



Annual Report and Financial Statements Parades Commission for Northern Ireland for the year ended 31 March 2008

Together with the Report of the
Comptroller and Auditor General thereon

Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998

Laid before each House of Parliament
in accordance with the Public Processions (Northern Ireland)
Act 1998 Schedule 1, paragraphs 12 and 13

24th March 2009

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Chairman's Report

This is the tenth Annual Report for the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland and covers the period April 2007 to March 2008.

Perhaps the publication of the 10th Annual Report, signalling a decade of activity from the Parades Commission, could be viewed as some kind of landmark. It may be open to question whether those who established the Parades Commission in 1998 envisaged that the body would still be in place in 2008 and still making the decisions on contentious parades. However, we are here and for as long as the political system dictates that a Parades Commission is required to adjudicate on parades, to facilitate and promote dialogue and education around parades, then the seven people who currently make up the Parades Commission under my Chairmanship remain determined to contribute in a positive way to the development of a more stable society in Northern Ireland.

The reality, thankfully, is that in the course of the last ten years parading as a contentious issue has slipped down the Northern Ireland agenda. Along the way, there have been bumps on the road to progress, most notably in Autumn 2005, but since that time progress has been significant in a number of localised disputes and in Northern Ireland as a whole.

Of course some serious problems still remain around the question of parading. The lead parading organisation, the Orange Order, still has an official policy of not engaging with the Parades Commission - the very body set up by the UK Parliament to handle parades. In too many cases those wishing to parade and the people who live close to the parade routes are not involved in a direct or meaningful dialogue, and that fosters a lack of understanding and acceptance

throughout the community. A significant number of parades still attract regular protests and counter protests. These issues amount to a blockade on progress and signal that when it comes to parading Northern Ireland still has some distance to travel in reaching a final resolution of these emotive and deep-rooted problems.

However, there is reason to be optimistic about the future of the parading question. The period covered by this Annual Report was characterised by further progress in areas which had previously witnessed serious civil disturbances. The marching season in 2007 was the first in which the army was not deployed to assist the police in their handling of contentious parades. This was the first time that had happened in decades. It is also the case that more people are now speaking to each other, and to the Commission, than have done in previous years. Last year there were some high profile success stories including in parts of Belfast where marches were accommodated without serious disturbance. Following the 12th of July parades last year the Commission noted that in instances where dialogue had not directly resulted in agreed accommodation between residents and parading bodies, "parades and protests has been managed in a way which ensured that peace was maintained on the streets." Within this report the volume of parades which took place between April 2007 and March 2008 is set out in detail alongside figures which show the number of contentious parades and associated restrictions where they applied. While the volume of parades has stayed largely constant (the year ended March 2007 involved 3,911 parades





“the next and most important piece of the parading jigsaw is dialogue between those who seek to express their culture through parading and those who object to the manner of this expression.”

compared with 3,849 in the period covered by this Report), the number of contentious parades has fallen slightly. However small the drop in figures (from 267 to 250), it is nevertheless a step in the right direction.

There has also been a series of more confidential dialogue and mediation processes which have been quietly effective in resolving outstanding parading issues. All of these initiatives have been organised, facilitated, or simply supported by the Parades Commission to one degree or another. And we are not settling for what has been achieved so far. We will continue to work for as long as we are here to support dialogue and mediation and to reach out to all of those involved in the parading issue.

The public face of the Parades Commission is represented by the seven people who make up the Commission. As a body we represent a cross section of the wider community in Northern

Ireland. Five of us, Joe Hendron, Anne Monaghan, Alison Scott McKinley, Vilma Patterson and I, have been in this role since January 2006, and we have been joined in the intervening period by Kelly Andrews and Rena Shepherd. The collective will to resolve parading disputes and the huge amounts of time and energy which we as a Commission dedicate to this pursuit is underpinned by a meticulous and unwavering support from a number of sources. The Secretariat maintains the day-to-day operation of the Commission, and in many ways is the 'permanent' structure underlying the Commissioners. In turn the Secretariat and the Commission is supported by a team of Authorised Officers whose role is to represent the Commission on the ground, to liaise between the parading protagonists and bring a considered and up to

date view of the local situation to the Commission. Each contentious parade is also monitored by a voluntary team of independent monitors who attend parades and protests and report back to the Commission. This process ensures that the Commission has full, detailed and independent reports of what actually takes place at parades.

The Parades Commission relies on the efforts of all those named above and I wish to publicly and sincerely acknowledge their efforts.

MR ROGER POOLE

Chair

Parades Commission for Northern Ireland

Handwritten signature of Roger Poole in black ink.



Foreword

FINANCIAL STATEMENT – ACCOUNTS DIRECTION

Under paragraph 12(1) of Schedule 1 to the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998, as amended by the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 (Accounts and Audit) Order 1998, the Commission is required to:

- (a) keep proper accounts and proper records in relation to the accounts; and
- (b) prepare a statement of accounts in respect of each financial year of the Commission.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with a direction issued by the Northern Ireland Office under the 1998 Act. The accounts incorporate an income & expenditure account, balance sheet and cash flow statement.

MISCELLANEOUS DISCLOSURES EVENTS AFTER THE BALANCE SHEET DATE

In January 2008 the House of Lords ruled that the appointments of Mr David Burrows and Mr Donald MacKay by the former Secretary of State were unlawful. Mr Burrows resigned from the Parades Commission with effect from 30 January 2008 and was replaced by Mrs Rena Shepherd with effect from 19 May 2008. Mr MacKay was no longer a Commissioner. The Annual Report and Accounts were authorized to be issued and laid in the Houses of Parliament on 24 March 2009. There were no other events which required disclosure or adjustment of the Accounts.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

The Commission will continue through dialogue to encourage local communities

to resolve disagreements about parades and to find a mutually acceptable resolution.

