

# **Parades Commission for Northern Ireland**

Annual Report and Financial Statements  
for the year ended 31 March 2021



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for the year ended 31 March 2021

Presented to Parliament pursuant to Schedule 1  
paragraphs 12 and 13 of the Public Processions  
(Northern Ireland) Act 1998

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# FOREWORD BY THE CHAIR

I am pleased to present this Annual Report on behalf of the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland. This Annual Report, to 31 March 2021, spans both the tenures of Commission members who were appointed on 1 January 2021 and the outgoing Commission members who left office on 31 December 2020.

At the outset I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the work and dedication of the former Chair and Commissioners and wish them well in their future endeavours. I and my fellow Commissioners look forward to building upon the work and relationships developed by our predecessors during the incoming year.

The past 12 months have been unprecedented with the Covid-19 pandemic

continuing to have wide societal and even global impacts. Whilst working from home became the new norm, and still continues at the time of writing, the work of the Commission has been business as usual with Commission meetings and stakeholder engagement and representation being held and received via digital Platforms. Commissioners past and present readily acknowledge the commitment and excellence of our staff.

2020 did not represent a traditional parading season with major parading bodies announcing early in April 2020 their decisions to cancel parades, including the Twelfth

of July celebrations. However, as lockdown restrictions eased, the Commission saw an increase in the number of parades being notified. The Commission faced the challenge of making parading decisions in face of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Commission acted within the remit of its statutory powers, whilst having regard to the changing Covid-19 Regulations. The Commission engaged with parade organisers and, where appropriate, brought parades and events which had the potential to contravene the Covid-19 Regulations to the attention of the relevant bodies with responsibility for enforcement. The Commission was pleased to note that the majority of parades passed off peacefully and enjoyably without any need for consideration by, or intervention from, the Commission. Given the unique circumstances of the reporting period, the Commission acknowledges the high level of responsibility demonstrated by the overwhelming majority of parade organisers.

Looking to the year ahead, the political landscape remains unsettled with further outbreaks of civic unrest a possibility. The feeling within the Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist (PUL) community in relation to the NI Protocol and tensions around the enforcement of the Covid-19 Regulations have the potential to provide significant challenges to the work of the Commission. Notwithstanding this backdrop the Commission remains focused on the importance of its role and will continue to exercise it in an impartial and fair manner.



Finally, despite the significant progress which has collectively been achieved over recent years, parading still remains high profile and is viewed by a significant number as having the potential to impact adversely on aspects of community life and community relations. The Commission will, therefore, continue to engage with stakeholders to encourage resolution of parading issues through local dialogue.

**GRAHAM FORBES**

# PERFORMANCE REPORT

## OVERVIEW

The Parades Commission was established on 27 March 1997, initially 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 regulating public processions and related protests.

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

Parades Commission  
2nd floor, Andras House  
60 Great Victoria Street  
Belfast  
BT2 7BB

Telephone: 028 9089 5900

E-mail [info@paradescommissionni.org](mailto:info@paradescommissionni.org)

Web: [www.paradescommission.org](http://www.paradescommission.org)

The Commission's statutory role is set out in the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998. Section 2 (1) of that Act 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; and
- b. issue determinations in respect of particular proposed public processions.”

The Commission is currently made up of six Commissioners, including a Chair. The Commissioners are appointed by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland. A secretariat supports the Commission in the delivery of its statutory responsibilities as set out in the Act.

The Secretary to the Commission, Sarah Teer, took up the post on the 1st July 2020. The Secretary is

responsible for the effective operation of the secretariat and for managing its financial and human resources.

The Secretariat is responsible for providing advice and support to the Chair and Commissioners in support of their aims and objectives, and in undertaking their statutory responsibilities. The Secretariat had an average of 6 staff in post over the year. The Commission also made use of services provided by external professionals such as media services, auditors and an accountant.

## **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

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 (NIO) under the 1998 Act. The accounts incorporate a Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, a Statement of Financial Position, a Statement of Cash Flows, a Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity and related notes.

## **GOING CONCERN**

The Statement of Financial Position at 31 March 2021 shows net liabilities of £56,886 (2020: £65,324). In addition, there are lease liabilities committed for future years of £60,167 (2020: £91,546).

The Commission's sponsoring body is the Northern Ireland Office as laid out in the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998. The Commission's budget for 2021-22 has been approved by the Northern Ireland Office. At the date of this report the accounting officer has no reason to believe that further support beyond 31 March 2022 will not be forthcoming due to the protections laid down in the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998. Therefore it has been considered appropriate to adopt a going concern basis for the preparation of the 2020-2021 financial statements.

## **PARADING ACTIVITIES**

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. Parade related protests are required to be notified to the police at least 14 days before the date of the parade. These notices are then passed on to the Parades Commission. Notifications can be submitted manually at a PSNI station or by using the on-line notification function on the website [www.paradescommission.org](http://www.paradescommission.org)

The Covid19 pandemic which affected the country since early 2020 and resulted in a full lockdown from 23rd March 2020 meant that there was no traditional parading season in 2020 with the vast majority of parade organisers cancelling their annual parades following the announcement of the cancellation of the Twelfth of July celebrations early in the year.

There was a reduction (2,680) in the number of notified parades and parade related protests in 2020-21 when compared with the previous year. See Table 1.

**Table 1: detailed breakdown of Parades and Parade related protests**

<b>Parades and Parade related protests</b>	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2019-20</b>
Total notifications received:	1,113	3,793
Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist notifications	690	2,312
Catholic/Republican/Nationalist notifications	30	99
“other” notifications*	393	1,382
Total notifications considered sensitive:	59	186
Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist sensitive**	52	176
Catholic/Republican/Nationalist sensitive	1	3
“others”	6	7
Number of parades or parade related protests with conditions imposed:	19	133
Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist sensitive**	18	124
Catholic/Republican/Nationalist sensitive	1	2
“others”	0	7

\*Other category includes charity, civic, rural and sporting events, as well as church parades. Collectively, these made up 35 percent of the overall total number of parades.

\*\*Protestant/Unionist/Loyalist sensitive parades include 6 notified weekly protest parades in Portadown.

## **Sensitive Parades and Parade Related Protests**

Some parades and parade related protests are deemed “sensitive” as they have the potential to raise concerns and community tensions. In making its decisions, the Commission seeks to balance the conflicting rights of different groups within the statutory criteria laid down in the legislation. It approaches all “sensitive parades” independently and fairly.

In 2020-21, 19 parades and parade related protests were subject to restrictions (2019-20:133). The type of restrictions placed on parades or parade related protests include the route, size and timing of a parade or parade related protest, type of music to be played, behaviour and dress code. There has been an 85% reduction in the number of parades that have restrictions placed on them when compared with 2019-20. This was due to the Covid 19 pandemic and the fact that no parades were notified in areas or on routes that were deemed “sensitive” on the grounds of raising concerns and community tensions.

When the Health Protection (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020 were eased during the summer months’ organisers began to notify parades again and the Commission faced the new challenge of making decisions against the backdrop of these Regulations. The Commission was faced with a number of parades that appeared to be notified in contravention of the Health Protection (Coronavirus) Regulations. Whilst acting within the remit



of its statutory powers, the Commission marked these parades as “sensitive parades” on the grounds that they breached the regulations. In total, 39 parades were deemed “sensitive” on these grounds and ‘decisions’ issued. The ‘decisions’ reminded organisers of their responsibilities under these regulations and they were brought to the attention of the Minister of Health, Chief Medical Officer, Chief Scientific Adviser and the PSNI.

The Commission’s overall objective is to help bring about a situation in which parades can take place peacefully in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

## **KEY ISSUES AND RISKS THAT COULD AFFECT THE COMMISSION IN DELIVERY OF ITS OBJECTIVES**

The principal risk identified is anything that would prevent the Commission from discharging its statutory duties in respect of notified processions and related protests. The highest ranking risks relate to our infrastructure, including maintenance of IT systems and protection of information. The continuing global Covid19 pandemic has resulted in staff continuing to carry out their duties from home. This has worked very successfully with staff and Commissioners being able to fulfil their statutory duties in this manner. There have been no detrimental effects on the financial position of the Commission as all staff have remained gainfully seconded to the Commission with no need for staff redeployment or increased sickness absence. As we have no income streams there was no



loss to the Commission. The current political landscape is very unsettled with uncertainty around the feeling within the PUL community and how they are going to approach the parading season in terms of notifying parades and recognising the role of the Commission. We will continue to engage with all stakeholders to encourage them to adhere to their obligations as per the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998.

Within the executive processes of the Parades Commission, there is embedded a corporate risk register in line with Government guidance. Risks are identified, assessed in terms of likelihood and impact, and then ranked in terms of priority.

The risk register is kept under constant review and updated as necessary. Management consider signs or warnings of risks altering, examine existing controls to reduce or manage risks and, if necessary, take additional action.

# PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS

The table below summarises performance against Parades Commission 2020-21 business plan targets. Each target outcome is listed in detail below the table.

	Business Plan Objective	Total Number of Target Outcomes	Number of Target Outcomes – Fully Achieved	Number of Target Outcomes – Substantially Achieved	Number of Target Outcomes – Not Achieved
1	To consider particular proposed parades and to issue determinations as deemed necessary	3	3		
2	To promote greater understanding by the general public of parading issues	2	2		
3	To keep itself generally informed on the conduct of public processions and protest meetings	4	4		

4	To promote and facilitate mediation as a means of resolving disputes concerning public processions	1	1		
5	To maintain high standards of governance & ensure value for money is achieved	3	3		

## ANALYSIS AND EXPLANATIONS REGARDING DEVELOPMENT AND PERFORMANCE

### **BUSINESS PLAN OBJECTIVE 1 - To consider particular proposed parades and to issue determinations as deemed necessary**

#### **Target:**

1. To hold formal Commission meetings throughout the year as required for full consideration of 200 approx. sensitive parades/parade related protests.
  - The Commission held 40 quorate meetings in year to consider sensitive parades/protests. **Achieved**
2. To utilise, to its fullest extent, the Commission's information database to inform decision making.

