**Candidate**

**Information Booklet**

**Northern Ireland Fishery**

**Harbour Authority**

**(NIFHA)**

**Chair Appointment**



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If you would like to speak to someone in connection with any aspect of the process, or if you require an application pack in a different format such as Braille, large print, audio etc. please contact:

**Public Appointments Unit**

**ALB Corporate Sponsor and Public Appointments Branch**

**Jubilee House**

**111 Ballykelly Road**

**Ballykelly**

**Limavady**

**BT49 9HP**

**Tel: 028 7744 2025**

**Or by email to:**

**PublicAppointments@daera-ni.gov.uk**

**Section 1 – Outline of the Public Body and its Role**

**Appointment**

The Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) is seeking to appoint a new **Chair** to the Board of the Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority (NIFHA) from **2 October 2023**.

Under the Harbour Authority Act (Northern Ireland) 1973, appointments to the NIFHA board can **only** be made by a **Minister**. While a decision has been taken to progress the appointment process up to and including interview stage, the final stages of the appointment process will be dependent on the political and legislative framework that applies at that point. There may therefore be a delay between the outcome of the interview process and decisions on appointment. We will do all we can to keep candidates updated as the process reaches its final stages.

An incoming Minister may also choose **not** to make an appointment.

Further information about the NIFHA Board can be obtained from the website at:

[**www.nifha.co.uk**](http://www.nifha.co.uk)

**Regulated Appointment**

The procedure for this appointment adheres to the Code of Practice issued by the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland. This means that the process will be based on **merit** after a fair, open and transparent process that involves independent scrutiny. A copy of the code can be found at:

**<https://www.publicappointmentsni.org/>**

**Overview of the Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority**

The Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority is an Executive non-departmental public body (Executive NDPB) sponsored by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA).

It is a statutory body established in 1973 under the Harbours Act (Northern Ireland) 1970 and the Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority Order (Northern Ireland) 1973.

The NIFHA is responsible for the three fishery harbours and harbour estates of Ardglass, Kilkeel and Portavogie.

Capital projects are currently 100% publicly funded, through the Maritime and Fisheries Fund. Expenditure is subject to monitoring and audit to ensure value for money and compliance with funding rules. Major infrastructure development is proposed for Kilkeel (£73M-£91M) and Ardglass (£31M-£35M), with lesser development at Portavogie. These proposals have arisen from proposals in the Fishing and Seafood Development Programme. NIFHA has responsibilities for project management for these projects.

**Primary Functions of the Northern Ireland Fishery Harbour Authority**

The primary functions of the NIFHA are:

* To improve, manage and maintain the three fishery harbours and harbour estates of Ardglass, Kilkeel and Portavogie.
* To operate such facilities as may be provided at the harbours.
* To dredge and maintain the harbour berth, channels and entrances.
* To lease, dispose of or develop land vested in the Authority; and
* To construct, alter or extend any tidal work (subject to regulatory consent).

The NIFHA is primarily responsible for ensuring that all on-shore and marine activities within port limits are carried out safely and efficiently and that harbour facilities are maintained and improved in an effective manner.

In terms of service provision, the NIFHA has seven key areas of operation: -

* The provision of safe navigation channels and berths.
* The maintenance of a safe operating environment within the harbours.
* The provision of services to the vessels including ice, water and electricity.
* The provision of services to repurpose, recycle and dispose of various waste streams.
* The provision, and management of fish market facilities.
* The provision of slipway facilities for vessel maintenance and repair; and
* Estate management and development.

**Organisational Structure**

The NIFHA is managed by a Board consisting of the Chair and between four and eight other members. In order to hold meetings, the Board requires a minimum of the Chair plus not less than four members to form a quorum. The Board is currently made up of six members. The Chair and members are ministerial appointments and are non-executive.

The Board has twosub-committees – Audit and Risk Assurance and Finance and General Purposes. The Audit sub-committee provides objective advice to the Chief Executive of the NIFHA, who is also the organisation’s designated Accounting Officer, and the Board on corporate governance, risk management and internal control issues.

The Chair and board members have overall responsibility for the corporate strategy and governance of the NIFHA and for setting aims and objectives. The Corporate Plan is normally updated every four years and the process involves the continuous monitoring and review of performance with a view to ensuring that overall aims and objectives are achieved. Annual business plans are derived from, and are consistent with, the Corporate Plan.

The NIFHA head office is located in Downpatrick and there are offices at each of the three harbours.