During the forthcoming year the Commission will continue to raise awareness of parading issues.

The Commission has instituted a review of the procedures under which it operates and will be making any recommendations for change to the Secretary of State.

FIXED ASSETS

Details of the movement of fixed assets are detailed in note 6 to the accounts.

FUNDING

The Commission is financed by a budget allocated by the Secretary of State from the Northern Ireland Office Request for Resources 1. The Account below relates to the year ending on 31 March 2008.

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMISSION

The current members listed below were appointed on 1 January 2006.

Mr Roger Poole (Chairman)
Mrs Kelly Andrews*
Dr Joe Hendron
Ms Anne Monaghan
Mrs Vilma Patterson
Mrs Alison Scott-McKinley
Mrs Rena Shepherd**

*Mr Donald MacKay resigned from the Commission with effect from 16 May 2006. He was replaced by Mrs Kelly Andrews, who took up her post on 1 February 2007.

**Mrs Rena Shepherd replaced Mr David Burrows with effect from 19 May 2008.

PROMPT PAYMENT

The Commission is committed to the prompt payment of bills for goods and services received in accordance with the Confederation of British Industry's Prompt Payers Code. Unless otherwise stated in the contract, payment is due within 30 days of the receipt of the goods or services, or presentation of a valid invoice or similar demand, whichever is later.

On their receipt invoices are promptly sent for processing to the Northern Ireland Office. During 2007/08, that Department had processed 89.9% (2007: 81.1%) of all bills received by them within 30 days.

DISABLED EMPLOYEES

It is the Parades Commission's policy to give equality of opportunity when considering applications from disabled persons. The Commission complies with all existing legislation in regard to its disabled employees.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

In keeping with the Northern Ireland Office's Equal Opportunities Policy Statement, everyone in the Parades Commission has the right of opportunity and to a good and harmonious working environment and atmosphere in which all staff are encouraged to apply their diverse talents and in which no member of staff feels under threat or intimidated.

EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT

The maintenance of a highly skilled workforce is key to the future of the business. The Parades Commission is committed to and complies with the policies of equal opportunity and responsibility for employee and career development of all staff.

The Parades Commission recognises the benefits of keeping employees informed of the progress of the business and of involving them in the Commission's performance. During the year the employees were regularly provided with information regarding the financial and economic factors affecting the performance of the Commission and on other matters of concern to them, as employees, through notices and meetings.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND REGISTER

Within the executive processes of the Parades Commission, there is now embedded a corporate Risk Register in line with Government guidance. Risks are identified, assessed in terms of regularity of occurrence and impact and then ranked in terms of risk.

The Risk Register is reviewed by Senior Management as necessary but normally at quarterly intervals. Senior Management consider signs or warnings of risks altering, examine existing controls to reduce or manage risks and if necessary take additional action.

PRINCIPAL RISKS

The principal risk identified is anything that would prevent the Commission from discharging its statutory duties in respect of notified processions and related protests.

REGISTER OF INTERESTS

Commission members and senior staff are required to provide information of personal or business interests that might be perceived by a reasonable member of the public to influence their judgement in the exercise of their public duty.

The Parades Commission maintains a register of interests which is available for public inspection.

AUDIT

The National Audit Office has been appointed under statute to examine these accounts and report on the audit examination. The agreed fee of £10,000 is confined to the statutory audit and neither includes or permits other services which might diminish auditor independence.

PENSION LIABILITIES

Details of how pension liabilities are treated can be found in Accounting Policy note 1. Additionally, further details in respect of pensions can be found in the Remuneration Report.

DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION TO AUDITOR

So far as the Accounting Officer is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the entity's auditors are unaware, and the Accounting Officer has taken all steps that he ought to have taken to make himself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the entity's auditors are aware of that information.



ORGANISATIONAL OVERVIEW

The Parades Commission was established on 27 March 1997 as a non-statutory body. The Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998, amended by the Public Processions (Amendment) Northern Ireland Order 2005, gives the Commission statutory responsibilities in relation to public processions and related protests.

The Parades Commission operates from a single site in Belfast City Centre. Contact details are as follows:

Parades Commission
12th Floor, Windsor House
9-15 Bedford Street
Belfast, BT2 7EL

Telephone: 028 9089 5900
Fax: 028 9032 2988
Email: info@paradescommission.com
Web: www.paradescommission.com

The Secretary, Mr Ronnie Pedlow, is responsible for the effective operation of the Parades Commission secretariat and for managing its financial and manpower resources. He is also a delegated Accounting Officer.

The Parades Commission secretariat is responsible for providing advice and support to the Chairman and Commissioners in support of their aims and objectives, and in undertaking their statutory responsibilities. The Parades Commission had an average of 11 staff in post over the year. The Commission also made use of services provided by external professionals such as authorised officers, media advisors, auditors and accountants. In addition the Commission also has access to the invaluable services provided by its team of volunteers who have provided their time and expertise to provide independent monitors' reports on public processions and protests.

The Commission's statutory role is set out in the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998. Section 2 (1) of that legislation provides that:

"It shall be the duty of the Commission —

- (a) to promote greater understanding by the general public of issues concerning public processions;
- (b) to promote and facilitate mediation as a means of resolving disputes concerning public processions;
- (c) to keep itself generally informed as to the conduct of public processions and protest meetings;
- (d) to keep under review, and make such recommendations as it thinks fit to the Secretary of State concerning, the operation of the Act."

And section 2 (2) provides that:

"The Commission may in accordance with the provisions of this Act —

- (a) facilitate mediation between parties to particular disputes concerning proposed public processions and take such other steps as appear to the Commission to be appropriate for resolving disputes;
- (b) issue determinations in respect of particular proposed public processions."

REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

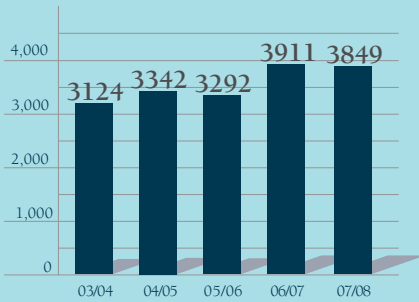
The Parades Commission received notification of 3,849 parades in the year from 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008. Only 250 of those required detailed consideration by the Commission and of those only 147 required the imposition of conditions on a proposed route. In making its decisions the Commission faced the difficult task of upholding the rights of not just one group, but also of seeking to balance the conflicting rights of different groups within the statutory criteria laid down in the legislation. It approached each of these contentious parades independently and fairly, and it remains steadfastly committed to this approach in working with all those involved in the parades issue. The Commission members have stated that their overall objective is to help bring about a situation in which parades can take place peacefully in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

GOING CONCERN

The Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2008 shows net liabilities of £26,189 (2007: £672,274). This reflects the inclusion of liabilities falling due in future years, which may only be met by future deficit funding from the Commission's sponsoring Department, the Northern Ireland Office. This is because, under the normal conventions applying to parliamentary control over income and expenditure, such funding may not be issued in advance of need.

Deficit funding for 2008/9, taking into account the amounts required to meet the Commission's liabilities falling due in that year, has already been included in the Department's estimates for that year, which has been approved by Parliament. There is no reason to believe that the Department's future sponsorship and future parliamentary approval will not be forthcoming. It has accordingly been considered appropriate to adopt a going concern basis for the preparation of these financial statements.

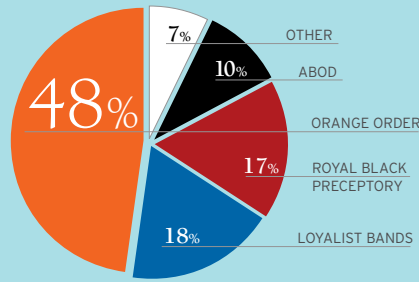
Fig 1: Total no. of parades



TOTAL PARADES NOTIFIED

The 2007/08 parading season witnessed an almost identical number of parades to the previous year with a similar breakdown of parade types. The current legislation requires that all public processions, with the exception of funerals and Salvation Army organised parades, are notified to the police at least 28 days before the date of the parade. The notifications are then passed on to the Parades Commission. (see fig 1)

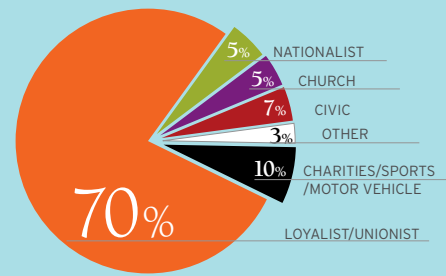
Fig 2: % Breakdown of Loyalist/Unionist parades



TOTAL PARADES BY TYPE

The number (2,691) of parades organised by the loyal orders and broad unionist tradition represents 70% of the overall total. This mirrors exactly the overall proportion of loyalist parades from the previous year. The number (203) of parades organised by nationalist groups remains relatively low at 5% of the overall total. Again that percentage remains unchanged from 2006/07. There were almost 1,000 "Other" parades including charity, civic, rural and sporting events, as well as church parades. These made up 25% of the overall total number of parades (25% in 2006/07.) (see fig 2 & 3)

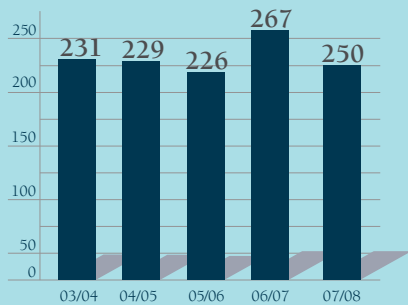
Fig 3: % Breakdown of 06/07 parades



TOTAL CONTENTIOUS PARADES

The number of parades deemed to be contentious decreased to 250 from 267 in the previous year. This represents a small decrease from 7% to 6% in terms of the total number of parades notified. Fifty-two of the parades deemed to be contentious relate to the weekly notification by the Portadown LOL District No. 1 in respect of the Garvaghy Road. Contentious parades are those that are considered as having the potential of raising concerns and community tensions, and which consequently are considered in more detail by the Parades Commission. (see fig 4)

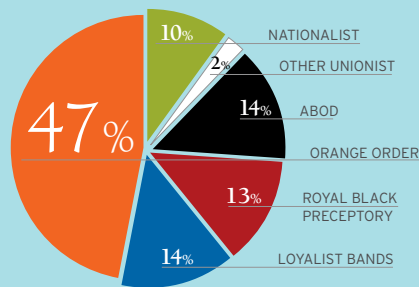
Fig 4: Total contentious parades



CONTENTIOUS PARADES BY TYPE

The vast majority of contentious parades continued to be loyalist parades, which accounted for 90% (a reduction from 97% in 2006/07). The proportion of contentious Nationalist parades, while small, increased to 9% from 2% in the previous year. Other parades accounted for less than 1%. (see fig 5)

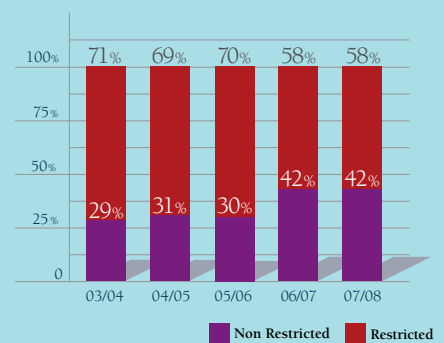
Fig 5: Total no. of contentious parades by type



BREAKDOWN OF RESTRICTIONS

The proportion of contentious parades on which the Commission placed restrictions was 59%, which was a marginal increase on the figure for the previous year (58%). This equates to less than 4% of the total number of parades notified. The most common restriction was on the route of a contentious parade, which applied in 80% of restrictions. The remainder of restrictions related to size and timing of a parade, type of music to be played, behaviour and dress code. (see fig 6)

Fig 6: % Restrictions on parades





Remuneration Report

RESULTS FOR THE YEAR

The deficit for the year was £1,051,067 (2007: £1,724,971). The Commission has met its key financial target of managing its workload in 2007-08 within a running costs budget (to cover salaries and administrative expenditure) to financial limits agreed with the Northern Ireland Office (including in-year adjustments).