- All decisions taken made use of the Commission's information database. **Achieved**
3. To issue determinations as deemed necessary in a timely manner.
- Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the limitations on the parading season 19 determinations were issued in 2020. However, the Commission issued 39 decisions on parades on the grounds of the Health Protection (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020. **Achieved**

## **BUSINESS PLAN OBJECTIVE 2 - To promote greater understanding by the general public of parading issues**

### **Target:**

1. To provide context to Commission determinations.
  - All decisions issued by the Commission in 2020-21 provided context for the decisions taken. **Achieved**
2. By 31 March 2021 to hold outreach meetings at locations across Northern Ireland:
  - Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, no outreach meetings were held during 2020-21. However engagement was made with a number of parade organisers around parading during a pandemic. **Achieved**

## **BUSINESS PLAN OBJECTIVE 3 - To keep itself generally informed on the conduct of public processions and protest meetings**

### **Target:**

1. To engage proactively with parade and protest organisers, elected and community representatives, and other stakeholders:
  - During 2020-21, the Commission proactively engaged with stakeholders. 10 per cent of Commission meetings had representations made either in person or in writing. **Achieved**
2. To obtain observer reports on the conduct of identified parades;
  - All of the parades identified for monitoring by the Commission are observed and reported on to the Commission. **Achieved**
3. To monitor media reports and statements relating to processions and protest meetings and attend relevant events.
  - The Commissioners reviews all media reports and statements on a daily basis. Members have attended a number of events throughout the year. **Achieved**
4. To keep under review the operation of the relevant legislation and Commissions procedures.

- Legislation/procedural rules were considered formally by the Commission in year. **Achieved**

## **BUSINESS PLAN OBJECTIVE 4 - To promote and facilitate mediation as a means of resolving disputes concerning public processions**

### **Target:**

1. Throughout the year, to explore mediation in areas where local agreement has not been reached, to ensure that the parties are made aware of the benefits of dialogue and to enable mediation where the parties agree to it.
  - Due to the ongoing pandemic it was a limited year for parading activities and the opportunities for mediation were limited. **Achieved**

## **BUSINESS PLAN OBJECTIVE 5 - To maintain high standards of governance & ensure value for money is achieved**

### **Target:**

1. To promote the highest standards of corporate governance by defining and strengthening the key relationships amongst the Accounting Officer, the Audit Committee, the Commission and the sponsoring department.
  - The Secretary met with the sponsor department on three occasions in 2020-21 and provided Stewardship Statements on the activities of

the Commission in line with best practice. The Secretary's report to the Commission is a standing agenda item at Commission meetings. The Audit Committee met four times in 2020-21. **Achieved**

2. To maintain an administrative support service to the Commission which is efficient, effective and economical within budget allocation. **Achieved**
3. To maintain high standards of information and data management in line with legislative requirements. **Achieved**

## **SUSTAINABILITY REPORT**

A full sustainable development report is not produced as the Parades Commission's staff complement is below the (250 employees) threshold.

The Commission has a recycling policy that involves the recycling of dry office waste, recycling of print cartridges and the ordering of recycled photocopying paper.

The Secretariat has developed an action plan to reduce the reliance on paper within the office practices.

From March 2015, parade and protest organisers are able to notify parades and parade related protests on-line, reducing use of paper. The number of on-line notifications in 2020-21 has increased to 75 per cent of total notifications.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Teer', with a long horizontal stroke extending from the top of the 'S'.

**S Teer**  
**Secretary and Accounting Officer**

**16 June 2021**



# ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

## Background

The Parades Commission for Northern Ireland is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Northern Ireland Office. Created on 27 March 1997, its statutory responsibilities are set out in the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998, amended by the Public Processions (Amendment) Northern Ireland Order 2005.

The Budget for the Commission is set by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and the financial activities form part of the NIO Resource Departmental Expenditure Limits (DEL) and Capital DEL estimates. In 2020-21, the Commission was allocated a budget of £791k. Efficiencies were achieved during 2020-21 due to the global pandemic and the delay in appointing a new Secretary, this resulted in reduced funding of £740k being received from NIO.

The Directors of the Commission comprise the Secretary and the Commissioners.

The previous Secretary to the Commission resigned on 18 March 2020. The post was filled on 1 July 2020, and Sarah Teer was appointed as the new Secretary, the Deputy Secretary held the post of Interim Accounting Officer from 19 March 2020 to 30 June 2020. The Secretary to the Commission is also appointed as Accounting Officer.

## **ROLE OF THE CHAIR OF THE PARADES COMMISSION**

The Chair is required to attend and chair Commission meetings, ensuring that these meetings are at appropriate intervals. The Chair must develop policy and provide strategic direction to the Commission to enable the effective and efficient performance of its statutory duties. The Chair must ensure personal and corporate compliance with the Code of Practice for Members of the Commission. The Chair must accept corporate responsibility for ensuring that the Commission complies with any statutory or administrative requirements for its use of public resources (including the promotion of regularity, propriety and value for money). The Chair shall assess the effectiveness and performance of the individual members of the Commission and report those assessments to the NIO.

## **COMMISSION MEMBERS**

Members are appointed by the NIO. The term of appointment for the outgoing Commission<sup>1</sup> was initially three years but was extended in December 2016 until December 2019 and extended for one further year until December 2020. From January 2021 a new Commission was appointed on a three year term. From 1 April 2020

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1 Original Commission appointments made 1st January 2014. Anne Marshall was re-appointed 27 March 2018 for a three year period. Geraldine McGahey was appointed 22 February 2016 to 31 December 2016 in line with the original appointment period of the Commission. Joelle Black was appointed 28 May 2018.

until 31 March 2021, membership of the Commission was as follows:

<b>Commission Members</b>	
<b>Membership 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020</b>	<b>Membership 1<sup>st</sup> January 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021</b>
Mrs Anne Henderson (Chair)	Very Revd Dr Graham Forbes (Chair)
Ms Sarah Havlin	Ms Anne Marshall
Mr Colin Kennedy	Ms Joelle Black
Mr Paul Hutchinson	Ms Marian Cree
Ms Anne Marshall	Ms Eimear McAllister
Mrs Geraldine McGahey	Mr Derek Wilson
Ms Joelle Black	Mr Billy Gamble (appointed 1 <sup>st</sup> February 2021)

## **ANNE HENDERSON**

Anne qualified as a chartered accountant in 1988. She worked for the accountancy firms KPMG and BDO Stoy Hayward in Belfast. During her three years in the international audit division of Time Warner Inc., she was based in New York and London and travelled extensively within the USA and across Europe. She has held a number of public appointments including as vice-chair, and briefly chair, of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive. She is a former board member of the International Fund for Ireland and the Enterprise Equity companies.

## **SARAH HAVLIN**

Sarah is a qualified and experienced solicitor and legal adviser. After a career in private practice she now

works in judicial decision making and regulation. She is currently Certification Officer of Northern Ireland, a quasi-judicial and regulatory role in the field of industrial relations. She has a particular expertise in government and public policy in Northern Ireland and was awarded a professional certificate in Policy Development from the Irish Institute of Boston College and also holds a professional certificate in Regulation from the London School of Economics and Political Science. Sarah has held a number of other positions in public office, judicial decision-making, formal arbitration proceedings and regulatory affairs. She played a significant role in the review of administrative electoral boundaries in Northern Ireland, having previously served as an Assistant Local Government Boundaries Commissioner, Assistant District Electoral Areas Commissioner and currently as Parliamentary Boundary Commissioner for Northern Ireland.

## **COLIN KENNEDY**

Colin is Chief Executive of 'Jordan's Gift' (a NI Charity assisting young people living with disability). Prior to taking up his current position he has been Chief Executive of the Mary Peters Trust and Chief Executive of Lenken Healthcare (Ireland) Ltd. He also spent 14 years in the finance industry. He is currently a member of the Mental Health Review Tribunal for Northern Ireland; a member of the Scrutiny Committee of the Pharmaceutical Society of Northern Ireland and a Director of the Northern Ireland Football League. He was a member of

the Nursing and Midwifery Council Fitness to Practice Panel from 2009 to 2017 and served as Chairman of the General Dental Council Complaints Panel from 2006 to 2009 and as Northern Ireland representative on the NHS Pay Review Board from 2013 to 2015.

## **PAUL HUTCHINSON**

Paul is the founder / director of Imagined Spaces, a company exploring creative community relations. A former Centre Director of Corrymeela (2009-14), Paul has a background in mental health, advocacy, mediation and the Arts. He worked for 12 years with NI Association for Mental Health, as a manager, advocate, practitioner / therapist, researcher. He was Associate Lecturer at the University of Ulster from 1999-2002, teaching Advocacy and Empowerment skills. He was a Neighbourhood Renewal Advisor in North West England for 5 years, and worked for 7 years in community cohesion projects in Oldham, Burnley and Blackburn. Paul also has a background in various artistic fields as a documentary film-maker, writer and photographer. Paul is currently Visiting Professor at Dalhousie School of Law, Nova Scotia. His latest book is 'Between the Bells- Stories of reconciliation from Corrymeela' (2019 - Canterbury Press).

