



Parole Commissioners
for Northern Ireland

ANNUAL REPORT
2020-2021



Parole Commissioners For Northern Ireland

Annual Report 2020/21

Report for the year end 31 March 2021

Laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly pursuant to Paragraph 7(2) of Schedule 4 to the Criminal Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2008. Amended by the NI Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010.

On 29 July 2021



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Foreword

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Minister of Justice
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Dear Minister

Paragraph 7(1) of Schedule 4 of the Criminal Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2008, as amended, requires that as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of each financial year the Chief Commissioner of the Parole Commissioners for Northern Ireland shall submit a report to the Department of Justice on the performance of the Commissioners' functions during that year. In compliance with that requirement I am pleased to submit my report to your Department in respect of the financial year 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

I was appointed as Chief Commissioner on 9th September 2019. This is therefore my second report as Chief Commissioner.

In terms of the workload of the Commissioners, our main challenge in the last year has been ensuring that the important work done by Commissioners could continue in the midst of the pandemic and the difficulties this has created for holding in-person hearings. I am pleased to report that we have largely managed the transition to remote hearings successfully. However, the impact of the public health crisis on vital risk reduction work with prisoners has been significant in that it has often been very difficult, if not impossible, to carry out such work. In addition critical initiatives such as pre-release testing have been suspended. This in turn has impacted upon the work of the Commissioners and in particular on our duty to have regard to the desirability of rehabilitating prisoners. I am pleased to report that in recent weeks, as the public health crisis has improved, steps have already been taken to address the impact of the above matters. It is important that these efforts are sustained.

There have, as in previous years, been a number of relevant judicial review decisions in the last year which have been of significance to the Commissioners. I discuss these and other developments over the course of the last year in the body of this Annual Report.

I am pleased that we have continued to deal with the cases referred to us in a timely and professional fashion and that we continue to maintain our high standards. I am committed to ensuring that we discharge our functions in accordance with Article 46 of the 2008 Order having due regard to the need to protect the public and regard to the desirability of rehabilitating prisoners and preventing further offences.

I commend this Report to you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Paul Hogg', written in a cursive style.

Chief Commissioner

Parole Commissioners for Northern Ireland

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Background

Due in large part to the coming into effect of the Human Rights Act in October 2000 and the report of the Criminal Justice Review in March 2000, it was considered that decisions with regards to the release of life sentence prisoners should be taken, not by government, but by a judicial body. To have judicial character, the body would need to be independent of the executive (and of the parties concerned); impartial; and able to give a legally binding direction regarding the prisoner's release.

The Government therefore brought forward legislation that required all life sentence prisoners to have the punitive element of their sentence judicially determined and their suitability for release independently assessed and directed at the appropriate time by an independent body of judicial character. The legislation in question was the Life Sentences (Northern Ireland) Order 2001 (2001 Order) and the Life Sentence Review Commissioners' Rules 2001 (2001 Rules). The Order came into force in October 2001.

The Criminal Justice Act 2003 made a number of significant changes to the sentencing framework for England and Wales. As a result it was felt that Northern Ireland should have its own review. In March 2005 the Northern Ireland Office published a consultation paper on the sentencing framework in Northern Ireland which considered new measures to enhance public protection. The exercise was largely informed by provisions contained in the Criminal Justice Act 2003, particularly the introduction of indeterminate and extended public protection sentences for dangerous sexual and violent offenders.

Ministers concluded that the sentencing framework should be revised and that legislation should be brought forward to provide for the introduction of indeterminate and extended sentences for dangerous sexual and violent offenders allowing individuals posing a risk of serious harm to be detained indefinitely or to the end of their extended sentences.

Criminal Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2008

The relevant legislative provisions are contained in the Criminal Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2008 (2008 Order). Among other things it provided that the Life Sentence Review Commissioners be renamed the Parole Commissioners for Northern Ireland and that the responsibilities of the Commissioners be extended to include decisions as to the release and recall of prisoners sentenced to indeterminate and extended custodial sentences and the recall of prisoners who receive other determinate sentences.