REMUNERATION POLICY

The remuneration of senior civil servants such as the Accounting Officer is set by the Prime Minister following independent advice from the Review Body on Senior Salaries.

In reaching its recommendations, the Review Body has regard to the following considerations:

- the need to recruit, retain and motivate suitably able and qualified people to exercise their responsibilities;
 - regional/local variations in labour markets and their effects on the recruitment and retention of staff;
 - Government policies for improving the public services, including the requirement on departments to meet the output targets for the delivery of departmental services;
 - the funds available to departments as set out in the Government's departmental expenditure limits; and
 - the Government's inflation target.
- The Review Body takes account of evidence it receives about wider economic considerations and the affordability of its recommendations.

The remuneration of all senior civil servants is entirely performance based.

Further information about the work of the Review Body can be found at www.ome.uk.com.

SERVICE CONTRACTS

Civil Service appointments are made in accordance with the Civil Service Commissioners for Northern Ireland's Recruitment Code, which requires appointment to be on merit on the basis of fair and open competition but also includes the circumstances when appointments may otherwise be made.

Unless otherwise stated below, the officials covered by this report hold appointments which are open-ended until they reach the normal retirement age of 60. Policy relating to notice periods and termination payments is contained in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) Staff Handbook. Further information about the Civil Service Commissioners can be found at www.nicscommissioners.org

Details of salaries and allowances paid, benefits in kind and accrued pension entitlement are shown in the table on page 8.

SALARY

"Salary" includes gross salary; performance pay or bonuses; overtime; reserved rights to London Weighting or London allowances; recruitment and retention allowances; private office allowances and any other allowances to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation.

PENSION

Pension benefits are provided through the Civil Service pension arrangements. From 1 October 2002, civil servants may be in one of three statutory based "final salary" defined benefit schemes (classic, premium, and classic plus). The Schemes are unfunded with the cost of benefits met by monies voted by Parliament each year. Pensions payable under classic, premium, and classic plus are increased annually in line with changes in the Retail Price Index. New entrants after 1 October 2002 may choose between membership of premium or joining a good quality "money purchase" stakeholder-based arrangement with a significant employer contribution (partnership pension account).

Employee contributions are set at the rate of 1.5% of pensionable earnings for classic and 3.5% for premium and classic plus. Benefits in classic accrue at the rate of 1/80th of pensionable salary for each year of service. In addition, a lump sum equivalent to three years' pension is payable on retirement. For premium, benefits accrue at the rate of 1/60th of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. Unlike classic, there is no automatic lump sum (but members may give up (commute) some of their pension to provide a lump sum). Classic plus is essentially a variation of premium, but with benefits in respect of service before 1 October 2002 calculated broadly as per classic.

The partnership pension account is a stakeholder pension arrangement. The employer makes a basic contribution of between 3% and 12.5% (depending on the age of the member) into a

stakeholder pension product chosen by the employee. The employee does not have to contribute but where they do make contributions, the employer will match these up to a limit of 3% of pensionable salary (in addition to the employer's basic contribution). Employers also contribute a further 0.8% of pensionable salary to cover the cost of centrally-provided risk benefit cover (death in service and ill health retirement).

Further details about the Civil Service pension arrangements can be found at the website www.civilservicepensions-ni.gov.uk.

The chart below represents an explanation of the various terms used.

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures would show the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies. The CETV figures, and from 2003/04 the other pension details, include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or

arrangement which the individual has transferred to the Civil Service scheme and for which the Scheme has received a transfer payment commensurate to the additional pension liabilities being assumed. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional years of pension service in the scheme at their own cost. CETVs are calculated within the guidelines and framework prescribed by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries.

The real increase in CETV reflects the increase effectively funded by the employer. It takes account of the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

BENEFITS IN KIND

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the employer and treated by the Inland Revenue as a taxable emolument.

Gross salaries for the most senior managers of the Department were determined by reference to the senior civil service pay award for 2006.



R PEDLOW
Secretary

	Salary, including performance pay	Real increase in pension at age 60 and lump sum	Total accrued pension at age 60 at 31/03/08 and related lump sum	Cash Equivalent Transfer Value at 31/03/07	Cash Equivalent Transfer Value at 31/03/08	Real increase in CETV	Employer Contributions to partnership pension account	Benefits in Kind
	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k	£k
Ronnie Pedlow	55-60	0-2.5 & 0-2.5	20-25 & 65	398	451	9	Nil	Nil
Michael Boyle	45-50	0-2.5 & 0-2.5	10-15 & 30	167	197	8	Nil	Nil



Statement of Secretary's Responsibilities

Under paragraph 12(1) of Schedule 1 to the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) 1998 Act, the Secretary of State (with the consent of HM Treasury and Northern Ireland Office) has directed the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland to prepare for each financial year, a statement of accounts in the form and on the basis set out in the Accounts Direction. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland and of its income and expenditure, total recognised gains and losses and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts, the Accounting Officer is required to comply

with the requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual and in particular to:

- observe the accounts direction issued by the Northern Ireland Office on behalf of the Secretary of State, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, as set out in the Government Financial Reporting Manual, and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis.

The Accounting Officer of the Northern Ireland Office has designated the Secretary as the Accounting Officer for the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland. The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, including responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records and for safeguarding the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland's assets, are set out in the Accounting Officers' Memorandum issued by HM Treasury and published in Managing Public Money.