For further information about the NIFHA (including minutes of Board Meetings and its Annual Report and Accounts) please visit its website at **<http://www.nifha.co.uk>**

**Section 2 – Role Profile**

**The NIFHA Board’s Role**

The Board has corporate responsibility forensuring that the NIFHA fulfils its aims and objectives as agreed with DAERA and as approved by the Minister, and the efficient and effective use of staff and other resources. To this end the Board establishes the overall strategic direction of the NIFHA within the policy and resources framework agreed with DAERA whilst ensuring that any statutory or administrative requirements for the use of public funds are complied with.

The Board ensures that high standards of corporate governance are observed at all times and that key financial and other risks facing the NIFHA are addressed. Corporate governance is the way in which an organisation is managed. In particular it defines responsibilities within the organisation, how decisions are made and provides for the monitoring of the organisation’s performance.

Board Members must comply with the NIFHA’s Code of Practice for Board Members. In particular they must not misuse information gained in the course of their public service for gain to themselves or associates. They are also required to declare publicly to the Board any private interests that may be perceived to conflict with their public duties and to comply with the Board’s rules on the acceptance of gifts and hospitality.

**All Board Members must adhere to the Seven Principles of Public Life.**

**Chair’s Role**

The Chair of NIFHA works closely with the CEO and is directlyinvolved in all major decisions made within NIFHA.

They chair Board Meetings, Finance & General Purposes Meetings and Corporate Planning Meetings. They also attend Port Stakeholders Meetings.

Additionally, the Chair represents the Harbour Authority at meetings with other business groups and forums.

The Chair also attends and presents to the joint NIFHA/DAERA Board Meetings. In addition, the Chair maintains good relationships across the Authority, including meeting staff at the Main Office and the three harbours to give leadership and strategic direction, in line with the Authority’s aims and objectives.

The Chair takes responsibility for the NIFHA Board and leads the Board while building relationships with all Board Members and the NIFHA staff. The Chair is responsible for completing annual assessments for the CEO and for Board Members.

**Other Information**

The following are the key terms and conditions: -

* **Location**: The NIFHA Board meetings are normally held at their premises, 3 St Patrick’s Avenue, Downpatrick, Co. Down, BT30 6DW.
* **Period of appointment**: DAERA is seeking to appoint a new Chair to the NIFHA Board from week commencing **2 October** **2023**. The appointment will be for **four** years. Under the Harbour Authority Act (Northern Ireland) 1973, appointments to the NIFHA board can **only** be made by a **Minister**. While a decision has been taken to progress the appointment process up to and including interview stage, the final stages of the appointment process will be dependent on the political and legislative framework that applies at that point. Candidates will be updated as appropriate.
* **Termination of Appointment**: Your appointment may be terminated if at any time you are considered unfit to continue in office or are incapable of performing your duties as Chair of the Board.
* **Performance Appraisal:** An annual assessment of the performance of the Chair is completed by the Senior Sponsor in DAERA.
* **Re-appointment**: Re-appointment for a second term may be considered subject to an appropriate standard of performance and attendance having been achieved during the initial period in office and evidence of continued adherence to the seven principles of public life (**see** **Annex A**). Re-appointment for a second term requires ministerial approval.
* **Time commitment**: The total time commitment for the NIFHA Chair is **30-32** **days per annum.** The Chair will be expected to attend the NIFHA Board meetings and stakeholder meetings and, where nominated to serve on any of its sub-committees, this may involve attendance at meetings held in any of the three harbours of Ardglass, Portavogie or Kilkeel. Provisions relating to annual leave do not apply to these positions.
* **Attendance**: The Chair of the NIFHA Board is expected to attend meetings regularly. The appointment may be terminated if attendance becomes such that it interferes with the effective running of the Board.
* **Remuneration**: Remuneration for the NIFHA Board Chair is **£10,680**per annum – paid quarterly in arrears. As remuneration is taxable, the NIFHA will apply PAYE deductions in respect of Income Tax and National Insurance. The appointment is **not** pensionable.
* **Expenses**: In carrying out the role as a Chair you are entitled to claim the following expenses –
1. Travel and other expenses incurred on the NIFHA business. This includes travel between your home (or your place of business) and Downpatrick to attend Board meetings.
2. Reasonable expenses incurred in relation to the care of dependants (including childcare costs).
3. Any other appropriate expenses such as particular costs associated with disabilities.

