

LONDONDERRY PORT

AND

HARBOUR COMMISSIONERS

ACCESS AND COMMUNICATION POLICY

December 2010



Londonderry Port and Harbour Commissioners

Table of Contents

1. A brief history of Londonderry Port.
2. Access Policy
 - a. Main aim of the policy.
 - b. Planned outcomes.
 - c. Access Policy
 - d. How will the policy aims be delivered.
 - e. Information to be produced.
 - f. Services and resources.
 - g. Monitor and review cycle.
3. Communication Policy
 - a. Main aim of the policy.
 - b. Planned outcomes.
 - c. How will the policy aims be delivered.
 - d. Monitor and review cycle.
4. Conclusions
5. Appendices



1. A brief history of Londonderry Port

Londonderry Port is a Public Trust Port established by act of parliament in 1854. The Port is operated by a Board of Commissioners who is appointed by the Minister for Regional Development. The current Board is made up of three local councillors, five independent members of the business or maritime community and the Chief Executive. The full list of the current Commissioners is included in Appendix 1. The Commissioners are appointed for a four year term with the option to remain for a further four years, two terms being the maximum that a Commissioner can serve.

The authority of the Port to operate stems from a series of acts of parliament dating back to 1854 with the most recent Harbour Order came into effect in 2002. The main powers of the Commissioners are clearly defined as having the power to manage, maintain and administer the harbour, to buy and sell land, and there is also a fiduciary duty to maintain the shipping channel.

The port assets are owned by the Commissioners in perpetuity on behalf of the state. This ensures that the asset of the Port remains in public ownership. However, the Port does not receive any public money and must act commercially to fund its operations. Consequently the Port must earn a sufficient return on its assets to fund its activities now and into the future.

In relation to our stakeholders, the Port has a wide variety of interest groups with which it interacts on a regular basis. These include:-

- Customers – These are the regular port users who pay for the services provided. These can be a mixture of long term customers or short term one off type cargoes. The Port will address each of their needs individually and ensure that the discharge or loading of their cargoes runs as smoothly as possible.
- Employees – The Port currently employ c50 people directly in areas of the business including marine operations, crane driving, stevedoring operations, shed management and administration.
- Local Community – The Port meets regularly with the local community groups to ensure that any concerns can be addressed or Port development plans can be shared. This ensures that the Port actively tries to be a better neighbour where it interfaces with local residential areas.



- Government – As the Port reports to the Minister for regional Development through the department, it is important that close links are maintained to ensure the smooth operation of the Port.

The purpose of having a formal access and communication policy is to ensure that there is a clear, unambiguous policy for accessing port information and communicating between the Port and its stakeholders. As the Port has a diverse set of stakeholders ranging from the commercial orientated port users to the public sector, it is vital that each group can access the Port appropriately. As a Public Trust Port there is an onus on the Commissioners to be mindful of our public responsibilities. On the other hand our Port Users are concerned with keeping charges to a minimum and future investment. This draft policy sets out to address the issue of access and communication for all of our stakeholders.



2. Access Policy

a. Main aim of the policy

The main aim of the policy is to formalise the access arrangements which addresses the needs of all of our stakeholders to obtain information from the Port. The Policy will set out the various services available and information provided. It will also signpost stakeholders where they can go to get further information.

b. Planned outcomes

The main planned outcomes are as follows:-

- To provide a clear understandable policy for all our stakeholders with regard to accessing information from the Port.
- To better understand how the Port and the various stakeholder groups interface.
- To highlight the current range of services and information available.
- To ensure that the Port continually reviews its access arrangements and sets out on a path of constant improvement.
- To explain what is meant by access in the context of a Public Trust Port.
- To make it easier for our stakeholders to access information regarding the port.

c. Access Policy

The Commissioners aim to provide access to as much information as possible to our stakeholders in an agreed format within the commercial context of running a Trust Port. The Commissioners will consider all requests for access to information particularly in alternative formats on their own merits. This policy is separate from the Freedom of Information policy.

d. How will the policy aims be delivered

The policy will be widely circulated to all of our stakeholders and will be posted on the Port's website, www.londonderryport.com, which is regularly updated. However, this will be balanced at all times with the commercial nature of our operations and the need to achieve value for money for the port users.

e. Londonderry Port and Harbour Commissioners information

The information currently made publically available is as follows:-

- The Annual Report and Accounts – The annual report from the Chairman and Chief Executive on behalf of the Board and the financial statements for the previous year.
- The Schedule of Published Rates – The agreed published rates for the port's services. These charges are a guide to the cost of using the Port.



- Web Site – www.londonderryport.com. This site was revised last year and is regularly reviewed with regard to its content.
- Port Marine Safety Code – There is a statutory obligation to produce a Port Marine Safety Code which governs the safe system of work for all marine operations.
- Emergency Response Plan – This is also a statutory obligation to produce and emergency plan for the Port in the event of a major incident.
- Oil Pollution Plan – This procedure covers the steps needed to be taken in the event of an oil spill on Lough Foyle.
- Complaints Procedure – This procedure sets out the process by which a formal complaint can be made to the Commissioners regarding our operations.
- Freedom of Information Policy.
- Whistleblower Policy.
- Section 75 Annual Reviews.
- Equality and Disability Plans.
- Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Policy.

The annual report and accounts is published every year following an Annual General Meeting which is publically advertised and open to members of the public. The publications are all reproduced on the website and can be downloaded.