Statement on Internal Control

SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland's policies, aims and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and departmental assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me in Managing Public Money.

THE PURPOSE OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a reasonable level rather than to eliminate all risk of failure to achieve policies, aims and objectives; it can therefore only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is based on an ongoing process designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of departmental policies, aims and objectives; to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised and the impact should they be realised; and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically. The system of internal control has been in place in the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland for the year ended 31 March 2008 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts, and accords with Treasury guidance.

CAPACITY TO HANDLE RISK

The system of internal control is based on a framework of regular management information, administrative procedures, including the segregation of duties, and a system of delegation and accountability. In particular it includes:

- comprehensive budgeting systems with an annual budget which is reviewed and agreed by the Secretary and Chairman of the Commission;
- regular reviews of periodic and annual financial reports which indicate financial performance; and
- as appropriate, formal project management disciplines.

THE RISK AND CONTROL FRAMEWORK

The Parades Commission for Northern Ireland has relied upon the services provided by Moore Stevens Internal Audit Unit (on behalf of the Northern Ireland Office), which operates to standards defined in the Government Internal Audit Manual. The work of the Internal Auditor is informed by an analysis of the risk to which the Commission is exposed, and annual internal audit plans are based on this analysis. A comprehensive risk register has been completed and is subject to ongoing review and monitoring by the Audit Committee.

REVIEW OF EFFECTIVENESS

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal

control. My review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control is informed by the work of the internal auditors and the executive managers within the department who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework, and comments made by the external auditors in their management letter and other reports. I have been advised on the implications of the result of my review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control by the Audit Committee and a plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.

Internal audit examined 11 key areas during their 2007/08 review. All areas were found to have either "substantial" or "satisfactory" assurance levels. Overall, none of the weaknesses identified was found to be significant. Some improvements were required to improve the adequacy and effectiveness of risk management, control and governance. There were also some outstanding recommendations from the 2006/07 year which require further work to be done in order to improve the controls in place. All recommendations are now being currently actioned by management.

R PEDLOW Secretary

The Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to The Houses of Parliament

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland for the year ended 31 March 2008 under the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 as amended by the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 (Accounts and Audit) Order 1998. These comprise the Income and Expenditure Account, the Balance Sheet, the Cash Flow Statement and Statement of Recognised Gains and Losses and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out within them. I have also audited the information in the Remuneration Report that is described in that report as having been audited.

RESPECTIVE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARADES COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND, SECRETARY AND AUDITOR

The Parades Commission for Northern Ireland and the Secretary as Accounting Officer are responsible for preparing the Annual Report, the Remuneration Report and the financial statements in accordance with the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 as amended by the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 (Accounts and Audit) Order 1998 and directions made thereunder by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and for ensuring the regularity of financial

transactions. These responsibilities are set out in the Statement of Secretary's Responsibilities.

My responsibility is to audit the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited in accordance with relevant legal and regulatory requirements, and with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland).

I report to you my opinion as to whether the financial statements give a true and fair view and whether the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 as amended by the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 (Accounts and Audit) Order 1998 and directions made thereunder by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. I report to you whether, in my opinion, certain information given in the Annual Report, which comprises the Chairman's Report, Foreword, Management Commentary and the unaudited part of the Remuneration Report is consistent with the financial statements. I also report whether in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

In addition, I report to you if the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland has not kept proper accounting records, if I have not received all the information and explanations I require for my audit, or if information specified by HM Treasury regarding remuneration and other transactions is not disclosed.

I review whether the Statement on Internal control reflects the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland's compliance with HM Treasury's guidance, and I report if it does not. I am not required to consider whether this statement covers all risks and controls, or form an opinion on the effectiveness of the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland's corporate governance procedures or its risk and control procedures.

I read the other information contained in the Annual Report and consider whether it is consistent with the audited financial statements. I consider the implications for my report if I become aware of any apparent misstatements or material inconsistencies with the financial statements. My responsibilities do not extend to any other information.

BASIS OF AUDIT OPINIONS

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) issued by the Auditing Practices Board. My audit includes examination, on a test basis, of evidence relevant to the amounts, disclosures and regularity of financial transactions included in the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited. It also includes an assessment of the significant estimates and judgments made by the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland and the Secretary in the preparation of the financial statements, and of whether the accounting policies are most appropriate to the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland's circumstances, consistently applied and adequately disclosed.

I planned and performed my audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which I considered necessary in order to provide me with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements

and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error, and that in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them. In forming my opinion I also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited.

OPINIONS

AUDIT OPINIONS

In my opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 as amended by the Public Processions

(Northern Ireland) Act 1998 (Accounts and Audit) Order 1998 and directions made thereunder by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, of the state of the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland's affairs as at 31 March 2008 and of its deficit for the year then ended;

- the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 as amended by the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 (Accounts and Audit) Order 1998 and directions made thereunder by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland; and
- information given in the Annual Report, which comprises the Chairman's Report, Foreword, Management Commentary and the unaudited part of the Remuneration Report, is consistent with the financial statements.

OPINION ON REGULARITY

In my opinion, in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

REPORT

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

*T J Burr
Comptroller and Auditor General
National Audit Office
151 Buckingham Palace Road
Victoria
London
SW1W 9SS
2009*



Financial Statements

INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2008

	Note	2008 £	2007 £
Expenditure			
Staff costs	2	683,746	669,832
Other operating costs	3	422,715	605,385
Exceptional items	4	(51,014)	459,007
Notional cost of capital	5	(11,254)	(14,818)
Depreciation	6	8,452	4,691
Permanent diminution	6	(1,578)	874
		1,051,067	1,724,971
Deficit for the Year		(1,051,067)	(1,724,971)
Reversal of notional cost of capital	5	(11,254)	(14,818)
		(1,062,321)	(1,739,789)

All amounts above relate to continuing activities and include VAT, where it is not possible to reclaim the input VAT. The notes on pages 16 to 25 form part of these accounts.