Reimbursement of expenses will be made on a quarterly basis following receipt of a completed claim form supported with relevant receipts.

**Appointees who already work in the public sector cannot be paid twice from the public purse for the same period of time.**

* **Training and Development**: The new Chair will be required to undergo formal training on corporate governance within six months of appointment and may be required to attend other relevant training courses organised by the NIFHA or DAERA.

The following applies to the Chair position:

* **Indemnities for personal liability:** The Department has indicated that an individual board member who has acted honestly and in good faith will not have to meet out of his/her own personal resources any personal civil liability which is incurred in the execution or purported execution of his/her board function, save where the person has acted recklessly.
* **Conduct:** All public appointees have a duty in relation to conduct, propriety and confidentiality.
* In exercising their duties, the Chair, must demonstrate impartiality, integrity and objectivity and should be aware of their wider responsibilities of the Board. The Chair must:
* Undertake on appointment to comply at all times with the Seven Principles of Conduct Underpinning Public Life and with the rules relating to the use of public funds.
* Act in good faith and in the best interests of the Board; and
* Not use information gained in the course of their public service for personal gain or for political purposes, nor seek to use the opportunity of public service to promote their private interests or those of connected persons, firms, businesses, or other organisations.

If appointees are deemed to have breached the Seven Principles of Conduct Underpinning Public Life, the Department may terminate the appointment.

* **Gifts and Hospitality:** All public appointees are expected to ensure that the acceptance of gifts and hospitality can stand up to public scrutiny. Gifts should be declined wherever possible and any offers should be reported to the NIFHA’s Secretariat. Where it would be ungracious or otherwise difficult not to accept, you should inform the NIFHA’s Secretariat of the gift, the estimated value, and the donor. Public appointees must take personal responsibility to ensure that a record is placed in the appropriate hospitality register. Similarly, care should be taken that no extravagance is involved with working lunches and other social occasions.
* **Conflicts of Interest:** Conflicts of interest, whether real or perceived, can be damaging to the individual board member, the board itself, the NIFHA and the Department. If a conflict of interest arises or is identified, it is essential that it is resolved as quickly as possible.

You must declare any personal or business interests, pecuniary or non-pecuniary which may, or may be perceived to, influence your judgement when performing your duties as Chair of the Board. Failure to do so could lead to your appointment being withdrawn.

You are required to register your own interests and the interests of close family members and persons living in the same household that appear closely related to your activities as Chair. Should you be in any doubt about what to disclose it is best to err on the side of caution and disclose the information. These interests will be included in an appropriate register of interests maintained by the NIFHA and you must ensure that your entries are kept up to date.

Should an issue arise subsequent to the completion of the register of interests that could give rise to a potential conflict of interest you must inform the CEO of the NIFHA Board.

If at a meeting of the Board an issue arises that could give rise to a potential conflict you should disclose your interest and withdraw from any discussion or consideration of the matter.

In extreme situations if a conflict of interest cannot be resolved dismissal may be the most appropriate option, however, due process must be followed and the principles of natural justice applied.

* **Other Appointments:** You must inform DAERA Sponsor Branch in advance of taking up any new appointments which may impinge on your duties.
* **Political Activity:** You should not occupy paid party-political posts or hold particularly sensitive positions of responsibility in a political party. Subject to the foregoing, you are free to engage in political activities provided that you are conscious of your general public responsibilities and exercise proper discretion, particularly with regard to the work of the Board. Be prepared to disclose any potential conflicts of interest.
* You are expected to inform the Minister of any intention to accept a prominent position in any political party and to understand that your appointment as Chair of the Board may be terminated if the Minister decides that, in the case of you accepting such a role, the positions are incompatible.

**Section 3 – Person Specification**

In making this appointment DAERA wants to ensure a broad range of skills and experience that reflect the range of activities of the NIFHA.

Before applying for this position, please take the time to study the essential criteria set out below and consider whether you meet these. Candidates who do not meet the essential criteria will **not** be considered for interview.

**Essential Criteria:**

Applications for the position of Chair are invited from candidates who can demonstrate both on the application form and, if invited to interview, the following skills, experience and knowledge:

**1 Corporate Governance and Accountability**

Corporate governance may be described as the way in which an organisation is directed and controlled. Accountability can be defined as the process by which public sector bodies and individuals within them are held to account for their decisions and actions, including their stewardship of public funds and all aspects of performance. The Chair will be expected to oversee and monitor project delivery to ensure that projects are delivered on time and to budget.

