

PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS

GUIDANCE NOTES

For completion of the application form for Members of the Council for Nature Conservation and the Countryside

The following notes give guidance to help you provide the relevant information when completing the application form. Read these notes and the information pack carefully before completing the application form. These notes are available in other formats. To request other formats, please contact:

Department of the Environment
Finance and Business Planning Division
Room 4.13b
Clarence Court
10 – 18 Adelaide Street
BELFAST BT2 8GB

Telephone: 028 9054 0901 or 028 9054 1126
Textphone: 028 9054 0642
E-mail: publicappointments@doeni.gov.uk

1. HOW WERE YOU MADE AWARE OF THIS OPPORTUNITY?

It is important for us to assess how people learn of public appointment opportunities in the Department, so that we can use the information to ensure we reach as wide a range of potential candidates as possible. We would, therefore, ask you to note the **initial** method that drew your attention to the opportunity.

2. PERSONAL DETAILS

Please give full contact details.

3. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

An appointee to a public body could find that matters or incidents which previously attracted no attention could become matters of legitimate public interest once the person concerned holds a public appointment. In this section, you are asked to provide information regarding interests that you, or your immediate family, have that might be construed as being in conflict with the appointment for which you have applied.

Included in your information pack is a copy of the leaflet entitled "CPANI, The Commissioner for Public Appointments Northern Ireland". This provides advice on what constitutes a conflict of interest. Please read it before completing this section. A conflict of interest will not necessarily prevent you

from taking up an appointment, but you must be prepared to have this explored in more detail at interview.

4. DECLARATION

Ensure that you read the declaration statement and sign your application form.

5. EMPLOYMENT AND/OR VOLUNTARY WORK EXPERIENCE

We are particularly interested in any paid or voluntary work experience that would have special relevance for this appointment. You will have the opportunity in section 7 to outline your suitability for appointment, and to tell us how you have gained these skills.

6. PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS

The Commissioner for Public Appointments requires us to publish details of public appointments, both past and present, already held by successful candidates.

7. SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE

In this section you are asked to provide practical information against the selection criteria for appointees. The information you provide in this section will be used for assessment and selection purposes so make sure you take full advantage to provide practical evidence and examples of how you feel you are suitable for this public appointment. When completing the section, you should have a copy of the selection criteria beside you for reference.

Many people are not used to writing about themselves or thinking about what they have done. To complete this section effectively, you need to understand the relationship between the examples you will use and the relevant selection criteria. In addition, you should bear in mind the following points:

- You should use simple and easy to understand language in your examples to describe what you have done;
- Use actual examples, rather than 'how you would do something';
- In recognition of the validity of non-traditional career paths you are encouraged to use appropriate examples from both your working life and from your personal life, including any voluntary or community work you are or have been involved in;
- Avoid statements that describe your personal beliefs or philosophies – focus on specific challenges and results;
- If possible, quantify/qualify your accomplishments;
- State clearly your personal involvement in any experience you quote. Use "I" statements e.g. "I contributed by...."; and
- Describe what you did and how you behaved – if your example includes activities undertaken by a team, focus on your role and not that of the team as a whole.

8. MONITORING INFORMATION

The Department monitors the gender, ethnic origin, community background and disability of candidates to ensure that equal opportunity measures are effective. You are asked to complete these details in section 9 of the form. As with all the information contained in the form, it is gathered, maintained and processed strictly in accordance with our Data Protection Registration, for public appointment purposes only.

9. DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998 – PRIVACY STATEMENT

The Department processes all personal data in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. The personal data you provide in this application form is used to inform the Department of your suitability to hold a public appointment and to comply with its statutory obligations under The Nature Conservation and Amenity Lands (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Order 1999. The Department will not make any unauthorised disclosure of this information to any person or body, and will hold the information only as long as is necessary for the purpose of making public appointments.

EXPLANATORY NOTES – DISQUALIFICATION

Under the terms of the House of Commons Disqualification Act 1975, the European Assembly Elections Act 1978 and the Northern Ireland Assembly Disqualification Act 1975, existing MPs, MEPs and MLAs cease to hold their elected office if they take up an appointment to a public body listed in the aforementioned legislation.

The onus is on the person standing for election to state that they are aware of the provisions of the House of Commons Disqualification Act 1975, the European Parliamentary Elections Act 2002 or the Northern Ireland Assembly Disqualification Act 1975 and that, to the best of their knowledge and belief, they are not disqualified from being an MP, MEP or MLA.

If an individual holding a public appointment decides to stand for election as an MP, MEP or MLA, it is their responsibility to check whether the public body to which they belong or the office that they hold is listed in the appropriate Disqualification Act.

If the public body to which an individual belongs or the office that they hold is listed in the Disqualification Act, they must immediately notify the Department of their intention to stand for election. To avoid any disqualification issues from arising later, they should resign their appointment **before** submitting their nomination as a candidate in an election. If they have not resigned their public appointment before submitting their nomination as a candidate and are subsequently elected as an MP, MEP or MLA, their election will be void.