The publications can be made available in alternative formats but with due regard to the commercial cost of doing so balanced against the public interest. In the first instance alternative formats will be reproduced as a PDF file and posted on our web site. If this is deemed to be unsatisfactory then consideration will be given to printing a document. Alternative formats could include Braille, audiotape, large print or alternative languages such as Irish or Ulster Scots. The list is not intended to be exhaustive and any request will be considered carefully.



f. Services and Resources

If information is required a request should be sent to:-

Company Secretary
Port Road
Lisahally
Co Londonderry BT47 6FL

Tel 02871 860 555
Fax 02871 861 168
E-mail info@londonderryport.com

All requests for information will be acknowledged within ten working days of receipt. All requests will then be considered and a full reply will be sent within four weeks. A full response will either include the information requested in an agreed format or explain the Commissioners decision to withhold the information. If an alternative format has been requested this will be either agreed and reproduced or refused with an explanation for the decision. Any decision can then be appealed by contacting:-

Chief Executive
Port Road
Lisahally
Co Londonderry BT47 6FL

Tel 02871 860 555
Fax 02871 861 168
E-mail info@londonderryport.com

g. Monitor and Review Cycles

The Commissioners are committed to continuously improving their policies and procedures. To this end this policy will be reviewed each year to ensure that best practice is followed at all times and that any lessons learned during the year are incorporated into the document.



3. Communication Policy

a. Main Aim of the Policy

The main aim of the policy is to ensure that the Port communicates effectively and efficiently with all of its stakeholders on an appropriate level. The communication should take many different forms and be targeted to ensure each stakeholder grouping is properly informed.

b. Planned Outcomes

The main planned outcomes are as follows:-

- To highlight through the media the Port's corporate roles and responsibilities.
- To set clear objectives and targets regarding our communications strategy.
- To use the Port's existing relations and networks to promote key messages with regard to branding and profiling.
- To continue to promote our corporate objectives through communication of the relevant policies such as Corporate Social Responsibility.
- Use alternative media sources when appropriate or as required.
- To establish a public relations strategy.

c. How will the policy aims be delivered.

The policy aims and outcomes will be delivered on a number of levels depending on the stakeholder group. The planned delivery will be as follows:-

Stakeholder	Communication Strategy	Target
Port Users	Regular face to face meetings Publication of the Annual Report	At least twice per annum By June each year
Employees	Regular updates	Newsletter and meetings Open door policy
Government	Regular updates	Bi-annual ministerial meeting Regular discussions with DRD Officials
Local Community	PR strategy Community group meetings	Target local media press coverage Hold bi-annual update meetings



d. Monitor and review cycle

The Commissioners are committed to continuously improving their policies and procedures. To this end this policy will be reviewed each year to ensure that best practice is followed at all times and that any lessons learned during the year are incorporated into the document.

DRAFT



4. Conclusions

The Londonderry Port and Harbour Commissioners is a Public Trust Port and as such has two separate but equally important duties. One is to act commercially to ensure that the Port is a viable commercial enterprise now and into the future. The other is a public sector duty as public body defined by legislation. The purpose of this policy is to outline how our stakeholders can access relevant information from the Port and also how information will be communicated from the Port to the various interested parties.

The Commissioners are committed to ensuring that all our stakeholders are properly informed and no one grouping is disadvantaged. To this end the Port will constantly review this policy to ensure that it is up to date and fit for purpose at all times.



5. Appendices

- Harbour Commissioners

DRAFT





1. Mr Garvan O'Doherty - Chairman

Has been a Harbour Commissioner since 1998 and became the Chairman of the Board in 2006. He has been reappointed by the Minister for Regional Development for a new term. Also Chairs the Pension and Remuneration Committee. Is the CEO of the Garvan O'Doherty Group which is involved in the property and hospitality sectors throughout the UK and Ireland.



2. Mr Brian McGrath – Chief Executive/ Commissioner

Was appointed Chief Executive and Harbour Commissioner in March 2003 and is the only full time executive board appointment. Became a Chartered Director in 2007 and is a Council member of Londonderry Chamber of Commerce and a Council member of the British Ports Association.





3. Mr Seamus Bovaird

Became a Harbour Commissioner in February 2004. A Master Mariner but now retired, is a self-employed marine surveyor and part time lecturer on marine studies. Also works for the Marine Casualty Investigation Board. Acts as the board representative on the Port Safety Committee.



4. Mrs Mary Bradley

Has been a Harbour Commissioner since February 2002 as one of three nominations from Derry City Council. Is a member of the SDLP and has been a local councillor for 22 years. Is a member of the NI Assembly and sits on the WELB. Is a member of the Pension and Remuneration Committee.





5. Mr Roy Devine

Was appointed a Harbour Commissioner in 2007. Is a Non-Executive Director of Opt2Vote Ltd and acting Finance Director of Biomass CHP Ltd. Is Chairman of FOSEC and is a Chartered Director. Is the Chairman of the Audit Committee and a member of the Pension and Remuneration Committee.



6. Ms Lynn Fleming

Has been a board member since September 2005 as one of the three nominees from Derry City Council. Is a member of Sinn Fein, a former Mayor and represents the Waterside area of the city. Is a member of the Audit Committee.





7. Mr John Gilliland

Has been a Board member since February 2004. Is the Managing Partner of Brook Hall Estate and the Chairman of Rural Generation Ltd. Other board positions include the Chairman of the Rural Climate Change Forum for DEFRA, a Non-Executive Director of the Scottish Agricultural College and a member of the NI Economic Forum.



8. Mr Joe McKeever

Has been a Harbour Commissioners since February 2007. Is a Board Member of the Probation Board for NI and a part time court official. Is a member of the Audit Committee and the Pension and Remuneration Committee.