STATEMENT OF RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2008

	2008 £	2007 £
Result for year (prior to adjustment in respect of notional costs)	(1,051,067)	(1,724,971)
Unrealised surplus on revaluation of fixed assets	0	0
Total recognised (losses) for the year	(1,051,067)	(1,724,971)

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2008

	Note	2008 £	2007 £
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	6	28,744	35,618
Current Assets			
Cash in hand		45	80
Debtors	9	16,188	12,537
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		16,233	12,617
Current Liabilities			
Creditors (due within one year)	10	71,166	720,509
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Net Current Liabilities		(54,933)	(707,892)
Provision for Liabilities and Charges	11	0	0
Total Assets less Liabilities		(26,189)	(672,274)
		<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
Financed By			
Capital & Reserves			
General fund	14	(26,277)	(672,362)
Revaluation reserve	14	88	88
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		(26,189)	(672,274)
		<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

R PEDLOW
Secretary
Date:

The notes on pages 16 to 25 form part of these accounts.

Financial Statements

CASH FLOW STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2008

	Note	2008 £	2007 £
Net Cash Outflow from Continuing			
Operating Activities	15	1,708,441	1,313,223
Capital Expenditure			
Payments to acquire fixed assets	6	-	2,220
Cash Outflow Before Financing		1,708,441	1,315,443
Financing			
Cash inflow from financing	14	1,708,406	1,315,441
Increase / (Decrease) in Cash		(35)	(2)

Included within creditors and accruals is an amount totalling £nil (2007: nil) in relation to capital expenditure.

The notes on pages 16 to 25 form part of these accounts.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1. Statement of Accounting Policies

Accounting Convention

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention, modified by the revaluation of fixed assets.

The accounts comply with the accounting standards issued or adopted by the Accounting Standards Board, FReM and accounting and disclosure requirements issued by the Treasury, insofar as those requirements are appropriate.

Income

As the Parades Commission do not receive grant-in-aid, income is not shown on the face of the income and expenditure account. All accounting transactions are processed through the NIO and are included in the NIO Resource Account.

Leasing

Rentals payable under operating leases are charged against income on a straight line basis over the lease term.

Fixed Assets

Fixed assets comprise computer and office equipment and are revalued annually on 31 August, using appropriate indices compiled by Central Statistics Office. The level for capitalisation of a tangible fixed asset or group of assets is £1,000.

Depreciation

Depreciation is provided on a straight line basis on all fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost or valuation of each asset over its expected useful life.

The estimated useful lives for depreciation purposes are as follows:

Computer hardware	5 years
Computer servers	5 years
Computer software	5 years
Furniture & equipment	15 years
Leasehold Improvements	Remainder of lease term

Financial Statements

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (CONT'D)

Capital Charge

A notional charge, reflecting the cost of capital utilised by the Commission, is included in the operating costs. The charge is calculated at the government's standard rate of 3.5 per cent (2007: 3.5%) in real terms on all assets (purchased) less liabilities.

Employer's Pension Contributions

The Secretary and employees of the Parades Commission are civil servants to whom the conditions of the Superannuation (Northern Ireland) Orders 1967 and 1972 and subsequent amendments apply. The Commission's staff are covered by the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme, which is a non-contributory scheme. The rate for the employer's contribution is set by the Government Actuary.

VAT

The Commission does not have any income which is subject to output VAT. The Commission recovers input VAT on contracted out services in accordance with guidance.

2. Staff Costs and Numbers

Staff costs consist of:

	2008	2007
	£	£
Wages & salaries	291,033	290,653
Social security costs	22,938	23,078
Pension costs	50,693	52,676
Total direct employee staff costs	364,664	366,407
Amounts payable in respect of staff on secondment, agency/temporary staff, and contract staff	319,082	303,425
Total Staff Costs	683,746	669,832

In line with revised disclosure requirements, amounts payable in respect of staff on secondment, agency / temporary staff and contract staff are now reported together. This includes the Commissioners' and Authorised Officers' costs, as they are non-Northern Ireland Civil Service and are therefore not pensionable.

The PCSPS (NI) is an unfunded multi-employer defined benefit scheme which produces its own resource accounts, but the Parades Commission is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. The most up-to-date actuarial valuation was carried out as at 31 March 2003 and details of this valuation are available in the PCSPS (NI) Resource Accounts.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (CONT'D)

For 2007-08, employer's contributions of £50,693 (2006-07: £52,676) were payable to the PCSPS (NI) at one of four rates in the range 16.5 to 23.5 per cent of pensionable pay, based on salary bands.

The contribution rates are set to meet the cost of the benefits accruing during 2007/08 to be paid when a member retires, and not the benefits paid during this period to existing pensioners. The remuneration report on pages 12 to 14 contains detailed pension information.

Employees joining after 1 October 2002 could opt to open a partnership pension account, a stakeholder pension with an employer contribution. Employer's contributions are paid to one or more of a panel of four appointed stakeholder pension providers. Employer contributions are age-related and range from 3 to 12.5 per cent of pensionable pay. Employers also match employee contributions up to 3 per cent of pensionable pay. In addition, employer contributions of 0.8 per cent of pensionable pay are payable to the PCSPS (NI) to cover the cost of the future provision of lump sum benefits on death in service and ill health retirement of these employees. No employees of the Commission have opted for a pension partnership account during 2007/08.

Number of Employees

The average number of whole-time equivalent persons (including senior management) employed during the year was:

Directly Employed Parades Commission Staff

	2008	2007
	No.	No.
Management and Executive	1	1
Administration Staff		
Employed on a full-time basis	11	11
Seconded, agency/temporary and contract staff	11	11

The Commission is not responsible for the remuneration of any ministers or special advisers.

