

ABERDEEN HARBOUR BOARD

INFORMATION FOR PROSPECTIVE BOARD MEMBERS

1 Introduction

These notes provide information for applicants interested in serving as a part-time non-executive member of Aberdeen Harbour Board. The notes include an explanation of the role of Board members, an overview of the work of the port and the qualities sought in applicants. Paragraph 7 explains how to apply.

Unsuccessful candidates may also be considered for relevant appointments in subsequent years.

2 About the Appointment

The appointment is part-time, typically up to two days per month exclusive of time required for participation in an induction training programme. For 2012 the Board have agreed to schedule at least six meetings, although there may be occasions when additional meetings are required. Each Board meeting generally last around two hours and Board members are remunerated for their attendance. At present this is £9,660 per annum paid monthly in arrears and is subject to review annually.

3 About the Appointing Process

The Board consists of 12 members, comprising nine non-executive and three executive members. Non-executive members are appointed for a period of three years and may be eligible for reappointment for a further term subject to performance. Board members are expected to live and work in the North-east of Scotland and may not be a member of any other harbour authority.

All appointments are made after a process of interviewing and selection carried out by an appointing panel. The Board is committed to equality of opportunity, encouraging a diverse range of applicants, and to the principle of appointments on the basis of merit with openness and transparency of process reflecting "Nolan" procedures for public appointments and in accordance with the Guide to Good Governance for Trust Ports. As well as those who respond to the present advertisement the appointing panel may also consider names from other sources.

In making appointments the main purpose is to ensure that the Board continues to reflect a complementary range of qualities, skills and competencies, which will allow it to deliver its objectives positively and efficiently. It is therefore important that candidates demonstrate clearly, with examples, any specific knowledge, experience or abilities they consider would be of value to the Board. The skills and qualities being sought by the Board are described in Paragraph 6.

Board members are required to disclose any relevant financial and other interests; are expected to act faithfully and impartially in the best interests of the Board and will also be required to sign a declaration to that effect.

4 An Overview of the Port

Aberdeen Harbour is one of the main components in the economic and transport infrastructure of North-east Scotland. It is Europe's premier marine support centre for the offshore oil and gas industry and is the principal commercial port serving North-east Scotland with a range of national and international shipping links, including roll-on/roll-off ferry services to the Northern Isles of Orkney and Shetland, and Scandinavia. The port is also a popular destination for cruise vessels.

The port has over six kilometres of quays and covers an area of approximately 153 hectares of which 83 hectares are land.

In 2010 the port handled over 4.66 million tonnes of cargo and 7,467 vessel arrivals representing 24.23 million tonnes of shipping. The Board also has a strong financial position with turnover in 2010 of £22.64 million and a pre-tax profit of £1.145 million. All profits are reinvested in the port.

5 Trust Port Status

Aberdeen Harbour Board is a Trust Port authority. There are approximately 100 such port authorities in the UK, autonomous bodies that were created by local Acts of Parliament. Trust ports are not Government-owned and are not treated as part of the public sector.

All trust ports operate on broadly commercial lines, but are limited financially to operating from within their revenue, often supplemented by commercial loans up to borrowing limits set in their constitutions. They cannot raise venture capital, and any profits from their activities are reinvested in the port for the benefit of their stakeholders.

The powers of the Board and the constitution thereof are laid down in the Aberdeen Harbour Order Confirmation Act 1960, which provided for the transfer of the undertaking from the former Aberdeen Harbour Commissioners at the end of 1960. This has been amended and updated by subsequent Confirmation Acts and Revision Orders.

The harbour undertaking is vested in the Board as a corporate body, and the 1960 Act charges the Board as being responsible - "for the regulation and administration of the harbour undertaking". In effect, therefore, the Board is a statutory authority operating in a commercial environment.

The recorded history of Aberdeen Harbour commenced in 1136 AD, although the harbour existed before that time. As a consequence there has been much legislation affecting the port and harbour, which applies constraints not applicable in ordinary commercial undertakings. Generally these do not inhibit the workings of the Board.

6 Skills and Qualities Sought in Potential Board Members

The objective of the selection process is to ensure that the Board continues to have an appropriate balance of skills, competencies and experience to provide it with leadership and effective strategic direction. The Board should have:

- Specialist knowledge of subjects which are relevant to the port (e.g. financial, legal or operational);
- Interest in the organisation of the port without becoming too identified with it;
- Knowledge of relationships between the port and Central Government departments and the Scottish Executive;
- An understanding of the legal and statutory framework within which the port operates and the duties and obligations this places on the Board.

In order to achieve an appropriate balance of expertise on the Board candidates will be required to provide evidence of their professional or personal experience in one or more of the following areas;

- The trade and industry of the North east of Scotland, preferably with knowledge of the freight or maritime transport sector;
- The local property market, preferably with valuation or development experience;
- The Scottish legal sector.

Candidates will also need to demonstrate the following personal qualities:-

- An ability to formulate and discuss strategic subjects in a boardroom environment in a coherent and structured way;
- The ability to contribute effectively and impartially to group discussions involving a wide range of subject matter and people, including specialists and professionals, and
- A depth of management or specialist expertise without personal bias towards any particular sector of activity.

The Board is committed to incorporating the standards and objectives of the Guide to Good Governance for Trust Ports, which require the annual performance of Board members to be assessed. Details of the publication "Modernising Trust Ports – A Guide to Good Governance Edition II" can be viewed on the Department for Transport's website at www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/shippingports/ports/trust.

As ports are a devolved matter The Scottish Government are currently preparing their own guide to good governance. A draft document will probably be issued later in 2011 although it is not expected that the Scottish guidance will differ significantly from the English and Welsh version.

7 How to Apply

To apply, please complete and return the accompanying application form to the Board Secretary, Aberdeen Harbour Board, 16 Regent Quay, Aberdeen, AB11 5SS. Candidates should ensure that their application is received at the correct address by the closing date **(12.00 noon on Thursday 29th September 2011)**. Late applications will not be considered.

Candidates should set out reasons for wishing to be considered for appointment and what they consider are the qualities and skills that they would bring to the Board. Candidates should note that the appointing panel will only accept completed application forms and up to two accompanying information sheets on A4 paper.

Curriculum Vitae or other personal profile documents will not be accepted.

Candidates selected for interview will be asked to provide evidence of qualifications and will be required to provide details of two sources of references, which will be taken up.

Applications may be kept on file for future reference unless specifically requested not to do so.