The Parole Commissioners' Rules (Northern Ireland) 2009 (2009 Rules) came into operation on 1 April 2009. These Rules replaced the Life Sentence Review Commissioners' Rules 2001 and apply to both the 2001 Order and the 2008 Order

Current Legislation

The work of the Parole Commissioners for Northern Ireland is therefore governed by two 'Orders' and one set of 'Rules' - The Criminal Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2008¹, the Life Sentences (Northern Ireland) Order 2001 and the Parole Commissioners' Rules (Northern Ireland) 2009.

The principal provisions of the Life Sentences (Northern Ireland) 2001 Order provide for:

- the setting by the court of a relevant period, or 'tariff', as the period of the sentence to be served to satisfy retribution and deterrence before review for release;
- the power of the Commissioners to direct a prisoner's release on licence if continued detention is not required for the protection of the public;

¹ The NI Act 1998 (Devolution of Policing and Justice Functions) Order 2010, provides for the continuing role of the Secretary of State in cases where national security is involved.

- the attachment by the Department of Justice of conditions to the release licence, in accordance with recommendations of the Commissioners;
- the revocation by the Department of Justice of the licence of a released prisoner and the latter's recall to prison;
- the consideration by the Commissioners of such recalls and their power to direct the release of recalled prisoners; and
- the arrangements for setting of tariffs for prisoners already serving life sentences.

The principal provisions of the Criminal Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2008 provide for:

- the appointment of Commissioners;
- the Commissioners to advise the Department of Justice with respect to any matter connected with the release or recall of prisoners referred to them;
- the renaming of the LSRC as the Parole Commissioners for Northern Ireland (PCNI);
- the appointment of Parole Commissioners to include a Chief Commissioner and, if necessary, the appointment of a deputy Chief Commissioner;
- the introduction of public protection sentences for violent and/or sexual offenders based on an assessment of dangerousness;
- the necessity for all public protection sentence prisoners to be referred to the Commissioners to assess suitability for release;
- the imposition of licence conditions on persons who have been sentenced to a public protection sentence or a determinate sentence of 12 months or more;
- the revocation by the Department of Justice of the licence of a released prisoner and recall to prison, if so recommended by Parole Commissioners; and

- the consideration by the Commissioners of such recalls and their power to direct release.

The Rules set out in detail the procedures that apply to life and public protection sentenced prisoners where the Department of Justice (or Secretary of State in matters of national security) refers a prisoner's case to the Commissioners regarding his release or recall. Currently there are no Rules governing the recall and re-release of determinate custodial sentenced (DCS) prisoners. However, as far as is practicable, the Rules will be applied by the Commissioners. They provide, in particular, for:

- the appointment by the Chief Commissioner of a single Commissioner to consider a case initially and provide a provisional direction/direction on release;
- the appointment by the Chief Commissioner of a panel of three Commissioners to consider those cases where release has been directed or, in the case where a prisoner is not to be released, the prisoner has requested an oral hearing of his/her case (wherever practical, one panel member should be legally qualified and another a psychiatrist or psychologist);
- the representation of the prisoner and the Department of Justice;
- the appointment by the Commissioners of a representative to act on behalf of the prisoner or for a single Commissioner to carry out an interview, with the prisoner's consent where he/she does not appoint one him/herself;
- the submission of information and reports by the Department of Justice and of representations and documentary evidence by the prisoner;
- the making of directions and the holding of oral hearings to consider the prisoner's case and the procedure for such hearings (including the granting/refusal of the attendance of witnesses and observers);

- the time limits within which notifications and responses must be made;
- the distribution of directions by the single Commissioner and/or panel chairman and the consideration of appeals against such directions by the Chief Commissioner; and
- the withholding, in specified circumstances, of particular items of evidence from the prisoner, or the prisoner and his representative and in the latter event, the appointment by the Attorney General of a Special Advocate to represent the prisoner's interests.