## **ANNE MARSHALL**

Anne qualified as a solicitor in 1998 and worked in private practice for 12 years specialising in criminal law and human rights work. She has also worked in the Children's

Law Centre and as a prosecutor in the Public Prosecution Service. She was appointed as a Deputy District Judge in 2013 and sits in Criminal, Youth and Family Courts. She currently holds public appointments as Chair of the Exceptional Circumstances Body, Presiding Member of Civil Legal Services Appeals Panel and Chair of Police Appeals Tribunals and also sits as a President of the Review Tribunal. Anne is also a governor in a local primary school.

## **GERALDINE MCGAHEY**

Geraldine McGahey stood down as Chief Executive of Larne Borough Council on 1 April 2015 when the new Northern Ireland district councils were formed. During her time as Chief Executive she was SOLACE's gender champion promoting women in local government, a representative on the Good Relations Panel reporting to the Office of the First and Deputy First Ministers and an appointee of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister to the Northern Zone Steering Committee for the Social Investment Fund. Previously, Mrs McGahey was a Building Control Surveyor in Belfast City Council (1993-2001) and Grants Officer with the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (1983-1989). She received an OBE for services to local government in the New Year Honours list for 2015. Mrs McGahey currently is the Chief Commissioner of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and a non-executive director for the Northern Health and Social Care Trust. She is also a mentor to the Woman's Leadership Initiative.



## **JOELLE BLACK**

Joelle was appointed to the Commission in May 2018. Joelle is a Barrister-at-law and has been a Principal Public Prosecutor with the Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland since 2008. During this period, Joelle was seconded by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to EULEX Kosovo as a Special Prosecutor.

## **NEWLY APPOINTED CHAIR AND COMMISSIONERS**

### **VERY REVD DR GRAHAM FORBES (Chair)**

The Very Revd Dr Graham Forbes CBE is a retired Anglican clergyman and former Provost of St Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh. His wide variety of public appointments include Chair of Court, Edinburgh Napier University, and Chair of the Scottish Committee of University Chairs. A former member of the Parole Board, he served as HM (Lay) Inspector of Constabulary and then as Chair of the Scottish Criminal Cases Review Commission which investigates alleged miscarriages of justice. Within health he served on the General Medical Council, chaired the Scottish Parliament's Expert Group on the safety of the MMR vaccine and chaired the Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland. He is the Portuguese Hon Consul in Scotland.

## **MARIAN CREE**

Marian Cree is Legal Service Oversight Commissioner for Northern Ireland and formerly the Northern Ireland representative at the Competition and Markets Authority.

## **EIMEAR McALLISTER**

Eimear McAllister practised at the Leeds Bar before leaving to focus on legal services regulation. She is currently Chair of fitness to practise panels for the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and a member of the Parole Board.

## **DEREK WILSON**

Derek Wilson is a former banker who chaired the Northern Ireland mortgage committee of UK Finance. He currently serves on a number of boards, committees and governing bodies, including the Northern Ireland Housing Executive Board where he chairs the Resources and Performance Committee, having previously served on the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee for over five years. He sits on the Co-ownership Board, is a member of the governing body of the South Eastern Regional College and serves as a lay member on the Statutory Committee of the Pharmaceutical Society of NI.

## **BILLY GAMBLE**

Billy Gamble now works as a Strategy Consultant following his retirement as a senior civil servant in the Northern Ireland Civil Service. During his civil service career, he held roles including Head of Good Relations



& Reconciliation Division in the Office of the First and deputy First Minister, and Director of Regional Planning and Transportation in the Department for Regional Development.

He has previously held a number of board and trustee appointments, including membership of the board of the International Fund for Ireland, the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, and the Community Relations Council.

## **REGISTER OF INTERESTS**

Commission members and senior secretariat 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. No interests were declared which may be perceived to conflict with their regulatory role or management responsibilities.

## **PERSONAL DATA RELATED INCIDENTS**

There were no personal data related incidents formally reported to the Information Commissioner's Office.

# REMUNERATION AND STAFF REPORT

## REMUNERATION POLICY

The remuneration of the Chair and Commissioners is determined by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland.

The Parades Commission does not directly employ staff, it seconds staff from the Home Civil Service (HCS), the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) or via the interchange scheme.

For senior civil servants seconded from HCS, the remuneration 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

- Government's inflation target.

For senior civil servants seconded from NICS, the remuneration is set by the Minister for Finance and Personnel following independent advice from the Review Body on Senior Salaries.

Further information about the work of the Review Body can be found at [www.ome.uk.com](http://www.ome.uk.com).

The remuneration of all senior civil servants is entirely performance-related. Performance is appraised by line managers in respect of achievement of agreed objectives.

## **SERVICE CONTRACTS**

The Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010 requires HCS appointments to be made on merit on the basis of fair and open competition. The Recruitment Principles published by the Civil Service Commission specify the circumstances when appointments may be made or otherwise. Unless otherwise stated below, the officials covered by this report hold appointments which are open-ended. Further information about the Civil Service Commissioners can be found at [www.civilservicecommission.org.uk](http://www.civilservicecommission.org.uk)

NICS 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. Policy relating to notice periods and termination payments is contained in the NICS Staff Handbook. Further information about the Civil Service Commissioners can be found at [www.nicscommissioners.org](http://www.nicscommissioners.org)

Details of salaries and allowances paid, benefits in kind and accrued pension entitlement are shown below.

## COMMISSIONERS’ NUMBERS AND COSTS (AUDITED)

The total emoluments of the Commissioners (including the Chair) during the year ended 31 March 2021 amounted to £198,253 (2019-20: £199,692) and the expenses incurred by the Commissioners were £nil (2019-20: £380). Both the Chair and Commissioners are non-Northern Ireland Civil Service, therefore their salaries are not pensionable. The salary entitlement of the Chair and Commissioners for 2020-21 was as follows:

Commission Member	2020-21		2019-20	
	Salary Range £'000	Benefits in Kind (to nearest £100)	Salary Range £'000	Benefits in Kind (to nearest £100)
Anne Henderson (Chair)*	35-40	-	50-55	-
Sarah Havlin**	15-20	-	20-25	-
Colin Kennedy**	15-20	-	20-25	-
Paul Hutchinson**	15-20	-	20-25	-
Anne Marshall	20-25	-	20-25	-
Geraldine McGahey**	15-20	-	20-25	-
Joelle Black	20-25	-	20-25	-
Graham Forbes (Chair)*	10-15	-	-	-
Marian Cree**	5-10			

Derek Wilson**	5-10	-	-	-
Eimear McAllister**	5-10	-	-	-
Billy Gamble**	0-5	-	-	-

\* The full time equivalent salary for the Chair is in the range £50,000 to £55,000.

\*\* The full time equivalent salary for a Commissioner is in the range £20,000 to £25,000.

This Commission has been appointed for a 3-year period ending December 2023.

The Commissioners are expected to devote approximately two days per week to Commission business over the course of a year, with a proportionately greater commitment required during the summer months.

## REMUNERATION (INCLUDING SALARY) AND PENSION ENTITLEMENTS 2020-21 - AUDITED

Single total figure of remuneration										
Officials	Salary (£'000)		Performance Pay or Bonus payments (£'000)		Non-Cash Benefits (to nearest £100)		Pension Benefits (to nearest £1,000)**		Total (£'000)	
	2020-21	2019-20	2020-21	2019-20	2020-21	2019-20	2020-21	2019-20	2020-21	2019-20
Sarah Teer****	50-55	-	-	-	-	-	12	-	62-65	-
Nuala Higgins***	10-15	0-5	-	-	-	-	7	1	15-25	0-5
Lee Hegarty*	-	65-70	-	-	-	-	-	29	-	95-100

\* Lee Hegarty resigned on 18 March 2020. His full-time equivalent salary for 2019-20 was £65,000 to £70,000.

\*\* The value of pension benefits accrued during the year is calculated as (the real increase in pension multiplied by 20) plus (the real increase in any lump sum) less (the contributions made by the individual). The real increases exclude increases due to inflation or any increase or decreases due to a transfer of pension rights.

\*\*\* Nuala Higgins was appointed as acting Secretary from 24th March 2020 until 30 June 2020. Her full-time equivalent salary for 2020-21 was £45,000 to £50,000.

\*\*\*\* Sarah Teer was appointed as Secretary on 1st July 2020. Her fulltime equivalent salary for 2020-21 was £70,000 - £75,000.

No bonus payments were paid in 2020-21, (2019-20: none).

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay, benefits-in-kind as well as severance payments. It does not include employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

## **SALARY**

This report is based on accrued payments made by the Commission and thus recorded in these accounts. “Salary” includes gross salary; overtime; recruitment and retention allowances; private office allowances and any other allowances to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation.

## **BENEFITS IN KIND**

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the Parades Commission and treated by HM Revenue and Customs as a taxable emolument. There were no benefits-in-kind in 2020-21, (2019-20: none).

## **BONUSES**

Bonuses are based on performance levels attained and are made as part of the appraisal process. Bonuses relate to the performance in the year in which they become payable to the individual. There were no bonuses paid in 2020-21 or 2019-20.

## PENSION BENEFITS

Pension Entitlements					
	Real increase in pension at pension age and lump sum at 31/3/21	Total accrued pension at pension age at 31/03/21 and related lump sum	Cash Equivalent Transfer Value at 31/03/21	Cash Equivalent Transfer Value at 31/03/20	Real increase in CETV
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Sarah Teer	25-30	10-15	113	82	27
Lee Hegarty	-	-	-	237	-
Nuala Higgins	0-2.5	15-20	218	206	6

## PENSION ARRANGEMENTS

As staff are seconded from different public sector bodies pension benefits are provided through both the Northern Ireland Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme and the Local Government Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland).

