



Sincerity is key to victims post

(Editorial, [Irish News](#))

The appointment of a victims commissioner took yet another curious twist yesterday (Monday) with the announcement that the post – which has already been subject to a recruitment process – will be readvertised.

This move was announced in a joint statement by the first minister and deputy first minister in which they said the readvertisement was because some potential candidates may have been deterred from coming forward during direct rule.

Both men dismissed "ill-informed speculation" that they had been at loggerheads over the appointment.

However, while they may not have been at loggerheads, it is fair to conclude they were unable to reach agreement on a candidate from the shortlist which has been with them since May.

Five months on, the decision to readvertise the post may look like a further delaying tactic and it will be interesting to see if an appointment is made by the end of the year.

The statement from Ian Paisley and Martin McGuinness stressed that this step is no reflection on the candidates who have already applied and were shortlisted.

However, these applicants have been placed in an unenviable position.

Their names have gone forward, no appointment has been made and the job is being readvertised in order to attract applicants who did not previously apply.

Yet they are being asked to allow their names to remain in contention.

There is no doubt the role of victims commissioner is highly sensitive and hugely significant in terms of dealing with those who have suffered the most during decades of conflict.

The history of this post has also proved particularly controversial and, given the British government's mishandling of this issue in the past, it is imperative that any recruitment process be

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transparent and credible.

If the first and deputy first ministers believe the process has not met these standards or they have been unable to agree on an outcome, they should say so.

Otherwise, their reasons for going through this procedure again seem less than compelling.

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