The Chair will be expected to ensure that the NIFHA has high standards of corporate governance and accountability.

We are looking for evidence gained within a personal, voluntary or employment context of your ability to apply the principles and practice of corporate governance and accountability, including risk management, and that you have demonstrated personal accountability when making or recommending decisions and taking or recommending action.

**2. Financial Planning and Management**

The NIFHA Chair will be responsible for ensuring high standards of financial management within the NIFHA, in line with DAERA and Department of Finance requirements for public bodies. The Chair will monitor, review, and act upon financial information received. They will be expected to constructively challenge the Executive Team in its financial planning, target setting and budgetary performance.

We are looking for evidence that you have financial planning and management skills and the ability to analyse financial information. You should demonstrate how you have applied these skills within a personal, voluntary or employment context to maintain or improve the finances, and/or achieve value for money.

**3. Strategic Thinking and Direction**

The Board will be responsible for establishing the strategic direction of the Authority within the scope of its statutory responsibilities, and for ensuring that the Authority achieves its corporate aims and objectives as agreed with DAERA and its Minister.

We are looking for evidence of your ability to think strategically, including examples where you have used these skills within a personal, voluntary or employment context to decide or influence strategic direction, taking account of the internal and external environment and other appropriate factors.

**4. Communication and Teamwork**

The NIFHA Chair should have good interpersonal skills, effective written and oral communication skills and the ability to promote the NIFHA and its activities. Board members should be able to work effectively with each other, with the Chair, with the CEO and with their team, to deliver the NIFHA’s corporate objectives and to offer constructive challenge to the Executive Team.

We are looking for examples where you have, within a personal, voluntary or employment context, contributed effectively as part of a team, have demonstrated your ability to put forward views in a clear and concise manner and have shown an ability to influence others to achieve desired outcomes.

**5 Leadership**

The NIFHA Chair will be an engaged leader responsible for promoting cohesion among Board members to achieve the strategic priorities of the NIFHA. This will involve working with Board colleagues, the NIFHA Chief Executive and senior management team, senior civil servants, the DAERA Minister, industry and other stakeholders.

We are looking for evidence that demonstrates your ability to provide effective leadership including the ability to manage relationships, guiding, persuading and constructively challenging others, driving the decision-making process and exercising personal authority.

**Please note:**

1. No formal qualifications are required for this position. Details of previous employment are **not** required.
2. You should ensure that you provide evidence in your application form which demonstrates your skills and understanding of the essential criteria detailed above.
3. The selection panel will not make assumptions from the title of the applicant’s post or the nature of the organisation as to the skills and experience which an applicant may have gained. It is not sufficient to simply list the various posts that you have held.
4. If you do not provide sufficient detail under **each** of the criterion the selection panel may reject your application.
5. Only the details provided by you in your application form will be provided to the selection panel for the purpose of determining your eligibility for the post or shortlisting (if necessary). Details must be provided in the relevant box for all of the essential criteria – any information provided on continuation sheets will **not** be used.

It is strongly recommended that all applicants/candidates read the ‘**Public Appointments Guide**’ which provides an overview of Public Appointments in Northern Ireland and helpful information for those wishing to apply. A copy of this Guide can be found at the following link:

[**www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/execoffice/public-appointments-guide.pdf**](http://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/execoffice/public-appointments-guide.pdf)

You may also be interested in registering for a free workshop on the public appointments process being offered by CPANI. Further details can be found at: [**https://www.publicappointmentsni.org/workshops**](https://www.publicappointmentsni.org/workshops)

**Section 4 - Application and Selection Process**

DAERA is committed to the principles of public appointments based on **merit** with independent assessment, openness, and transparency of process. The appointment process is regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland (CPANI).

**Guaranteed Interview Scheme**

All reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate the needs of applicants/candidates with a disability. We are operating the Guaranteed Interview Scheme (GIS) in this appointment process. 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 the essential criteria at stage one of the selection process (the sift process) will automatically be offered an interview. Their application will **not** be subjected to any **short-listing** which may take place.

**Application Procedure**

Application forms or further information about the process can be obtained from the Public Appointments Unit at the address on the cover of this document or by e-mailing a request to: **publicappointments@daera-ni.gov.uk**.