The alpha pension scheme was introduced for new entrants from 1 April 2015. The alpha scheme and all previous scheme arrangements are unfunded with the cost of benefits met by monies voted each year. The majority of existing members of the classic, premium, classic plus and nuvos pension arrangements also moved to alpha from that date. Members who on 1 April 2012 were within 10 years of their normal pension age did not move to alpha and those who were within 13.5 years and 10 years of their normal pension age



were given a choice between moving to alpha on 1 April 2015 or at a later date determined by their age. Alpha is a 'Career Average Revalued Earnings' (CARE) arrangement in which members accrue pension benefits at a percentage rate of annual pensionable earnings throughout the period of scheme membership. The rate is 2.32%.

Discrimination identified by the courts in the way that the 2015 pension reforms were introduced must be removed by the Department of Finance. It is expected that, in due course, eligible members with relevant service between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2022 may be entitled to different pension benefits in relation to that period. The different pension benefits relates to the different schemes eg classic, alpha etc and is not the monetary benefits received. This is known as the 'McCloud Remedy' and will impact many aspects of the Civil Service Pensions schemes including the scheme valuation outcomes. Further information on this will be included in the NICS pension scheme accounts which are available at DoF annual report and accounts | Department of Finance ([finance-ni.gov.uk](http://finance-ni.gov.uk)).

Currently new entrants joining can choose between membership of alpha or joining a good quality 'money purchase' stakeholder arrangement with a significant employer contribution (partnership pension account).

New entrants joining on or after 30 July 2007 were eligible for membership of the nuvos arrangement or



they could have opted for a partnership pension account. Nuvos is also a CARE arrangement in which members accrue pension benefits at a percentage rate of annual pensionable earnings throughout the period of scheme membership. The current rate is 2.3%.

Staff in post prior to 30 July 2007 may be in one of three statutory based 'final salary' defined benefit arrangements (classic, premium and classic plus). From April 2011, pensions payable under classic, premium, and classic plus are reviewed annually in line with changes in the cost of living. New entrants joining on or after 1 October 2002 and before 30 July 2007 could choose between membership of premium or joining the partnership pension account.

Benefits in classic 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 as per classic.

The partnership pension account is a stakeholder pension arrangement. The employer makes a basic contribution of between 8% and 14.75% (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 0.5% of pensionable salary to cover the cost of centrally-provided risk benefit cover (death in service and ill health retirement).

Active members of the pension scheme will receive an Annual Benefit Statement. The accrued pension quoted is the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach their scheme pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are at or over pension age. Scheme Pension age is 60 for members of classic, premium, and classic plus and 65 for members of nuvos. The normal scheme pension age in alpha is linked to the member's State Pension Age but cannot be before age 65. Further details about the NICS pension schemes can be found at the website [Civil Service Pensions \(NI\) | Department of Finance \(finance-ni.gov.uk\)](https://www.civilservicepensions.gov.uk).

All pension benefits are reviewed annually in line with changes in the cost of living. Any applicable increases are applied from April and are determined by the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) figure for the preceding September. The CPI in September 2020 was 0.5% and HM Treasury has announced that public service pensions will be increased accordingly from April 2021.

Employee contribution rates for all members for the period covering 1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022 are as follows:

## **Scheme Year 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022**

<b>Annualised Rate of Pensionable Earnings</b>		<b>Contribution rates – All members</b>	
<b>(Salary Bands)</b>			
<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>	<b>From 01 April 2021 to 31 March 2022</b>	
£0.00	£24,199.99	4.60%	
£24,200.00	£55,799.99	5.45%	
£55,800.00	£153,299.99	7.35%	
£153,300.00 and above		8.05%	

The Local Government Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) (the Scheme) which is a funded defined benefit scheme, which provides retirement benefits for Council employees on a “career average revalued earnings” basis from 1 April 2015. Prior to that date benefits were built up on a “final salary” basis.

From 1 April 2015, a member builds up retirement pension at the rate of 1/49th pensionable pay for each year. Pension benefits in relation to membership between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2015 were built up at the rate of 1/60th pensionable pay for each year of membership. There is no automatic lump sum provided in respect of membership after 31 March 2009. Pension benefits in relation to any membership before 1 April 2009 were built up at the rate of 1/80th (pension) and 3/80ths (tax-free lump sum) of pensionable pay for each year of membership up to 31 March 2009. At retirement, members may give up some pension for additional lump sum, subject to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC)

limits. The conversion rate is £12 additional lump sum for every £1 of pension given up.

The scheme is funded by contributions made by both employees and employers. Prior to 1 April 2009, a member's contribution rates were fixed at 6% of their pensionable remuneration (except for those who were entitled to contribute to the Scheme at 5% before 1 February 2003 and have remained in continuous employment). Tiered member contribution rates, determined by the whole-time equivalent rate of pay, were introduced from 1 April 2009. From 1 April 2015, the member contribution rates are determined on the actual rate of pay.

The ranges for the bands for tiered contribution rates are revised by the Department for Communities in April each year in accordance with the increase applied to a pension in payment.

The bands, effective from 1 April 2020 were as follows:

## Employee Contribution Rates

Band	Range	Employee Contribution Rate
1	£0-£15,000	5.5%
2	£15,001- £22,900	5.8%
3	£22,901 – £38,300	6.5%
4	£38,301 - £46,400	6.8%
5	£46,401 - £91,900	8.5%
6	More than £91,901	10.5%

Employers' contributions rates are determined by the fund's actuary every three years at the triennial valuation. A formal triennial actuarial valuation of the Fund as at

31 March 2019 was carried out in 2019/20 and set the employer contribution rates for the 3 years commencing 1 April 2020 as follows:

## Employer Contribution Rates

Year	Employer Contribution Rate
1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021	19.5%
1 April 2021 – 31 March 2022	19.5%
1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023	19.5%

The Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014 were made on 27 June 2014 and The Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment and Transitional Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014 were made on 30 June 2014. Both sets of regulations are effective from 1 April 2015.

## Cash Equivalent Transfer Values

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 shown relate to 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 NICS pension arrangements. 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 in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 and do not take account of any actual or potential benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

## **Real increase in CETV**

This reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It does not include 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. However, the real increase calculation uses common actuarial factors at the start and end of the period so that it disregards the effect of any changes in factors and focuses only on the increase that is funded by the employer.

## **COMPENSATION FOR LOSS OF OFFICE (Audited)**

There were no redundancy or departure costs paid or payable by the Parades Commission in 2020-21 or 2019-



20 in respect of Civil Service or other compensation schemes.

## **PAYMENTS TO PAST DIRECTORS (Audited)**

No payments have been made to any person who was not a Director at the time the payment was made, but who had been a Director previously.

## **FAIR PAY DISCLOSURE (Audited)**

The Commission is required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the most highly-paid Director, as disclosed in the remuneration table on page 20, in the organisation and the median remuneration of the organisation's workforce.

	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2019-20</b>
	<b>Salary</b>	<b>Salary</b>
Band of Highest Paid Director's FTE Total Remuneration	£000 70-75	£000 65-70
Median Total Remuneration	£28,575	£25,491
Ratio	2.54	2.65

The highest paid Director in the Parades Commission in the financial year 2020-21 was paid in the band £70,000 - £75,000 (2019-20 was £65,000 - £70,000). In 2020-21, the salary of the highest paid Director, was 2.54 times (2019-21: 2.65 times) the median remuneration of the workforce, which was £28,575 (2019-20: £25,491). The decrease from 2.65 to 2.54 is due to a lower paid staff member leaving before the year end, resulting in an increased median salary in 2020-21.

Remuneration ranged from £20,000 to £75,000 (2019-20: £20,000 to £70,000).

The calculations exclude the remuneration to the Commissioners as their employment terms and conditions, including rates of remuneration, are determined by the United Kingdom Government, and the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland is unable to influence those rates. Details of their remuneration are provided above.

## STAFF REPORT (Audited)

### Number of Senior Civil Service Staff

Grade of Senior Civil Servant	2020-21 Number of Staff	2019-20 Number of Staff
5	1	1

## Staff Numbers and Costs (Audited)

### Average number of persons engaged

The average number of whole-time equivalent persons engaged during the year was as follows:

	2020-21			2019-20
	Total	Commissioners* and Seconded Staff	Agency Staff	Total
Directly engaged	7	7	-	7
Other	7	7	-	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>15</b>

\* The Commissioners are expected to devote approximately two days per week to Commission business over the course of a year, with a proportionately greater commitment required during the summer months. Each commissioner is included as one whole-time equivalent person in the above numbers.



	2020-21		2019-20
	Total	Commissioners and Seconded staff	Total
	£	£	£
Wages and Salaries	425,575	425,575	455,713
Social security costs	45,439	45,439	46,948
Other pension costs	53,799	53,799	71,068
<b>Total net costs</b>	<b>524,813</b>	<b>524,813</b>	<b>573,729</b>

## Staff Composition

	2020-21			2019-20		
	Total Average Number of Persons Engaged	Average Number of Female Persons Engaged	Average Number of Male Persons Engaged	Total Average Number of Persons Engaged	Average Number of Female Persons Engaged	Average Number of Male Persons Engaged
Commissioners	7	5	2	7	5	2
Senior Civil Service	1	1	0	1	0	1
Secretariat Staff	6	5	1	7	6	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4</b>

## Average Staff Turnover

The average number of staff movements for whole-time equivalent permanent persons employed during the year was as follows:

	2020-21
Joiners	5
Leavers	(6)
Transfers In from Other Government Bodies	1
Transfers Out to Other Government Bodies	(1)
<b>Net Movement</b>	<b>(1)</b>

## **Managing Attendance**

The Parades Commission is comprised of seconded civil servants and manages attendance in line with the policies of secondees' parent departments. Staff absence arising as a result of illness, including injuries, disability or other health problems, was approximately 1 day per employee in 2020-21 (2019-20: 1 day).

