



**Independent Examination  
Belfast City Council Local  
Development Plan: Plan  
Strategy**

**COMMISSIONERS**  
Rosemary Daly BSc MSc DipTP MRTPI  
Julie de-Courcey BSc MSc LLB MRTPI

**PROGRAMME OFFICER**  
James Bickerstaff  
Park House  
87/91 Great Victoria Street  
Belfast  
BT2 7AG

**REFERENCE**  
LDP2019/BCC/PS

**CONTACT**  
028 9089 3919  
BCC.LDP@pacni.gov.uk

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## **CONFIRMATION OF ATTENDANCE AT ORAL HEARING SESSIONS**

Dear Sir or Madam

Belfast City Council have responded to the Commission's letter of the 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2020. A copy of this letter and their response of 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020 can be found on our website at ([www.pacni.gov.uk/node/120/](http://www.pacni.gov.uk/node/120/)). The independent examination is moving to the pre-hearing stage.

The ongoing implications of the Covid-19 global pandemic have altered the way in which the Commissioners had expected to conduct the Independent Examination as outlined in our procedures document. ([Procedures for Independent Examination of Local Development Plans](#)) In the interests of moving forward we are making plans to accommodate the opening sessions of the Independent Examination (IE) on a remote basis. As time progresses and regulations/guidance change we may be able to accommodate (IE) sessions in person. How the sessions will be accommodated will be a matter for the appointed Commissioners.

The programme of hearing sessions and associated guidance notes will be published on our website [www.pacni.gov.uk](http://www.pacni.gov.uk) in due course. A specific guidance document will be published for how the remote hearing sessions for the IE will operate. In the interim you can refer to our remote hearings protocol which has been prepared for appeal cases ([PACWAC Covid-19 Remote Hearings Protocol](#))

You made representations to Belfast City Council regarding the soundness of the Plan Strategy document and indicated that you wish to take part in the public hearing sessions. I am writing to enquire if you still wish to participate in them or if you want to rely on your written representation to the Council. The Commissioners will afford equal weight to oral and written evidence.

**Please confirm in writing (preferably via email) whether you wish to participate, for each of your clients, in the public hearing session or not. Please note that if confirmation of your intention to attend the oral hearing session (in whatever form) is not provided before 4pm on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020 the Commission will proceed on the basis that you do not wish to participate in the public hearing sessions.**

During the examination process the Commission will regularly update our website and **use email as our primary means of contact**. Please regularly check the website to keep up to date with the latest developments. **If you need to update the email address we hold for you, please contact me directly.**

If you have any questions about the content of this email, please do not hesitate to contact me using the email address or telephone number above.

Yours faithfully

*James Bickerstaff*

**James Bickerstaff  
Programme Officer**

**Please note** that correspondence issued and received by the Commission in relation to the Independent Examination will be published on our website.

**Data Protection**

Our lawful basis for processing personal information is provided for under Article 6(e) of the GDPR. The Planning Appeals Commission processes personal data as this is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest and/or for the Commission to comply with legislation underpinning our functions. The main legislation underpinning our functions is the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011, and details of all relevant legislation can be found on our website [www.pacni.gov.uk](http://www.pacni.gov.uk).

Our Privacy Notice and more information about our Data Protection and Freedom of Information Policy are available on our website.