Commissioners' Numbers and Costs

The total emoluments of the Commissioners (including the Chairman) during the year ended 31 March 2008 amounted to £185,541 (2007: £188,423) and the Commission's expenses was £156,962 (2007: 205,224). The total remuneration of the Chairman during the same period was £59,116 (2007: £54,723). The Chairman was the highest paid Board Member. Both the Chairman and Commissioners are non-Northern Ireland Civil Service; therefore they are not pensionable.

Financial Statements

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (CONT'D)

The salary entitlement of the Chairman and Commissioners for 2007/08 was as follows:

Commission Member	Salary Range £'000
Mr Roger Poole (Chairman)	50 - 55
Mrs Vilma Patterson	15 - 20
Dr Joe Hendron	15 - 20
Mrs Alison Scott-McKinley	15 - 20
Mrs Kelly Andrews	15 - 20
Ms Anne Monaghan	15 - 20
*Mr David Burrows	15 - 20

*Mr David Burrows resigned from the Parades Commission with effect from 30 January 2008. He was replaced by Mrs Rena Shepherd with effect from 19 May 2008.

3. Other Operating Costs

	2008	2007
	£	£
Other operating costs comprise:		
Accommodation costs	10,754	16,478
Rent	127,872	129,755
Travel, subsistence & hospitality	56,513	68,103
Advertising	15,652	19,993
Training	2,074	2,306
Telecommunications	18,488	27,419
Inter-Departmental charges	28,433	35,496
Commission's expenses	26,772	62,220
Professional advisors' service	68,231	77,339
Consultants' fees	15,202	16,187
Auditor's remuneration	10,000	10,000
Mediation	36,901	102,570
Other Expenditure	5,823	37,519
	422,715	605,385

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (CONT'D)

4. Exceptional Items

	2008	2007
	£	£
NIC + income tax payable (see note below)	(51,014)	516,014
Movement in provision for legal costs	-	(57,007)
	(51,014)	459,007

The charge in respect of NIC and income tax payable relates to a failure to deduct income tax and national insurance from payments made to Commissioners from the establishment of the Commission in 1997 to December 2005. The amount of £516,014 was included as an accrual last year; however, the actual amount settled was £465,000. The excess related to charges which were met by NIO.

5. Notional Costs

The income & expenditure account bears a non-cash charge for interest relating to the use of capital by the Parades Commission. The basis of the charge is 3.5 per cent of the average capital employed by the Commission during the period ended 31 March 2008, defined as the total assets less total liabilities.

	2008	2007
	£	£
Cost of capital	(12,223)	(16,042)
CSO Service charge	969	1,224
	(11,254)	(14,818)

Financial Statements

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (CONT'D)

6. Fixed Assets

	Computer Hardware	Computer Software	Office Equipment	Leasehold Improvements	Total Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Opening Cost	18,974	6,992	8,537	19,790	54,293
Additions	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	280	-	280
Permanent diminution	(674)	(248)	-	-	(922)
Closing Cost	<u>18,300</u>	<u>6,744</u>	<u>8,817</u>	<u>19,790</u>	<u>53,651</u>
Opening Depreciation	14,997	2,796	882	-	18,675
Charge for the year	1,719	1,348	437	4,948	8,452
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-
Backlog depreciation	-	-	28	-	28
Permanent diminution	(2,149)	(99)	-	-	(2,248)
Closing Depreciation	<u>14,567</u>	<u>4,045</u>	<u>1,347</u>	<u>4,948</u>	<u>24,907</u>
Closing Net Book Value	<u>3,733</u>	<u>2,699</u>	<u>7,470</u>	<u>14,842</u>	<u>28,744</u>
Opening Net Book Value	<u>3,977</u>	<u>4,196</u>	<u>7,655</u>	<u>19,790</u>	<u>35,618</u>

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (CONT'D)

7. Capital Commitments

There were no outstanding capital commitments at 31 March 2008.

8. Contingent Liabilities

There were no contingent liabilities at 31 March 2008.

9. Debtors

	2008	2007
	£	£
Debtors	0	0
Prepayments	16,188	12,537
	16,188	12,537

10. Creditors

	2008	2007
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year		
Creditors	2,625	8,979
NIC/Income tax liability (note 4)	-	516,014
Legal costs re. judicial review	-	122,394
Accruals	68,541	73,122
	71,166	720,509

Financial Statements

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (CONT'D)

11. Provisions for liabilities and charges

There was no provision for liabilities and charges for 2008.

12. Commitments

Operating Lease

The Commission is committed under a Memorandum of Terms of Occupation with the Department of Environment to pay rental of £60,489 per annum for the premises it occupies.

Operating Leases expiring:

	£
Within one year	NIL
Between one and five years	60,489
After five years	NIL

13. Other

The Commission is committed under its approved training plan with the Business Development Service to attend training courses totalling £6,000 (2007: £6,000) during the financial year ending 31 March 2008. It should be noted that this will be a notional charge.