## **Disabled Employees**

The Parades Commission aims to ensure that there is no discrimination on the grounds of disability and that access to employment and career advancement in the Commission is based solely on ability, qualifications and suitability for the post. The Commission complies with all existing legislation in regard to its disabled employees.

## **Equal Opportunities**

In keeping with the NIO 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 intimidation.

## **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 regular staff meetings.

## **Health & Safety**

The Parades Commission recognises its legal responsibilities in relation to the health and safety of its staff and is committed to operating an effective health and safety regime. In line with this commitment the Commission has complied with the relevant legislation.

## **Expenditure on Consultancy**

There was no expenditure on consultancy in 2020-21 (2019-20: £nil).

## **Off-payroll engagements**

There were no off-payroll engagements in 2020-21 (2019-20: £nil).

## **Exit packages (Audited)**

There were no exit packages in 2020-21 (2019-20: £nil).

# STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING OFFICER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

Under paragraph 12(1) and para (2) of Schedule 1 to the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998, 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 comprehensive net expenditure, statement of financial position, changes in taxpayers' equity 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 as set out in the Government Financial Reporting Manual have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis; and
- confirm that the annual report and accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable and take personal responsibility for the annual report and accounts and the judgments required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable.

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 Managing Public Money published by the HM Treasury.

As the Accounting Officer, I have taken all the steps that I ought to have taken to make myself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland's auditors are

aware of that information. So far as I am aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware. I confirm that the Annual report and Accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable. I take personal responsibility for the Annual Report and Accounts and the judgements required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable.

# GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

## Introduction and Context

The Parades Commission for Northern Ireland (the Commission) is an independent executive non-departmental public body sponsored by the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) which was created on 27 March 1997. It was given statutory responsibilities on 16 February 1998 by the commencement of the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998.

As at 31 March 2021 the Commission had seven Commissioners, including its Chair. It is supported by a secretariat. The secretariat had on average seven seconded staff, including myself, all seconded to the Commission from public sector bodies. I was appointed to the position of Secretary 1st July 2020. The Deputy Secretary had been in post and appointed as interim Accounting Officer for the first quarter of the reporting period and I am content there were no significant internal control issues to note in the period before my appointment as Accounting Officer.

The Commission normally meets on a weekly basis and has a collective responsibility for approving any significant changes relating to the operation or use of resources of the Parades Commission. The Commission also has an Audit and Risk Committee which meets formally four times a year, or more frequently as required, to assist and advise the Accounting Officer on



governance responsibilities. Any recommendations made by the Audit and Risk Committee must be approved by the Commission.

As Accounting Officer, I regularly discuss operational performance and corporate issues with the sponsor group within the NIO.

## **Scope of Responsibility**

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal governance that supports the achievement of the Commission's policies, aims and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me in Managing Public Money. As such, I am responsible for ensuring propriety and regularity in the handling of those public funds; and for the day-to-day operations and management of the Commission.

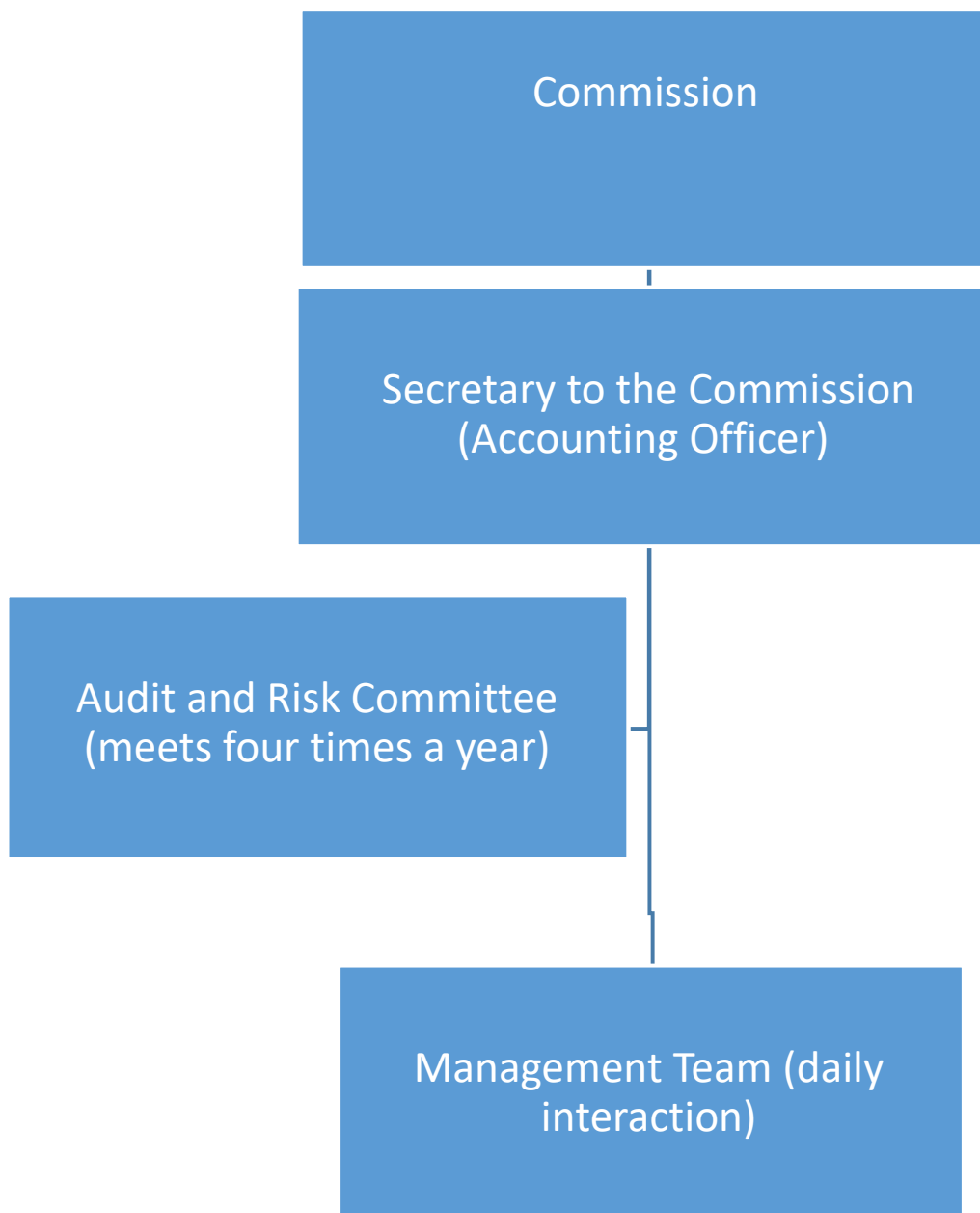
I am also responsible for the effective operation of the secretariat and for managing its financial and human resources. I provide advice and support to the Chair and Commissioners in support of their aims and objectives and in undertaking their statutory responsibilities. One of the statutory responsibilities of the Commission is "to keep under review, and make such recommendations as it thinks fit to the Secretary of State, concerning, the operation of the Act". There were no recommendations made to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland in



2020-21. There were no Ministerial directions in the 2020-21 financial year.

## Governance Framework

In my role as Accounting Officer, I discharge my responsibilities with the support of the Audit and Risk Committee and my Management Team. This is outlined below:



## Commission's Performance

The statutory duties of the Commission include:

- promoting greater understanding by the general public of issues concerning public processions;
- promoting and facilitating mediation as a means of resolving disputes concerning public processions;
- keeping itself generally informed as to the conduct of public processions and protest meetings; and
- keeping under review, and making such recommendations as it thinks fit to the Secretary of State concerning, the operation of the Act.

Throughout 2020-21 the Commission effectively discharged its statutory functions and duties. It received representation and where necessary, issued determinations on parades and parade related protests. In line with best practice, the operational procedures of the Commission and the quality of data used by the Commission is kept under continuous review to ensure that the Commission is content that it is provided with all requisite information to enable it to make informed decisions.

Attendance at Commission meetings during 2020-21 is set out in the following table:

<b>Outgoing Commissioners up to December 2020</b>	<b>Current Commissioners from January 2021</b>	<b>Commission Meeting Attendance/Eligible to attend</b>
Anne Henderson (Chair)		33/33
Joelle Black	Joelle Black	37/40

Sarah Havlin		28/33
Paul Hutchinson		30/33
Colin Kennedy		33/33
Anne Marshall	Anne Marshall	37/40
Geraldine McGahey		31/33
	Graham Forbes (Chair)	7/7
	Marian Cree	7/7
	Billy Gamble	5/5
	Eimear McAllister	7/7
	Derek Wilson	7/7

All meetings were quorate.

Strategic objectives were agreed to reflect the Commission's statutory duties and functions, incorporating its strategic vision. The Commission uses these objectives as a basis for the 2020-21 Business Plan. The 2020-21 Business Plan can be found on the website.

## **Audit and Risk Committee**

The Audit and Risk Committee supports the Accounting Officer and the Commission in their responsibilities for the management of risk and the effectiveness of the internal system of control and governance arrangements. The Committee fulfils this responsibility by reviewing whether proportionate assurances for meeting the Commission's and Accounting Officer's responsibilities are available and by testing the reliability and integrity of these assurances. This includes oversight of the effective operation and impact of the Framework Document and the Commission's business planning process.

