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Paterson Appoints New Parades Commission

MONDAY 20 DECEMBER 2010

PATERSON APPOINTS NEW PARADES COMMISSION

Secretary of State Owen Paterson MP today announced the appointment of Peter Osborne as Chair of the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland and six new Commission members.

They are Douglas Bain, Delia Close, Rev Brian Kennaway, Dr Catriona King,

Frances Nolan and Robin Percival. They will all take up their posts on 1 January 2011.

Owen Paterson said: “Until such time as locally owned arrangements can be found the Parades Commission will continue to play a vital role in ensuring that there is a means of dealing with contentious parades which allows for consideration of the rights of those who wish to parade and those who are affected by parading.”

“I am sure these new Commissioners will continue to work with local communities to ensure we do not see a repeat of the violence which occurred at a small number of parades during the summer past.”

“They bring with them skills, understanding and a wealth of knowledge that will contribute greatly to this important work. I am delighted that they have accepted the offer of appointment. “

“We were very impressed by the strength of the applicants and believe we have ended up with a strong commission, which will be robust and fair”

The Secretary of State also thanked the outgoing Commission.

He said: “The outgoing Commissioners, whose term of office has now expired, have made a valuable contribution to moving the issue of parading forward in Northern Ireland.

“Their dedication to the work of the Commission has been invaluable and I am extremely grateful to them for their commitment over their time in office.”

Notes to Editors

The Parades Commission for Northern Ireland

The Parades Commission was established in 1997 and took on its full powers in 1998 through the Public Processions (NI) 1998 Act. It has a chairman and six members and is supported by a secretariat.

The Commission has two fundamental responsibilities:

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

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland is responsible under the Public Processions (NI) Act 1998 for making appointments to the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland.

Brief summary of appointees' career

Peter Osborne runs Rubicon Consulting and has a wealth of experience in the public, voluntary and community sectors. He has experience of working on issues such as good relations, community cohesion, community safety and community support. Peter was previously a member of the Parades Commission from

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2000-2005. He was also an elected member of Castlereagh Borough Council. He is a non-executive director of Extern and a Northern Ireland Committee member of the BIG Lottery Fund.

Douglas Bain recently retired as Chief Electoral Officer for Northern Ireland. He was called to the Scottish Bar in 1973 and worked there in both the private and public sector before moving to Northern Ireland in 1988. He held a number of posts in the Northern Ireland Office before resigning from the Civil Service in 2006. He was appointed CBE in 2006 for services to the Northern Ireland Prison Service.

Delia Close is a retired teacher. She is now involved in conflict transformation and community peace initiatives in the Ballymena area. She is an Independent Member of Ballymena DPP and served two terms as vice chair.

Brian Kennaway is an ordained Minister of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and retired in January 2009. He is a serving member of the Judicial Commission of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland. He has been active in the church serving on a number of church Committees of the General Assembly. He is the author of a number of books and articles on orangeism. He is also a member of the Irish Association for Cultural, Economic, and Social Relations.

Dr Catriona King graduated in Medicine from Queens University and completed her hospital and GP training in London. She obtained an MBA from Henley Management College. She has an extensive clinical, management and academic career having worked with Universities and medical schools, in senior management posts within the NHS and as an advisor at the DH London. She has also consulted on EU projects and carried out fundraising for charity.

Frances Nolan is a retired police officer. She led a varied career which included time as Superintendent Community Safety and District Commander Dungannon and South Tyrone. She is Deputy Lieutenant for County Tyrone and Member of Victim and Survivors Transition Group.

Robin Percival has spent his career in education and is currently employed in writing his second novel. During his career he was Head of Department at the North West Institute of Further and Higher Education. He specialised in technology and computing. He is also heavily involved in community work. He has experience of parading having been involved in negotiations around the Apprentice Boys of Derry and Orange Order Parades in the north west.

Terms of appointment

The new Commission will all take up appointment on 1 January 2011. All posts were advertised as an average of two days a week, with the possibility of evening and weekend meetings.

The new Commission's term will last for three years until 31 December 2013. The remuneration for the Chair was advertised as £500 per day. The members' remuneration will be £250 per day.

Other Ministerial public appointments held

The following appointees to the Commission currently hold paid public appointments:

Peter Osborne – Northern Ireland Committee Member , Big Lottery Fund – £4,000 per annum.

Catriona King – Independent Board Member of DHSSPSNI up to a maximum of £11,500 per year.

OCPA Code of Practice

The Commissioner for Public Appointments' Code of Practice stipulates that independent scrutiny is a mandatory element of every competition. No chair or non-executive member appointment to a public body within the Commission's remit may be made unless an independent assessor has been involved in the process to ensure that the procedures set out in the Code are applied. An independent assessor has been involved in the appointments process throughout. The procedures have complied with the OCPA Code of Practice for Public Appointments.

Political Activity

All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, in accordance with the original Nolan recommendations, there is a requirement for appointees' political activity in defined categories within the last five years to be made public.

The following appointees declared the following political activity in the past five years:

Rev Brian Kennaway declared that he canvassed on behalf of a member of the Ulster Unionist Party.

Delia Close was a member of the South Antrim Branch of Northern Ireland Women's Coalition and has declared that she canvassed on behalf of the party and helped at elections.

Statutory Requirements

This appointment was made by the Secretary of State taking account of his statutory duty under Schedule 1, of the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998, to secure that as far as practicable, the membership of the Commission, is representative of the community in Northern Ireland.