



The Commissioner  
for Public Appointments  
Northern Ireland

“Guardian of the Public Appointment Process”

Follow up report on recommendations made in March 2013 audit of Warrenpoint

Harbour Authority

Department for Regional Development

November 2013

A competition to appoint two members to the Board of Warrenpoint Harbour Authority was selected for audit as part of the 2012/2013 audit programme of the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland (CPANI). This competition was administered by the Department for Regional Development (DRD).

Three recommendations were identified as a result of this audit and presented in a report published in March 2013. The Department was advised that it should take action to address these recommendations, and that a follow-up to the audit would be conducted in six months' time.

In order to conduct the follow-up, the Commissioner requested appropriate documentation based on public appointment competitions run by the Department since the publication of the audit report. A review of this documentation took place in order to ascertain if the recommendations were implemented.

### **Recommendation 1**

In order to comply with paragraph 3.2 of the Code and to fully inform the Minister of the detail and timeframe for key aspects of the process, the Department should ensure that an appointment plan is included in all future Ministerial submissions relating to public appointment processes.

#### Implementation of recommendation 1

The Department provided a copy of a Ministerial Submission which included an appointment plan. The appointment plan was compliant with the Code. This recommendation has been implemented.

### **Recommendation 2**

The Department should ensure that the statement regarding monitoring information requirements is corrected and an accurate and more appropriate statement included in future guidance for applicants.

#### Implementation of recommendation 2

The information pack for a subsequent competition contained the following statement.

*“The Department for Regional Development monitors the 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 Information*

*section of the application form. The information is purely for monitoring purposes. It is not made available to the selection panel and does not play a role in the decision making process.”*

This recommendation has been implemented.

### **Recommendation 3**

In order to comply with paragraph 3.25 of the Code, to ensure applicants are kept informed of the progress and ultimate outcome of their application in a timely and courteous manner, an acknowledgement letter or e-mail should be issued by return, to all applicants who request feedback.

#### **Implementation of recommendation 3**

The Department has received no requests for feedback since the publication of the CPANI audit report. Accordingly, the Department provided evidence to show that a request for an appeal was acknowledged within one working day of the correspondence being received, the same procedure is in place for feedback requests. This recommendation has been implemented.

### **Conclusion**

All recommendations have been implemented. The Commissioner would like to thank the Department for its attention to these matters.