The Audit and Risk Committee is comprised of five Commissioners, and must have two Commissioners in attendance to be quorate. The Committee is also attended by the Accounting Officer, Deputy Secretary, Internal Audit, the National Audit Office (as external auditors), external accountant and representatives from the sponsor department. The Committee meets four times per year and more frequently as required. In addition to providing all Commissioners with a copy of the minutes of meetings of the Committee, the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee briefs the Commission after each meeting.

Attendance at the Audit and Risk Committee is disclosed in table below:

Membership in 2020/21 under New Commission	Membership in 2020/21 under Previous Commission	Date of meeting				No. of Meetings attended/ Eligible to attend
		06/05/2020	10/06/2020	21/10/2020	27/01/2021	
Anne Marshall (Chair)	Anne Marshall (Chair)	✓	✓	✓	✓	4/4
Joelle Black	Joelle Black	✓	✓		✓	3/4
Marian Cree					✓	1/1
Eimear McAllister					✓	1/1
Derek Wilson					✓	1/1
	Sarah Havlin					0/3
	Colin Kennedy		✓	✓		2/3
	Geraldine McGahey	✓	✓	✓		3/3

All meetings were quorate.

During the 2020-21 financial year, the Audit and Risk Committee advised the Commission on the following significant areas:

- The accounting policies, the accounts and the annual report of the organisation, including the process for review of the accounts prior to submission for audit, level of errors identified and management's letter of representation to the external auditors;
- The risk management process;
- The planned activity and results of both internal and external audit;
- The adequacy of management responses to issues identified by audit activity, including the external auditor's Audit Completion Report and the progress on the implementation of recommendations from internal and external audit reports; and
- Specific, significant issues for the attention of the Committee.

Based on the views expressed by the Accounting Officer, the Internal Auditors and the External Auditors, the Committee was satisfied with its overall effectiveness.

## **Corporate Governance**

The Commission conducts its affairs in accordance with a comprehensive corporate governance framework. Although not part of central government, the Commission is expected to comply with the principles set out in the

Corporate Governance Code (Corporate governance in central government departments, code of good practice, published by HM Treasury and the Cabinet Office, April 2017) as far as applicable. The Commission has a comprehensive Framework Document agreed with the NIO which sets down its values and principles, roles and responsibilities and clear lines of accountability.

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the control environment. This review is informed by the work of staff who have the responsibility for the development and maintenance of the control framework, by the work of internal audit and by the findings of the external auditors in their report to those charged with governance and any other reports. I also complete Stewardship Statements bi-annually. These statements help to identify areas of improvement and provide assurances to the NIO's Principal Accounting Officer on the effectiveness of management controls. The statements also inform the content of this Governance Statement.

The Commission has a raising concerns (whistleblowing) policy in place to ensure that staff who raise concerns receive a response and are informed about how their concerns are being dealt with. The handling of complaints is set out in the Commission's Complaints Procedure.

## Internal Audit Reports Submitted to Audit and Risk Committee

In 2020-21, ASM were internal auditors to the Parades Commission, appointed through a tender competition. The services provided by ASM operate to standards defined by the Public Sector Internal Audit Standards.

Internal Audit's work plan is informed by an analysis of the risk to which the Commission is exposed and the plan is considered by the Audit and Risk Committee before it is agreed by the Commission.

Internal Audit's findings are presented to the Audit and Risk Committee and copies of all final reports are sent to me, as Accounting Officer. In addition, Internal Audit provides an annual written statement to the Audit and Risk Committee, setting out a formal opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Committee's risk management, control and governance processes. Internal Audit conducted three reviews on the following activities during 2020-21:

- Review of Risk Management and Corporate Governance;
- Review of Notification Management System; and
- Follow-up review from 2019-20.

All of the above reports received 'Satisfactory' opinion ratings. There were two Priority 2 recommendations and five Priority 3 recommendations made, these are low



level recommendations which could result in some impact on a key organisational objective or could lead to an increased risk exposure. All of these recommendations have been accepted by management and will be implemented during 2021-22.

In the Annual Assurance Statement, the Internal Auditors stated that, during the year ended 31 March 2021, the Commission's systems in relation to risk management, control and governance were adequate and operated effectively, thereby providing an overall 'Satisfactory' assurance in relation to the effective and efficient achievement of the Commission's objectives.

## **Risk Assessment**

The Commission's corporate governance controls are 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. Risks are managed on an ongoing basis in a process that is designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Commission's 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 was in place for the year ended 31 March 2021 and up to the date of approval of the annual report and accounts, and accords with HM Treasury guidance.



The system 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 to the Commission;
- Regular reviews of periodic and annual financial reports which indicate financial performance; and
- As appropriate, formal project management disciplines.

Throughout the year the Commission had a risk register in place that has been assessed and considered at management level. The register has been scrutinised, discussed at both the Audit and Risk Committee and Commission meetings.

The Commission operates a “traffic light” corporate risk register in line with Government guidance. The Commission revised its corporate risk register following feedback received from the internal auditors. Changes have been made to the format of the register and each risk has been assigned a risk owner. The register is kept under constant review, with a formal quarterly review, and update by management as necessary. Risks are identified and assessed in terms of likelihood of occurrence and impact of risk. Management considers

signs of risks changing, examines existing risk control tools and, if necessary, takes remedial action.

The Commission's risks are identified by the Commissioners, by me as Accounting Officer and by my management team and they are ratified by the Audit and Risk Committee and the Commission. The risks have been ranked according to 'Likelihood' and 'Impact'. We have also assessed what actions are in place, or need to be taken, to mitigate the organisational risks identified.

During the course of 2020-21 our main risks were financial and reputational risks, including maintenance of IT systems and protection of our information. One risk has remained high in 2020-21 regarding loss of knowledge due to staff turnover, as a result of a number of key Secretariat staff contracts coming to an end. The risk as a result of the global outbreak of Covid-19 meant that business continuity plans were activated to mitigate the impact and ensured that the Commission could continue with business as usual with minimal disruption; however, it is likely that Covid-19 will have a continuing impact on the work of the Commission.

On-going operational risks are managed as follows:

- all operational risks are identified, captured, evaluated and controlled by me and my management team and communicated to the Audit and Risk Committee;

- Any changes to the assessment and evaluation of risk are noted by the Audit and Risk Committee and ratified by the full Commission; and
- The full Commission has a responsibility to lead on determining and evaluating the Commission's risks; and
- Risks are communicated to staff by management, via regular staff meetings and in the risk register.

## **Personal Data Related Incidents**

There were no personal data related incidents formally reported to the Information Commissioner's Office.

## **Significant Internal Control Issues**

There were no significant internal control issues identified during 2020-21. There is no relevant audit information of which the external auditors are unaware.

## **Events after the Reporting Period**

There are no events to note.



**S Teer**

**Secretary and Accounting Officer**

**16 June 2021**

# Parliamentary Accountability and Audit Report

- 1.1 The accounts of the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland are audited by the Comptroller and Auditor General under the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998. The audit fee charged was £15,500 (£15,000 in 2019-20). The auditors received no fees for non-audit services. The auditors have been provided with all relevant audit information necessary to complete their audit and the Accounting Officer has taken all the necessary steps to ensure that the auditors are aware of any relevant information.
- 1.2 All expenditure was applied to the purpose intended by Parliament (audited).
- 1.3 No fees or charges were paid by the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland (audited).
- 1.4 The Parades Commission for Northern Ireland has no remote contingent liabilities (audited).
- 1.5 The Parades Commission for Northern Ireland had no losses or special payments (audited).
- 1.6 The Parades Commission for Northern Ireland's net expenditure in 2020-21 was £731,617. The total comprehensive expenditure for prior years was as follows:

## Expenditure and income

	<b>2020-21</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2018-19</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Net Expenditure	731,617	776,217	720,078
Other Comprehensive Expenditure	(3)	(35)	(271)
Total Comprehensive Expenditure	731,614	776,182	719,807



**S Teer**

**Secretary and Accounting Officer**

**16 June 2021**

# THE CERTIFICATE AND REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL TO THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

## Opinion on financial statements

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland for the year ended 31 March 2021 under the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998. The financial statements comprise: Statements of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, Financial Position, Cash Flows, Changes in Taxpayers' Equity; and the related notes, including the significant accounting policies. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out within them. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and International Accounting Standards as interpreted by HM Treasury's Government Financial Reporting Manual.

I have also audited the information in the Accountability Report that is described in that report as having been audited.

In my opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland's affairs as at 31 March 2021 and of the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland's net expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 and Secretary of State directions issued thereunder.

## **Opinion on regularity**

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

## **Basis for opinions**

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) (UK), applicable law and Practice Note 10 'Audit of Financial Statements of Public Sector Entities in the United Kingdom'. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of my certificate.

Those standards require me and my staff to comply with the Financial Reporting Council's Revised Ethical Standard 2019. I have also elected to apply the ethical standards relevant to listed entities. I am independent of the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland in



accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK. My staff and I have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinion.

## **Conclusions relating to going concern**

The Parades Commission for Northern Ireland's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Commission and the Accounting Officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this certificate.

The going concern basis of accounting for the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland is adopted in consideration of the requirements set out in HM Treasury's Government Reporting Manual, which require entities to adopt the going concern basis of accounting



in the preparation of the financial statements where it anticipated that the services which they provide will continue into the future.

## **Other Information**

The other information comprises information included in the annual report, but does not include the parts of the Accountability Report described in that report as having been audited, the financial statements and my auditor's certificate thereon. The Commission and the Accounting Officer are responsible for the other information. My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in my certificate, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. In connection with my audit of the financial statements, my responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

## **Opinion on other matters**

In my opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the parts of the Accountability Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with Secretary of State directions made under the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998; and
- the information given in the Performance and Accountability Reports for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

## **Matters on which I report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Performance and Accountability reports. I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept or returns adequate for my audit have not been received from branches not visited by my staff; or
- the financial statements and the parts of the Accountability Report to be audited are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or

- certain disclosures of remuneration specified by HM Treasury's Government Financial Reporting Manual are not made; or
- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with HM Treasury's guidance.