14. Reconciliation of Movements in Reserves

	General Fund £	Revaluation Reserve £	Total 2008 £	Total 2007 £
At start of year	(672,362)	88	(672,274)	(247,926)
Transfer from income & expenditure account	(1,062,321)	-	(1,062,321)	(1,739,789)
Financing from vote	1,708,406	-	1,708,406	1,315,441
Transfer of fixed assets	-	-	-	-
Revaluation of fixed assets	-	-	-	-
At end of year	<u>(26,277)</u>	<u>88</u>	<u>(26,189)</u>	<u>(672,274)</u>

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (CONT'D)

15. Reconciliation of Results for the Period to Net Cash Flow from Operating Activities

	2008	2007
	£	£
Result for the year	(1,051,067)	(1,724,971)
Notional costs	(11,254)	(14,818)
Adjustment for non cash transactions		
Depreciation	8,452	4,691
Permanent Diminution	(1,578)	874
Decrease in provisions	-	(250,000)
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Adjustments for movements in working capital		
Decrease/(Increase) in debtors	(3,651)	19,304
Increase/(Decrease) in creditors	(649,343)	651,697
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net Cash Outflow From Operating Activities	(1,708,441)	(1,313,223)
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>

16. Financial Instruments

FRS 13, Derivatives and Other Financial Instruments, requires disclosure of the role which financial instruments have had during the period in creating or changing the risks an entity faces in undertaking its activities. Due to the non-trading nature of its activities and the way in which executive Non Departmental Public Bodies are financed, the Parades Commission is not exposed to the degree of risk faced by business entities. Moreover, financial instruments play a much more limited role in creating or changing risk than would be typical of the listed companies to which FRS 13 mainly applies. The Parades Commission has no powers to borrow or invest surplus funds and has limited end year flexibility. Financial assets and liabilities are generated by day-to-day operational activities and are not held to change the risks facing the Commission in undertaking its activities.

As permitted by FRS 13, debtors and creditors that mature or become payable within 12 months from the balance sheet date have been excluded from this disclosure.

Financial Statements

Liquidity Risk

The Parades Commission is budgeted through the Northern Ireland Office Request for Resources 1 and is accountable to Parliament through the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and is not therefore exposed to significant liquidity risk.

Interest-Rate Risk

All financial assets and financial liabilities of the Parades Commission carry nil rates of interest and therefore are not exposed to interest rate risk.

Currency Risk

The Parades Commission does not trade in foreign currency and therefore has no exposure to foreign currency risk.

Fair Values

The book values and fair values of the Parades Commission's financial assets and financial liabilities as at 31 March 2008 are as set out below:

Primary Financial Instruments:

	Book Value	Fair Value
	£	£
Financial Assets		
Petty cash	45	45
Financial Liabilities		
None	N/A	N/A

17. Related Party Transactions

The Parades Commission is an independent statutory body, established by the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998, and funded by the Secretary of State through the Northern Ireland Office.

The Northern Ireland Office is regarded as a related party. During the year, the Parades Commission has had various material transactions with the Northern Ireland Office.

In addition, the Parades Commission has had a small number of material transactions with other Government Departments. Most of these transactions have been with the Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland, and one of its executive agencies, the Construction Service, and also Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission.

None of the Parades Commission members, key managerial staff or other related parties has undertaken any material transactions with the Parades Commission during this year.



1. MR ROGER POOLE:

Roger has had a long career in Trade Union movement and was the former Assistant General Secretary of NUPE and of UNISON. He was responsible for national negotiations in the NHS, Local Government, Water Industry and Higher Education. The public face of the ambulance dispute of 1989/90, he was the Chief Union negotiator and frequently appeared in the media. He was one of the senior trade union officials responsible for negotiating the terms of the merger between NUPE, COHSE and NALGO to create UNISON. In 1999 he joined the team which had been established by the Prime Minister to look at the future of the Co-operative movement. He is also a visiting fellow at Warwick University.

2. DR JOE HENDRON:

Joe was a GP in West Belfast for 40 years. He was elected MP for West Belfast for the SDLP and served from 1992-97. He was an MLA for the constituency and he chaired the Assembly's Health and Social Services and Public Safety Committee. He visited North Korea in 1998 as part of a Trocaire charity delegation looking at famine.

3. MS ANNE MONAGHAN:

Anne Monaghan is Director of AM:PM Communications Ltd. Prior to that she worked as Public Liaison Manager with Highway Management Construction - the Westlink Contractor. She has an MA in Peace and Conflict Studies from the University of Notre Dame, Indiana, where she was a Kroc Scholar and Graduate Fellow. She is currently studying for a PhD part-time at the University of Ulster and is an Independent Member of Belfast's District Policing Partnership.

4. MRS VILMA PATTERSON MBE:

Mrs Patterson has spent over 30 years in the construction industry, in sportsground construction, consultancy, research and network development and is Director of John G Duff (Annadale) Ltd. She was a member (1996 to 2008) and Chair (1999 - 2002) of the Independent Monitoring Board for HMP Maghaberry and Chair of Northern Ireland Association of the Independent Monitoring Boards for Northern Ireland for five years. She is also the former Chair of the Women in Business Network working with the private, public, voluntary and community sectors. She was appointed as a Civil Service Commissioner for Northern Ireland in 2009.

5. MRS RENA SHEPHERD:

Rena has extensive experience at senior executive level in business. She has led organizations in the Oil, Publishing and Postal Sectors. She is currently a partner in a medium-sized consultancy firm that supports organisations in strategic planning, leadership development, corporate governance and diversity issues. She is heavily involved with a number of disability charities and lobbies for the rights of people with disabilities. She is Chair of the Policy Committee at the Chamber of Commerce and sits on the Development Board of the Ulster Orchestra.

The Commission



6. MRS ALISON SCOTT MCKINLEY:

Alison is currently employed by the North Eastern Education and Library Board as an Alternative Education Youth Worker. Alison's background is in the field of Family Work, Youth Work and Community Development. In addition to this she is also a Therapeutic Counsellor and a Family Group Conference Co-ordinator. She is a Lay Magistrate serving in the Family Proceedings and Youth Courts in the Londonderry County Division, and an Independent Member of Cookstown District Policing Partnership.

7. MRS KELLY ANDREWS:

Kelly Andrews is Co-Chair of the Green Party in Northern Ireland. She is a former Secretary of the Party. Kelly has a background in community development. She has worked as a Training Coordinator for Women into Politics, facilitating various programmes dealing with conflict resolution, equality, democracy and politics. She has a BA Hons in English and Politics from Queen's University Belfast.



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