Alternatively, you can download the information pack at:

[**https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/appointment-chair-board-northern-ireland-fishery-harbour-authority-nifha**](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/appointment-chair-board-northern-ireland-fishery-harbour-authority-nifha)

**Making Your Application**

The application form is designed to ensure applicants provide the necessary information to determine how they meet the competition requirements. You will be assessed against the essential criteria in **Part B** of the application form. You can use examples from your working life, including any voluntary or community work you are, or have been, engaged in or, if preferred, you can use examples from your personal life.

**Please note:**

* DAERA Public Appointments Unit is working within the hybrid working policy, i.e. both from home and the office. All forms should be submitted electronically. However, where this is not possible, you should notify the Public Appointments Unit if a hard copy application has been sent to facilitate timely collection arrangements.
* You can contact us **on 028 7744 2025** or **publicappointments@daera-ni.gov.uk**.
* Typewritten or electronic versions of the application are preferred and should be completed in **Arial** minimum font size **12**. If your application is submitted by email, we may require you to sign **Part A** if invited to interview.
* Handwritten applications should be completed in legible block capitals using **black ink**.
* We will **not** accept CVs, letters, or any other supplementary material in place of, or in addition to, completed application forms.
* When completing the application form, a maximum of **400** words per criterion is permitted. Any additional words will be redacted and not presented to the panel for assessment.
* Application forms should **not** be amended in any way.
* Braille, large print, and audio formats are available on request.

**Applications from Civil Servants/Former Civil Servants**

Civil servants, or former civil servants are subject to the rules on Acceptance of Outside Business Appointments, Employment or Self-Employment for a period of up to two years after leaving the NI Civil Service. Individuals in this category, who wish to apply, must check their eligibility to do so with their former Department and the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) Human Resources. (*Standards of Conduct Policy Sections 8, IRO Public Appointments: Error! Filename not specified.Kelly, Dolores14:25*

*The NICS Staff Handbook includes the HR policy, 6.01 Standards of Conduct).*

Civil servants, or former civil servants, should be aware that a judgement may also be made by the interviewing panel, taking account of the Cabinet Office guidance on Making and Managing Public Appointments, as to whether the nature of their employment could lead to a perceived, or real, split of loyalties of a sufficiently serious nature to render appointment as a NIFHA Chair, or Board Member, an unmanageable conflict of interest.

**Timetable/Time Frame**

The **closing time and date** for receipt of completed application forms by post or email is **Noon on Friday 19 May** **2023.**

Completed applications should be returned to DAERA’s Public Appointments at **publicappointments@daera-ni.gov.uk** (for full contact details see the Contents page of this document).

**Late applications will not be accepted by DAERA.**

The time of receipt of applications will be formally and individually recorded. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that sufficient time is allowed for their application to arrive with DAERA on or before the deadline.

Please ensure that posted applications bear the correct amount of postage as any shortfall may lead to a delay in delivery, which could cause you to miss the deadline.

Please notify Public Appointments Unit if a hard copy application has been sent to facilitate timely collection arrangements. In the event of a postal strike please contact the Public Appointments Unit to arrange alternative delivery arrangements to a local DAERA Direct office.

To ensure equality of opportunity for all, applications will **not** be examined or assessed by the selection panel until after the closing deadline. It is the candidate’s responsibility to ensure that the application is valid and meets the eligibility requirements.

**Selection Process**

* The appointment process for the NIFHA Chair will be overseen by a selection panel. The selection panel will have an independent panel member who has been allocated by the office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland (CPANI) and has had no recent employment, advisory or other operational contact with DAERA. Under the Harbour Authority Act (Northern Ireland) 1973, appointments to the NIFHA board can **only** be made by a **Minister**. While a decision has been taken to progress the appointment process up to and including interview stage, the final stages of the appointment process will be dependent on the political and legislative framework that applies at that point. Candidates will be updated as appropriate.

DAERA’s Public Appointments Unit will conduct an initial application admissibility check. Applications will only be eligible for panel assessment if they are received within the deadline and all eligible questions are completed in line with the parameters set out in **Section 4** of the Candidate Information Document.

**Part A** and **Part B** of the Application Form should be completed in full.

**Part C**, the Equal Opportunity Monitoring Form is **not** compulsory and failure to complete this will not result in your application being withdrawn.

**Sift Process**

An **anonymised** sift of all applications will be carried out by the selection panel.

The selection panel will assess **Part B** of all application forms. Only information supplied under each of the criteria in the application form will be considered for the sift process. It is therefore essential that you provide in the application form information relevant to **each** of the essential criterion.

