministerial Appointments of Interim Non Executive Directors

CPA NI received the following questions in relation to the Interim Ministerial Appointments - Non Executive Directors – Northern Ireland Water:-

1. To provide details on what was the exception to the Code of Practice
2. Request for all documents (emails/minutes of meetings / letters etc) between the Commissioner for Public Appointments and Department for Regional Development in relation to the appointment process of the New Non Exec Directors to NI Water.

### Question 1

The Commissioner's Code of Practice for Ministerial Public Appointments states:

- *3.15 All competitions to fill chair posts, appointments which are paid, have a high profile, or have responsibility for managing significant public funds **must be advertised** sufficiently widely to attract an appropriate field of applicants.*
- *3.16 Unpaid posts **must be publicised**. Departments should do so in the most effective and appropriate way.*

DRD put a case to the Commissioner seeking an exception to the Code allowing the normal procedure of advertising to be suspended and permission to approach several individuals, [the individuals were not named], as part of an emergency process to appoint non-executive Directors to the Board of Northern Ireland Water on an interim basis.

It was expected that any applicant, putting themselves forward after the initial approach, would be assessed against criteria set by DRD. Only those, who in the opinion of the selection panel, met the criteria, would be deemed suitable for appointment and their names presented to the Minister for his consideration.

Under section 1.10 of the Code the Commissioner agreed to the exception on the caveat that even in these circumstances the Commissioner required DRD to include a demonstrable element of independent participation in the assessment of the candidates for the interim arrangements.

### Question 2

All items related to the process as held by CPANI can be accessed at the link below.

[www.publicappointmentsni.org/news/drd-foi.htm](http://www.publicappointmentsni.org/news/drd-foi.htm)

The only redactions relate to names or signatures below Grade 7 and the redactions have been applied consistently.