

**COMMISSIONER FOR PUBLIC APPOINTMENTS'  
REPORT ON A SELECTION PANEL TO RECRUIT  
MEMBERS, NORTHERN IRELAND VETERANS ADVISORY AND PENSIONS  
COMMITTEE - IN CONFIDENCE**

This report describes the outcome of the public appointments process to select appointable candidates for the post of Member of the Northern Ireland Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committee (VAPC).

### **Role and Person Specification**

The VAPC members play a central role in promoting the interests and welfare of Veterans and their families. Members are expected to be involved in a wide-ranging agenda of issues relating to the functions of the committee set out above. Whilst knowledge of service life would be useful it is not necessary, what is most important is that the applicant should have a real commitment to supporting Veterans and their Families.

Successful candidates will demonstrate:

- an ability to contribute to a committee setting;
- good all round communication skills and be able to consider complex issues.
- an ability to look ahead and work with others to develop practical plans.
- some experience and knowledge of service pensions and/or compensation schemes in terms of policy impact.
- a willingness to become familiar with the Government's commitment to veterans as set out in the Armed Forces Covenant.

### **Process**

I chaired the selection panel throughout. The independent panel member was [REDACTED] technical innovator in computing, telephonics and cyberoptics. He has also served in the Army Reserves for over 20 years as an intelligence and reconnaissance officer and more recently has spent some time mentoring the next generation of technology entrepreneurs. I was satisfied that the panel was properly constituted to assess candidates impartially against the full breadth and depth of the requirements of the role.

The post does not attract remuneration and was advertised on the Public Appointments website as well as through ex-Service networks.

The outcome of the selection panel will now be forwarded for ratification to the Minister of State for Defence Personnel and Veterans via Veterans UK.

### **Sifting of applications**

No sift was carried out and the Panel was in agreement to proceed straight to interview. There were 9 applications, 8 from men and 1 from women.

Amongst the candidates there was previous Military experience and Welfare backgrounds with current serving and veterans. Civilian backgrounds included Committee and Board experience management and manufacturing experience in industry, Medical, legal (criminal law), banking and agriculture.

For each candidate we had an application form and CV giving evidence and examples of their ability to meet the criteria in the role.

## **Final Interviews**

The interviews were held on 01 May 2018. Candidates started the interview giving a short overview about themselves before outlining why they wished to apply to become a member of the Northern Ireland Veterans Advisory and Pensions Committee. Our questions covered the criteria outlined in the advertisement for the position and are included below for completeness.

- an ability to contribute to a committee setting;
- good all-round communication skills and be able to consider complex issues.
- an ability to look ahead and work with others to develop practical plans.
- some experience and knowledge of service pensions and/or compensation schemes in terms of policy impact.
- a willingness to become familiar with the Government's commitment to veterans as set out in the Armed Forces Covenant.

Taking account of performance at interview together with all the other evidence that had been obtained, the panel reached the following conclusions on each of the candidates.

**[REDACTED]**

**[REDACTED]** embodies lifelong learning and is a shining example of the system, bad points and good. He will, I think, work ceaselessly for the VAPC. Colin's very personal experience of appealing Vets UK decisions through the NI VAPC brings an absolutely vital perspective to the Committee. Additionally, he will help balance out an "Officer heavy" Committee.

**Appointable**

**[REDACTED]**

**[REDACTED]** interviewed well and would, I believe be a good contributor at Committee meetings due to his structured approach to his day job. Additionally, his service in both the reserves, Royal Irish and Police Service gets us in touch with a younger, more "current" veterans group. He will also make an excellent Committee Secretary and future potential Chairman.

**Appointable**

[REDACTED]

As a UDR Association Member with considerable service, as an NCO and, latterly a commissioned officer, ~~XXXXX~~ is, I would suggest of the type that would be hardb working "fit" for the work of the VAPC. His banking background would also aid the committee moving forward; other items he mentioned suggest he would have great empathy with fellow veterans.

**Appointable**

[REDACTED]

With his Medical background, Col. ~~XXXXXX~~ ill add both depth and breadth to the committeeP his "Green" connections will undoubtedly stand him and the VAPC well.

**Appointable**

[REDACTED]

~~XXXXXX~~ spoke well and his background in money and banking together with his years of RUC service will stand him and the Committee in very good stead.

**Appointable**

[REDACTED]

In person ~~XXXXXX~~ comes across as a thoughtful and caring individual, with an eye for detail b this is backed up in his application b and as someone who makes every effort to understand but in a nonb confrontational way.

**Appointable**

[REDACTED]

Engaging and considered, I found ~~XXXXXX~~ to be exactly the type who, if I was in need, would want to do her best for me, in any situation.

**Appointable**

[REDACTED]


With exemplary conduct in the Regular Army and the UDR, ~~XXXXXX~~ well positioned to advise veterans on life as a veteran and how to make the best of it. He will be a valuable asset.

**Appointable**

## **Conclusion**

I am satisfied that this competition met the requirements of the Commissioner for Public Appointments' Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies.  
I was grateful for the administrative support provided by Kerry Wright throughout the process.

**I would be grateful if Sereine Bara would ensure that the Commissioner for Public Appointments is told as soon as possible when the Minister has chosen their candidates for appointment.**

Signed:  (by email) Kingsley Donaldson (Panel Chair)

Date: 14th August 2018