

Mr Daithi McKay
Chairperson
Committee for Finance and Personnel
Northern Ireland Assembly
Room 419
Parliament Buildings
BELFAST
BT4 3XX

11 December 2012

Dear Mr McKay


Thank you for your letter of 28th November 2012.

You are of course correct when you write that responsibility for the Civil Service Commissioners is a reserved matter. In those circumstances you will understand that it may be more appropriate for you to seek the views of the Northern Ireland Office in relation to the content of the Civil Service (Special Advisers) Bill. However, wishing to be as helpful as possible, I would add that, whilst not seeking to comment on the Bill in general, it is worthy of note that its provisions do not appear to impact on the work of Commissioners.

With regard to your request for clarification in relation to the Employers' Guidance on Recruiting People with Conflict-Related Convictions, the position is that Commissioners considered this matter when drawing up the Revised Recruitment Code. They took the view, following discussion that the wording was sufficiently inclusive to deal with the Guidance in relation to this situation. In stating this it is, of course, important to remember that the appointment of Special Advisers is outside the terms of the Recruitment Code by virtue of the provisions of Article 3(2) and (3) of the Civil Service Commissioners (Northern Ireland) Order 1999.

I hope that this response has been helpful.

Yours sincerely



BRIAN ROWNTREE, CBE
Chairperson

Cc Marion Matchett
Raymond Mullan
Vilma Patterson
Jim Scholes
Heather Stevens
Bernie Gray
Julian King, NIO