Only those applicants who are deemed to meet **all** ofthe essential criteria will be invited to interview. If a high number of applications are received, only the top scoring applicants will progress to the next stage, based on the quality of information received. Applicants who are sifted out will be informed of the decision at this stage.

**The eligibility sift is due to take place mid-June 2023.**

At sift stage the criteria will be marked out of a scoring framework of 1 to 5.

Each individual criterion needs to meet the satisfactory level, which is obtaining a minimum pass mark of **2** to be considered for the next stage of the selection process. Only those applicants assessed as meeting all the criteria will be eligible to proceed to the next stage of the selection process.

**Shortlisting**

If, following the sift exercise, the number of applicants meeting the essential criteria, are in the Department’s view, too many to be interviewed, shortlisting may be applied. Shortlisting in this competition will involve incrementally increasing the value of the pass mark in the following criterion:

* **Criterion 5: Leadership**

Only those applicants who are deemed to meet **all** of the essential criteria will be invited to interview, subject to any shortlisting as above.

If an applicant challenges a decision not to short-list them for interview the Department will refer the matter to the same selection panel that made the original decision not to short-list the applicant for interview.

**Feedback**

If an applicant does not pass the sift stage of the process, feedback will be provided on request. This will be based on the Panel’s consensus assessment of the application.

DAERA has a system in place to deal with queries, challenges, or complaints raised during the appointment process and to reassess decisions not to invite candidates for interview.

**Reassessment Process**

If an applicant is unhappy with the decision of the panel, in that they have not been invited to interview, they have the right to make a request in writing to have their case reviewed. The applicant must contact the Public Appointments Unit requesting a review within **10** days of receiving the outcome letter from the sift process.

The reassessment request will be shared with the panel in full and the panel are clearly advised **not** to take any additional information provided by the applicant into account, that the reassessment must be based **only** on the information provided by the applicant in their application form.

Applicants should contact the DAERA Public Appointments Unit by email at: **publicappointments@daera-ni.gov.uk** to request a reassessment.

**Interview Process**

Interviews will be carried out in person. Public Health Guidance and Regulations will be considered as necessary.

Requests for remote interviews will only be considered by the panel in exceptional circumstances or in response to public health guidance, however, **audio only** interviews will **not** be permitted. If the selection panel agrees that it is necessary to conduct an interview(s) remotely, these will be conducted via the video conferencing facility used by DAERA i.e., WebEx and candidates will be provided with a link by email to engage in the interview.

It is anticipated that interviews will be held week commencing **26 June and 3 July** at **Greenmount Campus, CAFRE, Antrim**. A valid form of photographic identity will need to be presented to the panel for **all** candidates attending for interview, either in person or remotely.

The interviews will be competence-based interviews which test candidates against the specific selection criteria for a particular appointment. Please see the enclosed Guide to Competency Based Interviewing **(Annex B).**

The application form gives the applicant an opportunity to provide examples relevant to the specific criteria. These, in turn, provide the interview panel with information and evidence about you, to gain a deeper understanding of your abilities.

The interview is a crucial part of the appointment process and thorough preparation is essential. You can prepare for interview by:

* Reading and thoroughly understanding the selection criteria.
* Reminding yourself of examples you used in your application form and being prepared to expand on these at interview, if asked.
* Rehearsing how you might relate your experiences to the interview panel, emphasising your own role and responsibilities.
* Not assuming that your qualities and experience will speak for themselves.

The interview panel is:

* **Mr Owen Lyttle, (Chair), Director of Marine and Fisheries, DAERA,**
* **Dr Kathryn Clarke, Director of Corporate Services, DAERA,**
* **Ms Bronagh McKeown, Independent Assessor appointed by the office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland CPANI.**

It is expected that the successful candidates will be notified by end of August so that the appointee can take up their position from week commencing **2 October 2023.**

**(Subject to adjustment and an incoming Minister or alternative arrangement).**

If unsuccessful at interview, candidates may request **Feedback** on their performance, this can be arranged by contacting the Public Appointments Unit by email at: **publicappointments@daera-ni-gov.uk**

Applicants will be able to claim expenses for travel at standard NI Civil Service rates for attendance at interview.

**Appointments**

Under the Harbour Authority Act (Northern Ireland) 1973, appointments to the NIFHA board can **only** be made by a **Minister**. While a decision has been taken to progress the appointment process up to and including interview stage, the final stages of the appointment process will be dependent on the political and legislative framework that applies at that point. Candidates will be updated as appropriate.