## **Responsibilities of the Commission and Accounting Officer for the financial statements**

As explained more fully in the Statement of Accounting Officer's Responsibilities, the Commission and the Accounting Officer, are responsible for:

- the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view;
- internal controls as the Commission and the Accounting Officer determine are necessary to enable the preparation of financial statement to be free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.
- assessing the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Commission and the Accounting Officer anticipates that the services

provided by the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland will not continue to be provided in the future.

## **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

My responsibility is to audit, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998.

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue a certificate that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

I design procedures inline with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulation, including fraud.

My procedures included the following:

- Inquiring of management, the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland's head of internal audit and those charged with governance, including obtaining and

reviewing supporting documentation relating to the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland's policies and procedures relating to:

- identifying, evaluating and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
  - detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud; and
  - the internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations including the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland's controls relating to the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 and Managing Public Money.
- discussing among the engagement team regarding how and where fraud might occur in the financial statements and any potential indicators of fraud. As part of this discussion, I identified potential for fraud in the following areas: posting of unusual journals.
  - obtaining an understanding of Parades Commission for Northern Ireland's framework of authority as well as other legal and regulatory frameworks that the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a direct effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the Parades

Commission for Northern Ireland. The key laws and regulations I considered in this context included the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998, Managing Public Money, Employment Law and tax legislation.

In addition to the above, my procedures to respond to identified risks included the following:

- reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with relevant laws and regulations discussed above;
- enquiring of management and the Audit Committee concerning actual and potential litigation and claims;
- reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance and the Commissioners; and
- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, testing the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments; assessing whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

I also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indications



of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of my certificate.

In addition, I am required to obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the income and expenditure reported in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.

## **Report**

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

**Gareth Davies**  
**Comptroller and Auditor General**

**Date 21 June 2021**



National Audit Office  
157-197 Buckingham Palace Road  
Victoria  
London  
SW1W 9SP

# Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

## Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2021

		2020-21	2019-20
	Notes	£	£
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Staff costs	2	524,813	573,729
Other expenditure	3	199,786	194,297
Depreciation and amortisation	3	5,789	8,191
(Gain) / loss on disposal	3	1,229	-
<b>Net Expenditure</b>		<b>731,617</b>	<b>776,217</b>
<b>Other Comprehensive Expenditure</b>			
Items that will not be reclassified to net operating costs:			
Net (gain)/loss on revaluation of Intangibles	6	(3)	(35)
<b>Total Comprehensive Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2021</b>		<b>731,614</b>	<b>776,182</b>

The above expenditure is derived from continuing operations.

The notes on pages 48-58 form part of these accounts.

# Statement of Financial Position

## as at 31 March 2021

			2020-21		2019-20
	Notes	£	£	£	£
<b>Non-current assets:</b>					
Property, plant and equipment	5		4,849		10,444
Intangible assets	6		223		1,643
<b>Total non-current assets</b>			<b>5,072</b>		<b>12,087</b>
<b>Current assets:</b>					
Trade and other receivables	8	10,547		10,961	
<b>Total current assets</b>			<b>10,547</b>		<b>10,961</b>
<b>Total assets</b>			<b>15,619</b>		<b>23,048</b>
<b>Current liabilities:</b>					
Trade and other payables	10	(72,505)		(88,372)	
<b>Total current liabilities</b>			<b>(72,505)</b>		<b>(88,372)</b>
<b>Non-current assets less net current liabilities</b>			<b>(56,886)</b>		<b>(65,324)</b>
<b>Assets less liabilities</b>			<b>(56,886)</b>		<b>(65,324)</b>
Taxpayers' equity					
Revaluation reserve			218		616
General reserve			(57,104)		(65,940)
			<b>(56,886)</b>		<b>(65,324)</b>

The financial statements on pages 44-47 were approved by the Commission on 16 June 2021 and were signed on its behalf by:



16 June 2021

Accounting Officer Date

The notes on pages 48-58 form part of these accounts.

# Statement of Cash Flows

## for the year ended 31 March 2021

		2020-21	2019-20
	Notes	£	£
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Net Expenditure after interest	SoCNE	(731,617)	(776,217)
Adjustments for non-cash transactions:			
Depreciation & amortisation	5,6	5,790	8,191
Revaluations through SoCNE		- 1,228	--
Adjust for (gain)/loss on disposal			
(Increase) / decrease in trade and other receivables	8	414	(3,302)
Less movements in receivables relating to items not passing through the Net Expenditure account			
Increase / (decrease) in trade payables	10	(15,867)	26,262
Less movements in payables relating to items not passing through the Net Expenditure account		-	-
<b>Net cash outflow from operating activities</b>		<b>(740,052)</b>	<b>(745,066)</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		-	-
<b>Net cash outflow from investment activities</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>			
Funding from Parent Department	SoCITE	740,052	745,066
<b>Net cash inflow from financing activities</b>		<b>740,052</b>	<b>745,066</b>
<b>Net decrease in cash and cash equivalents in the period</b>	9	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period</b>	9	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period</b>	9	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>

The notes on pages 48-58 form part of these accounts.

## Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity for the year ended 31 March 2021

		General Reserve	Revaluation Reserve	Total Reserves
	Notes	£	£	£
<b>Balance at 31 March 2019</b>		<b>(35,502)</b>	<b>1,294</b>	<b>(34,208)</b>
<b>Changes in taxpayers' equity for 2019-20</b>				
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of property, plant and equipment	5	-	-	-
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of intangible assets	6	-	35	35
Comprehensive expenditure for the year		(776,217)	-	(776,217)
Transfers between reserves		713	(713)	-
Funding from parent		745,066	-	745,066
<b>Balance at 31 March 2020</b>		<b>(65,940)</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>(65,324)</b>
<b>Changes in Taxpayers' equity for 2020-21</b>				
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of intangible assets	6	-	3	3
Comprehensive expenditure for the year		(731,617)	-	(731,617)
Transfers between reserves		401	(401)	-
Funding from parent		740,052	-	740,052
<b>Balance at 31 March 2021</b>		<b>(57,104)</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>(56,886)</b>

The notes on pages 48-58 form part of these accounts.

# Notes to the Parades Commission's Accounts

for the year ended 31 March 2021

## 1. Statement of accounting policies

The Financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the 2020-21 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) issued by HM Treasury. The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public sector context. Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which is judged to be most appropriate to the particular circumstances of the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The particular policies adopted by the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland for the year ending 31 March 2021 are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the accounts.

### 1.1 Accounting convention

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the historical cost convention, modified by the revaluation of non-current 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.

## **1.2 Critical accounting estimates and key judgements**

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with IFRS requires the use of accounting estimates and assumptions. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying the accounting policies. We continually evaluate our estimates, assumptions and judgements based on available information and experience. As the use of estimates is inherent in financial reporting, actual results could differ from these estimates. The estimates and assumptions which have the most significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities are discussed below.

### **(i) - Depreciation of property, plant and equipment**

Depreciation is provided in the accounts so as to write-down the respective assets to their residual values over their expected useful lives and as such the selection of the estimated useful lives and the expected residual values of the assets requires the use of estimates and judgements. Details of the useful lives are as shown in Note 1.4.



## **(ii) - Impairment of property, plant and equipment**

Where there is an indication that the carrying value of items of property, plant and equipment may have been impaired through events or changes in circumstances, a review will be undertaken of the recoverable amount of that asset.

### **1.3 Funding**

The Statement of Financial Position at 31 March 2021 shows net liabilities of £56,886 (2020: £65,324). In addition, there are lease liabilities committed for future years of £60,167 (2020: £91,546).

The Commission's sponsoring body is the Northern Ireland Office as laid out in the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998. The Commission's budget for 2022-23 has been approved by the Northern Ireland Office. At the date of this report the Accounting Officer has no reason to believe that further support beyond 31 March 2022 will not be forthcoming due to the protections laid down in the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998. Therefore it has been considered appropriate to adopt a going concern basis for the preparation of the 2020-2021 financial statements.

## **1.4 Property, plant and equipment and depreciation**

Expenditure on items, or groups of items, of property, plant and equipment costing £1,000 or more (including VAT) is capitalised. Expenditure on a complete computer unit is classified as capital expenditure regardless of the price. Expenditure on printer is classified as capital expenditure if the purchase cost of an individual item (including VAT) is over £500.

On initial recognition, separate component assets are identified and are measured at cost including any costs such as installation directly attributable to bringing them into working condition. Owned assets are subsequently re-valued annually using appropriate indices compiled by the Office for National Statistics.

All non-property operational assets are measured at cost and are subsequently re-valued annually using appropriate indices compiled by the Office for National Statistics (ONS).

Depreciation is provided on a straight line basis at rates calculated to write-off the cost less estimated residual value of each asset over its expected useful life. Depreciation is charged in the month following acquisition. The estimated useful lives for depreciation purposes are:

Furniture & equipment	15 years
Computer hardware	5 years

## 1.5 Intangible Assets

Identifiable intangible assets are recognised when the Commission controls the asset, it is probable that future economic benefits attributable to the asset will flow to the Commission and the cost of the assets can be reliably measured.

The Commission's intangible assets consist of software licences where expenditure is £1,000 (including VAT) or more.

Intangible assets are re-valued annually using appropriate indices compiled by the ONS.

