

APPOINTMENTS IN CONFIDENCE



PRIME MINISTER

ABOLITION: RESIDUARY BODIES

I wrote to you on 10 December about the then Chairman of the Merseyside Residuary Body, Leslie Pocock, whose leadership was not proving successful and whom I proposed to replace. My preferred candidate for the appointment at that time was Peter Hadfield, the Chairman of the Greater Manchester Residuary Body, whom I envisaged as running both RBs in parallel. You were content for this appointment to go ahead.

Mr Pocock resigned on 24 December. Since then, a new candidate for the Chairmanship has become available: Norman Brodrick, who is currently the Deputy Chairman.

Mr Brodrick was appointed to the Residuary Body at its inception on 4 September 1985. He is 67 and formally the Bank of England's agent in the North West. He was appointed Deputy Chairman on 20 December to run the Residuary Body in the interregnum, and has already demonstrated determination to make up for lost time in progressing the RB's major tasks. His decision to allow himself to be considered a candidate for the Chairmanship has been made during this recent period.

His appointment, instead of Mr Hadfield, would have three advantages. First, it would have the unanimous support of the MRB Board, as that of any other candidate would not; a recent letter to me, signed by all five of Mr Brodrick's colleagues, make clear their commitment to his candidacy. Secondly, it would have local political acceptability, as the appointment of a Merseysider. Thirdly, it would eliminate, at a crucially short period in the run up to abolition, the time lost to any newcomer's 'learning curve'.

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On all these grounds I believe that it would now be right to appoint Mr Brodrick, instead of Mr Hadfield, to the MRB Chairmanship. I should be grateful for your agreement to this revised proposal.

I am copying this letter to the Chief Whip and to Sir Robert Armstrong.

RTA's office in content

Approved by the Secretary of State and signed in his absence.

JH Leonard.

PS.

K B

13 January 1986

LOCAL GOVT
RELATIONS
PT 29





10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

16 January 1986

Dear Mr Maclean,

ABOLITION: RESIDUARY BODIES

The Prime Minister has seen your Secretary of State's minute of 13 January. She is content that Mr. Brodrick should be appointed to the Chairmanship of the Merseyside Residuary Body.

I am copying this letter to Murdo Maclean (Chief Whips Office) and to Michael Stark (Cabinet Office).

Yours sincerely,

J. Auld (Miss)

pp (Mark Addison)

Robin Young, Esq.,
Department of the Environment.

PRIME MINISTER

The Secretary of State for Environment is proposing that Mr Pocock, who has now resigned as Chairman of the Merseyside Residuary Body, should be succeeded by Mr Brodrick rather than by Mr Hadfield. You had earlier approved his recommendation that Mr Hadfield should succeed Mr Pocock.

The Secretary of State's minute, attached, sets out his reasons for the change of mind. I understand that the key point was that the other members of the Merseyside Residuary Body Board are very keen indeed that Brodrick should take on the Chairmanship. Indeed there is some question that they might not be willing to continue to sit on the Board unless Mr Brodrick were appointed. (I understand that they do not, however, know that Mr Hadfield was being considered.)

Agree that Mr Brodrick should be the new Chairman of the Merseyside Residuary Body?

MUA

MARK ADDISON
15 January 1986

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Les mt

CAJABD



10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

12 December 1985

ABOLITION: RESIDUARY BODIES

The Prime Minister has seen your Secretary of State's minute of 10 December proposing that Mr. Pocock should be replaced as Chairman of the Merseyside Residuary Body by Mr. Peter Hadfield. The Prime Minister has agreed, providing your Secretary of State has the necessary powers - the Prime Minister would be concerned about the difficulties caused if Mr. Pocock refused to go.

You have since told me that there are no formal powers which would enable Mr. Pocock easily to be dismissed, but that there are sufficient informal pressures available, and on this basis I think the Prime Minister would accept that her proviso is satisfied.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Murdo Maclean (Chief Whip's Office) and Michael Stark (Cabinet Office).

(David Norgrove)

Robin Young, Esq.,
Department of the Environment.

LB



PRIME MINISTER

ABOLITION: RESIDUARY BODIES

Providing you have the necessary powers - but what happens if Mr Pocock refuses to go? not

DN - Jeyar, lib. Agree that Pocock should be replaced by Hadfield? DR 11/12

In general, the Residuary Bodies set up under the Local Government Act 1985 are making good progress in preparing for abolition. They are working closely with successor authorities, and are receiving reasonable co-operation from the abolition authorities themselves.

The exception is Merseyside. There is very little co-operation there between the county and the districts, and no consensus among the districts themselves. The problems that this causes are intractable; but I have regretfully come to the conclusion that they are being exacerbated by the personality and approach of the Chairman of the Residuary Body, Leslie Pocock (whose appointment you approved on 16 July). He was recommended to us as a very hard worker, who has been a very strong and effective Health Authority Chairman; but unfortunately he has not stood up well to the pressures surrounding the implementation of abolition.

Terms of appointment?

In his discussions with the district councils - and in particular the two Conservative-controlled districts, Sefton and Wirral - Mr Pocock is giving the impression that it is the Residuary Body's business to preserve and enhance Merseyside County Council (MCC) services, rather than leaving the decisions in the hands of the Districts themselves. The feeling that the RB could become a re-creation of the county councils is reinforced by their decision to offer dual appointments to the MCC's Chief Executive and four of his Chief Officers. All this is leading to a considerable loss of confidence in the Residuary Body's ability and will to accept the limited role envisaged by the Act and to wind itself up quickly.

I have therefore concluded that a fresh start is needed, and that Mr Pocock should be asked to go now. As Patrick Jenkin observed when he sought agreement to Mr Pocock's appointment, there is

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a dearth of good candidates in Merseyside. However, we have available an excellent replacement for Mr Pocock in the Chairman of the Greater Manchester RB, Mr Peter Hadfield; and I see great advantage in appointing him to run the Merseyside body also, as he would be well placed to make an impact very quickly. This is important as time is now short, not least for sorting out the staffing requirements for the services which the RB does need to take over.

Mr Hadfield, whose appointment to the Greater Manchester RB you also agreed on 16 July, is a Director (and retired Managing Director) of Bass, North West, and a Member of the Regional Boards of Lloyds Bank and the CBI. He has done a very good job in getting the Greater Manchester Body off on the right tracks, he lives within a reasonable distance of Liverpool, and I am confident he would be able and willing to run both Residuary Bodies.

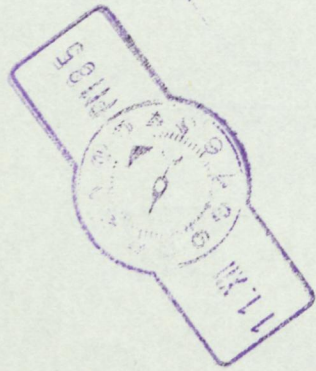
I should be grateful for your agreement as soon as possible to my appointing Mr Hadfield in place of Mr Pocock.

I am copying this letter to the Chief Whip and to Sir Robert Armstong.

k. b.

K B

10 December 1985



COMMUNICATIONS