Candidates should be aware that information provided in the application form and at interview stage will be used to compile an “**Applicant Summary**”. The Applicant Summary will provide the Minister/Decision Maker with an objective analysis of each applicant’s skills and experience, based on the information provided during the appointment round and the selection panel’s assessment of that applicant. In addition, if they are successful, they will be asked to provide information for a short pen picture for inclusion in the press release to announce the appointment, in line with the Commissioner for Public Appointment’s Code of Practice. This will include:

* Their name.
* A brief summary of the skills and knowledge they bring to the role.
* Details of current appointments held and any related remuneration received.
* Details of any political activity declared in the last five years.

DAERA will add the following information to the press release:

* A short description of the body to which they have been appointed.
* The period of appointment; and
* Any remuneration associated with the appointment.

The Minister/Decision Maker may decide to create a **reserve list** to cover any unforeseen vacancies that arise within 12 months following the initial appointment.

**Disqualification**

Under the terms of the House of Commons Disqualification Act 1975 and the Northern Ireland Assembly Disqualification Act 1975, existing MPs or 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 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 or MLA.

If an individual holding a public appointment decides to stand for election as an MP 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 DAERA 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 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 or MLA, their election will be void.

**Section 5 - Probity and Conflicts of Interest**

The highest standards of propriety are expected of the NIFHA Chair. Public appointees must show a willingness to work under any administration irrespective of public opinion. Public appointees, including the NIFHA Chair, must adhere to the Seven Principles of conduct underpinning Public Life as established by the Nolan Committee. A copy is attached at **Annex A.**

Any private or business interests that a potential Chair might have, and that may be relevant to the work of the NIFHA must be declared in the application form. Examples of what might constitute a **conflict of interest** are given on the enclosed leaflet issued by the Commissioner for Public Appointments:

**<https://www.publicappointmentsni.org/publications/guidance-conflicts-interest-integrity-and-how-raise-complaint>**

You should declare in your application form any matter(s) which could cause or could be perceived to cause reputational damage to DAERA or the NIFHA.

Conflicts of interest are not necessarily a barrier to appointment, but both real and perceived conflicts, if viewed as relevant, will be explored by the selection panel.

Applicants will be tested on these issues during the selection stage of the appointment process.

A person appointed to the NIFHA Board may be removed from office if they: -

1. Have become bankrupt or made an arrangement with creditors or is the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or a debt relief restriction order.
2. Have been absent from more than **three**consecutive meetings otherwise than for a reason approved by DAERA.
3. Are otherwise unable or unfit to discharge the functions of a member or are unsuitable to continue as a member.
4. Have during the process leading to their appointment given false information or wilfully suppressed any material fact.

**Other Public Appointments**

Departments have a duty to satisfy themselves, as far as practicable, that those they appoint to the Boards of Public Bodies will carry out their duties in an effective manner. DAERA will therefore conduct a cross-departmental check on the probity and performance of those candidates who currently hold or have held public appointment roles. Similar information will be provided by this Department on request about all DAERA associated Board Members.

**The Two Terms Rule**

You should be aware that if you have already served **two** terms in the **same** position on the **same** board you cannot apply through open competition for a third term.

**Double Paying**

If you already work in the public sector you need to be aware that:

* You may be ineligible for consideration for this appointment if in the Department’s view there is a conflict of interest, the perception of a conflict or a potential conflict, between the appointment and their existing commitments.
* You will be asked to confirm that you have permission from your employer to take up an appointment if one is offered and your Department will 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, if you already work in the public sector, you may not be entitled to claim remuneration, including expenses, for this position if the duties are undertaken during a period of time for which you are already paid by the public sector. If in doubt you should contact your employer for advice.

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

**Access NI Checks**

If successful, you should be aware that you will be required to complete a Basic Access NI check. Further details in relation to this can be found in the Access NI Code of Practice at: [**https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/publications/accessni-code-practice**](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/publications/accessni-code-practice)

**Section 6 - Equal Opportunities Monitoring and Complaints Procedure**

**Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form**

The Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) is committed to equality of opportunity. The NICS monitors the appointment processes to help ensure that processes and procedures promote equality of opportunity as far as possible. Please complete the voluntary Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form - **Part C** of the application form.