Amortisation is provided on a straight line basis. The estimated useful lives for amortisation purposes are:

Website development	5 years
---------------------	---------

## 1.6 Operating Leases

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

## 1.7 Pensions

Past and present employees are covered by the provisions of the Principal Civil Service Pension Schemes (PCSPS), the Principal Civil Service Pension Schemes (NI) (PCSPS (NI)) and the

Local Government Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) which are described in Note 2. The defined benefit schemes are unfunded. The Commission recognises the expected cost of these elements on a systematic and rational basis over the period during which it benefits from employees' services by payment to the PCSPS, PCSPS (NI) and the Scheme of amounts calculated on an accruing basis. Liability for payment of future benefits is a charge on the PCSPS, PCSPS (NI) and the Scheme. In respect of the defined contribution schemes, the Commission recognises the contributions payable for the year.

## **1.8 Value Added Tax**

The Commission is not VAT registered, therefore all expenditure is inclusive of VAT and included in the capitalised value of non-current assets.

## **1.9 Staff Costs**

Under IAS19 Employee Benefits, all staff costs must be recorded as an expense as soon as the organisation is obligated to pay them. This includes the cost of any untaken leave as at the year end.

## **1.10 Accounting standards, interpretations and amendments to published standards adopted in the year ended 31 March 2021**

The Parades Commission has reviewed the standards, interpretations and amendments to

published standards that became effective during 2020-21 and which are relevant to its operations. The adoption of these standards has not had a significant impact on the Commission's financial position or results.

## **1.11 Impending application of newly issued accounting standards not yet effective**

The following standards or interpretations have been issued by the International Accounting Standards Board but have not been adopted:

IFRS 16 Leases replaces IAS 17 Leases and is effective for periods beginning on or after 1 January 2019. However, for bodies applying the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM), HM Treasury have agreed with the Financial Reporting Advisory Board (FRAB) to defer the implementation of IFRS 16 Leases until 1 April 2022. The commission will be impacted by this implementation in relation to the Andras House property lease. Management have not yet completed the calculations to assess what the impact will be in the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023.

IFRS 17 Insurance contracts was issued in May 2017 and applies to annual reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2023. It will have no impact on the accounts of the Commission.

## 1.12 Segmental Reporting

All the activities carried out by the Parades Commission relate to a single business and are reported internally on this basis.

## 2. Staff Costs

Staff costs comprise:

			2020-21	2019-20
	Seconded staff	Agency Staff	Total	Total
	£	£	£	£
Wages and Salaries	425,575	-	425,575	455,713
Social security costs	45,439	-	45,439	46,948
Other pension costs	53,799	-	53,799	71,068
<b>Total net costs</b>	<b>524,813</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>524,813</b>	<b>573,729</b>

Further detail is provided in the Remuneration and Staff Report

## 3. Other Expenditure

There were no payments made to the auditors during the year for non-audit services (2019-20: £nil)

		2020-21	2019-20
	Note	£	£
<b>Other Expenditure:</b>			
Computer maintenance and software		86,351	54,759
Rent and rates		69,477	64,931
Professional advisers' fees		22,360	22,280
Auditors' remuneration		15,500	15,000
Accommodation costs		2,777	27,833
Advertising & publications		1,722	4,139
Other expenditure		905	1,016
Telecommunications		421	2,068
Travel, subsistence & hospitality		273	2,271
<b>Subtotal Other Expenditure</b>		<b>199,786</b>	<b>194,297</b>

Non-cash items:			
Amortisation	6	1,423	3,615
Depreciation	5	4,367	4,576
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>5,790</b>	<b>8,191</b>
(Gain) / loss on disposal	5	1,228	-
Subtotal non-cash items		7,018	8,191
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>206,804</b>	<b>202,488</b>

## 4. Income

There was no income received in 2020-21 or 2019-20.

### 5.a. Property, Plant and Equipment

	Computer Hardware	Furniture & Equipment	Total
	£	£	£
<b>Cost or valuation</b>			
At 1 April 2020	56,195	6,593	62,788
Disposals	(4,925)	-	(4,925)
Revaluations through SoCNE	-	-	0
<b>At 31 March 2021</b>	<b>51,270</b>	<b>6,593</b>	<b>57,863</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At 1 April 2020	45,981	6,363	52,344
Charged in year	4,137	230	4,367
Disposals	(3,697)	-	(3,697)
<b>At 31 March 2021</b>	<b>46,421</b>	<b>6,593</b>	<b>53,014</b>
Carrying amount at 31 March 2021	4,849	-	4,849
Carrying amount at 31 March 2020	10,214	230	10,444
<b>Asset financing:</b>			
Owned	4,849	-	4,849
<b>Carrying amount at 31 March 2021</b>	<b>4,849</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4,849</b>

### 5.b. Property, Plant and Equipment (continued)

	Computer Hardware	Furniture & Equipment	Total
	£	£	£
<b>Cost or valuation</b>			
At 1 April 2019	56,195	6,583	62,778



Revaluations through SoCNE	-	10	10
<b>At 31 March 2020</b>	<b>56,195</b>	<b>6,593</b>	<b>62,788</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At 1 April 2019	41,735	6,023	47,758
Charged in year	4,246	330	4,576
Revaluations through SoCNE	-	10	10
<b>At 31 March 2020</b>	<b>45,981</b>	<b>6,363</b>	<b>52,344</b>
Carrying amount at 31 March 2020	10,214	230	10,444
Carrying amount at 31 March 2019	14,460	560	15,020
<b>Asset financing:</b>			
Owned	10,214	230	10,444
<b>Carrying amount at 31 March 2020</b>	<b>10,214</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>10,444</b>

## 6.a Intangible assets

	Website	Total
	£	£
<b>Cost or valuation</b>		
At 1 April 2020	88,987	88,987
Revaluations through Reserves	14	14
<b>At 31 March 2021</b>	<b>89,001</b>	<b>89,001</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>		
At 1 April 2020	87,344	87,344
Charged in year	1,423	1,423
Revaluations through Reserves	11	11
<b>At 31 March 2021</b>	<b>88,778</b>	<b>88,778</b>
Carrying amount at 31 March 2021	223	223
Carrying amount at 31 March 2020	1,643	1,643
<b>Asset financing:</b>		
Owned	223	223
<b>Carrying amount at 31 March 2021</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>223</b>

## 6.b Intangible assets (continued)

	Website	Total
	£	£
<b>Cost or valuation</b>		
At 1 April 2019	88,836	88,836
Revaluations through Reserves	151	151

<b>At 31 March 2020</b>	<b>88,987</b>	<b>88,987</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>		
At 1 April 2019	83,613	83,613
Charged in year	3,615	3,615
Revaluations through Reserves	116	116
<b>At 31 March 2020</b>	<b>87,344</b>	<b>87,344</b>
Carrying amount at 31 March 2020	1,643	1,643
Carrying amount at 31 March 2019	5,223	5,223
<b>Asset financing:</b>		
Owned	1,643	1,643
<b>Carrying amount at 31 March 2020</b>	<b>1,643</b>	<b>1,643</b>

## 7. Financial instruments

As the cash requirements of the Commission are met through funding provided by the Northern Ireland Office, financial instruments play a more limited role in creating and managing risk than would apply to a non-public sector body. The majority of financial instruments relate to contracts to buy non-financial items in line with the non-departmental public bodies expected purchase and usage requirements and the non-departmental public body is therefore exposed to little credit, liquidity or market risk.

## 8. Trade receivables and other current assets

	2020-21	2019-20
	£	£
<b>Amounts falling due within one year:</b>		
Prepayments and Accrued Income	10,547	10,961
Other Receivables	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,547</b>	<b>10,961</b>

## 9. Cash and cash equivalents

The Parades Commission does not operate a bank account in its own name. The Commission authorises NIO to make payments from the NIO bank account on behalf of the Commission, through Account NI, the Northern Ireland Civil Service accounting system. These payments must be authorised by the Commission in advance and are treated as funding in the financial statements. NIO staff do not have permission to authorise any bank payments on behalf of the Parades Commission. Purchasing and payment controls and regular reconciliation of the general ledger accounts provides assurance that only authorised spend is included within the Commission Accounts.

## 10. Trade payables and other current liabilities

	2020-21	2019-20
	£	£
<b>Amounts falling due within one year:</b>		
Trade Payables	35,548	41,168
Accruals and deferred income	36,957	47,204
<b>Total</b>	<b>72,505</b>	<b>88,372</b>

## 11. Commitments under leases

### 11.1 Operating leases

Total future minimum lease payments under operating leases are given in the table below for each of the following periods.

	2020-21	2019-20
<b>Buildings</b>	£	£
Not later than one year	33,024	31,379
Later than one year and not later than five years	27,143	60,167
Later than five years	-	-
	<b>60,167</b>	<b>91,546</b>

The existing lease on Andras House was signed on 13 March 2020 and commenced 26 Jan 2021 and terminates 25 Jan 2023.

## 11.2 Finance leases

The Parades Commission has no obligations under finance leases.

## 12. Capital Commitments

The Parades Commission does not have any capital commitments as at 31 March 2021 (31 March 2020: £nil).

## 13. Contingent Liabilities disclosed under IAS 37

The Parades Commission has no contingent liabilities at 31 March 2021 (31 March 2020: £nil).

## 14. 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 including the Crown Solicitor's Office.

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.

## **15. Events after the Reporting Date**

There were no events after the reporting date which required disclosure or adjustment of the Accounts.

In accordance with the requirements of IAS 10, events after 31 March 2021 are considered up to the date on which the accounts are authorised for issue by the Accounting Officer. This is interpreted as the date of the Comptroller and Auditor General's Audit Certificate.

The Annual Report and Accounts were authorised for issue by the Accounting Officer on the same date as the Comptroller and Auditor General signed the audit certificate.

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