

Appointment at harbour



Peter Fitzsimmons
10W15N105

Regional Development Minister, Conor Murphy has announced the appointment of local businessman, Peter Fitzsimmons, to the board of Warrenpoint Harbour Authority.

The appointment is for a four year period ending on March 31, 2014.

"Peter Fitzsimmons brings to the board of Warrenpoint Harbour Authority a wealth of commercial experience, especially in sales and marketing," said Mr Murphy.

"The public competition to recruit new board members attracted a range of highly skilled candidates. I am extremely grateful for all those who expressed an interest in serving the

local community in this way.

"The port at Warrenpoint is a key economic gateway to the North of Ireland. I am confident that, under the leadership of the chairman, Jim Stewart, the Harbour Authority will provide the strategic direction necessary to steer the port through the current challenging trading environment. I am sure that Mr Fitzsimmons will make a significant contribution to the efficient management of the port," added the minister.

Warrenpoint Harbour Authority has responsibility, under a series of Harbour Acts and Orders, for

improving, maintaining and managing the harbour. Mr Fitzsimmons joins the representatives of Newry and Mourne District Council, councillors Josephine O'Hare, Michael Ruane and William Burns. Mr Peter Conway, the port's CEO, will continue to serve as a board member in an ex-officio capacity, as will the finance director Kieran Grant. The remaining members of the Board are: Kieran Campbell, Bonnie Horsman, Bill Luney and Gerard McGivern.

The process of reconstituting the Board was carried out by means of an open, public competition in accordance with the Commissioner for Public

Appointments Northern Ireland (CPANI) Monitored Kitemark Scheme.

Two further vacancies which will arise in October will be filled from this competition.

Mr Fitzsimmons has confirmed that he has not undertaken any political activity within the last five years. In a 35 year career from 1972 to 2006, with multi-national manufacturing company, SCA Packaging Limited, Mr Fitzsimmons progressed through sales and marketing disciplines to become the sales and marketing director for UK and Ireland and then general manager of the Southern Region of the company which had a turnover of £370million.

He currently works in Urban Forest Limited Newry and Alleclear Environmental, Newry as operations director.

He has been chairman of NI-CO (Northern Ireland - Cooperation Overseas) Limited since 2007 and is currently a voluntary Board member of Newry and Mourne Enterprise Agency, since 1991. Other positions held in the past include, Board Member of Northern Ireland Business Education Partnership from 1995 to 1998 and chairman of Business in the Community - Newry Group from 1993 to 1997.

Petrol Prices grow to all time high

It has been revealed by analysts that the price of unleaded petrol has reached an all time high.

According to Experian Catalist, a leading source of information on petrol and retail forecourts, the rate, which is approximately 120p per litre, has destroyed the previous high price set two years ago.

Along with this there is also a 3p fuel duty to be phased in gradually, as part of the Budget, with a third of this already implemented.

Stemming from the weakened status of the pound, fuel prices have steadily increased especially in oil and petrol and it is only set to worsen with a further 1p rise this October followed by a 0.76p increase in January 2011

Galloping business success

While computer games and fancy phones were at the top of most kids' 2009 Santa letters, it was a classic toy that rocked the wish-list charts thanks to a Co Down entrepreneur.

In October last year, Kilkeel man Michael Campbell enrolled in Invest Northern Ireland's Go for it programme to help him set up a business making outdoor rocking horses. Less than two months later his order book was full as parents scrambled to buy the nostalgic toy for their children at Christmas.

And Michael can't quite believe the galloping success his business has enjoyed in such a small space of time.

"It has all happened very quickly, one minute I was researching Invest NI, the next I was working a seven day week to keep up with the orders in the run-up to Christmas," said Michael.

Invest NI's Go for it programme helps people to turn their business ideas into reality. A business adviser will assess the needs of the potential entrepreneur and then help in the development and delivery of a comprehensive support package.

Michael was in full time employment when he decided to set up his own business and fill what he saw as a gap in the market.

"It was a bit nerve-wracking but I felt it was the right time to do it. I got a lot of help and support from Invest NI, particularly with regard to devising my business plan and



Kilkeel man Michael Campbell is having a galloping business success. 1015N103

setting up the website. It was while on holiday in the south of Ireland that Michael got his inspiration to start building the rocking horses.

"My original idea was to build and sell garden sheds, which I still plan to do. However, after seeing this wooden rocking horse in a children's play area, I realised that there weren't many people making them in Northern Ireland," he added.

Each of Michael's beautifully handmade horses is constructed with timber, which is preserved for outdoor use, and has a unique face with life-size rubber ears and a saddle made of real leather. He has also ensured the horses meet standards regarding child safety.

The rocking horses can also be dismantled and placed in the boot of a car or even in a cupboard. This design feature has also been good

for business as it has allowed him to sell the rocking horses on Ebay and Gumtree websites, sending them to customers via post.

Michael says that as soon as customers see the rocking horses their eyes light up and they just want to buy one.

"They are made for children aged four to 12 years-old, but adults seem to be fascinated with them too and always have to have a go on

them," he said. "They are extremely strong and can even hold the weight of an average man added.

Michael has enjoyed every minute of his new business, so far and he now plans to use Invest NI's Growth Program he can exploit the growing market for his product in areas outside Northern Ireland.