The information provided in the Monitoring Form will be detached from the information on the application form and held separately. It will **not** be available to selection panels or to anyone else involved in the selection process. The information will be used for statistical purposes and analysed independently by staff in the **Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) i**n the strictest confidence.

Furthermore, some of the personal information you supply may be disclosed to other government departments, the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland, or anonymously in response to Assembly/Parliamentary Questions and other enquiries.

**Diversity in Public Appointments**

DAERA 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. All applications for appointment are considered strictly on merit. Since women, young people, people from black and ethnic minority backgrounds and people with disabilities are currently under-represented on the NIFHA, applications from these groups would be particularly welcome.

**Complaints Procedure**

If you wish to make a complaint about any aspect of this appointment process, you should direct your concerns in the first instance in writing to the Public Appointments Unit, DAERA at the address below:

**Public Appointments Unit**

**ALB Corporate Sponsor and Public Appointments Branch**

**Jubilee House**

**111 Ballykelly Road**

**Limavady**

**BT49 9HP**

**Or by email to:** **PublicAppointments@daera-ni.gov.uk**

**Telephone:** **028 7744 2025**

**Textphone: 1 8001 7744 2025**

If you are unhappy with DAERA’s response, you may wish to write to the office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments in Northern Ireland (see contact details below):

**Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments NI (CPANI)**

**Dundonald House**

**Annexe B, Stormont Estate**

**Upper Newtownards Road**

**Belfast, BT4 3SB**

**E-mail:** **info@publicappointmentsni.org**

**If you have a hearing difficulty you can contact DAERA via Text Relay.**

**Making a call from a text phone dial 18001 7744 2025**

**Making a call from a telephone dial 18002 7744 2025**

**Section 7 – DAERA’S PUBLIC APPOINTMENT’S PRIVACY NOTICE**

The Department takes data protection, freedom of information and environmental information issues seriously. It takes care to ensure that any personal information received from you is dealt with in a way which complies with the requirements of the UK General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act (2018). This means that any personal information you supply will be processed principally for the purpose for which it has been provided. It may also share this information with other bodies responsible for the audit or administration of public funds in order to prevent and detect crime. In addition, the Department may also use it for other legitimate purposes in line with DAERA’s Public Appointments Privacy Statement and with the UK General Data Protection Regulation, Data Protection Act 2018, Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

A full copy of the **DAERA’S Public Appointments Privacy Statement** can be found here: -

[**https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/daeras-public-appointments-privacy-notice**](https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/daeras-public-appointments-privacy-notice)

If you require this in hard copy, please contact DAERA’s Public Appointments Unit as per contact details on page 2.

**Annex A**

**The Seven Principles Underpinning Public Life**

In 1995, the Committee on Standards in Public Life defined seven principles, which should underpin the actions of all who serve the public in any way. These are:

**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**

**Guide to Competency Based Interviewing**

Competency Based Interviewing (CBI) is currently the most common method adopted for making public appointments in Northern Ireland. CBI is based on the premise that past performance is the best indicator of how someone will perform in a similar situation in the future. The CBI approach places the onus on you, the candidate, to provide evidence from your own experience of specific skills, competencies and behaviours at the required standard of performance. A **‘competence’** is simply a desirable skill or quality.

CBI provides the opportunity for you to answer questions about how you have reacted to and dealt with previous situations, the lessons you have learned and how you might handle similar situations in the future. CBI gives you an opportunity to illustrate your personality, skill set and individual competencies to the interviewer.

During the interview each competence is tested separately and you will be told which competence you are being questioned on. For each competence, the interviewer will begin by asking a **lead question**. These questions are seeking an **example** of a situation or task which led you to take a certain course of action. Lead questions are standardised and are therefore asked to each candidate in the same way. Some examples of lead questions are:

* *Describe a situation when you have worked as part of a team?*
* *Tell me about a time when you have been faced with a challenge in work?*

**Probing questions** may then be used to determine the course of action taken, what changes were created by those actions and the effects of those actions on others. Examples of probing questions are:

* *What did you actually do?*
* *What risks did you take?*
* *How did you plan it?*
* *What were the implications of….?*
* *What went well?*
* *What went badly?*
* *What were the outcomes?*
* *What would you do differently?*

When preparing for a CBI, a good approach is to read each competence that you will be questioned on, identify a relevant example and break it down under the following headings:

* Describe the **challenge** presented,
* Explain the **context** of that challenge,
* Outline the **action** taken and
* Describe the end **result**.

The competencies being tested are the essential criteria indicated in the application form.