Workload and Key Statistics

There were 614 new referrals received this year, a small decrease of 3%. There has also been a small decrease in the number of recall requests received of 4% (9 cases) and subsequently a decrease in recall reviews of 14% (27 cases), although there was a 50% (15 cases) increase in the number of further reviews received (Art 29(6)).

119 cases were completed at the single Commissioner stage. This is a decrease of 17 (12%) against the 2019/20 figure of 136.

In DCS recall reviews² 56% (103) of the cases completed in year were completed at the single Commissioner stage without reference to a Panel, a slight reduction on last year's figure (59%). 19 DCS cases were referred to Panel by the single Commissioner (10% decrease). A further 83 requests (19% increase) were received for an oral hearing with 82 granted.

The overall number of cases referred to panel across all categories of cases amounted to 35, a 19% decrease on the previous year.

This year the overall case completion figure has increased slightly by 1% (7 cases), which is despite the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and remote hearings.

There has been a decrease in the number of recall recommendations issued this year of 4%³ (9 cases). ECS recall requests have remained the same at 18 and ICS recall requests decreased from 2 to 0. There has been a decrease in lifer recall cases of 20% (1 request) and a decrease in DCS recall requests of 3% (6 requests). On 11 occasions the Commissioners did not recommend recall and on 1 occasion the Department of Justice recalled a prisoner using the powers under the 2008 Order.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic panel hearings were initially suspended with paper hearings being conducted with the agreement of all parties or the hearing was adjourned. Where cases were dealt with on the papers and the prisoner was not released, it was decided that out of fairness to the prisoner, re-referrals should be made within six months. A video-link option was later introduced and subsequently all hearings were completed remotely using WebEx. A year on year comparison can therefore best be made for the second half of the year - October to March when WebEx system was in operation. Commissioners completed 143 panel hearings in October 2020 to March 2021, which is an increase of 16% (20 cases) on the same period from the previous year.

Overall, 957 provisional directions/directions, single commissioner decisions, panel decisions, pre-tariff recommendations, licence consultations/variation/cancellation recommendations and recall recommendations have been issued in year which is a 5% increase on last year.

² This includes those case dealt with under Articles 28(4) and 29(6)

³ Figures for recall recommendations issued may differ from recall referrals received in year

Key Statistics

New Referrals				
Article	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
6	47	50	57	61
7(2)	1	0	0	0
8(3)	9	14	13	18
9(1)	8	2	5	3
9(4)	7	2	5	4
18	92	83	88	87
20	1	0	0	1
24(5)	38	40	29	26
28(2)(a) ECS/ICS	34	30	20	28
28(2)(a) DCS	180	163	182	169
28(4) ECS/ICS	27	30	20	13
28(4) DCS	166	152	172	153
29(6)	37	44	30	45
46(3)	15	13	11	6
Total	662	623	632	614

Cases Withdrawn/No Jurisdiction				
Article	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
6	0	0	0	1
7(2)	0	0	0	0
8(3)	0	0	0	0
9(1)	0	0	0	0
9(4)	0	0	0	0
18	1	1	0	0
20	0	0	0	0
24(5)	2	2	0	0
28(2)(a) ECS/ICS	0	0	0	0
28(2)(a) DCS	2	1	0	0
28(4) ECS/ICS	0	0	0	0
28(4) DCS	0	0	0	0
29(6)	2	4	0	1
46(3)	0	0	0	0
Total	7	8	0	2

Cases Completed				
Article	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
6	49	43	60	65
7(2)	1	0	0	0
8(3)	9	14	13	17
9(1)	8	2	5	3
9(4)	3	7	6	1
18	100	101	79	104
20	1	0	0	1
24(5)	39	40	28	26
28(2)(a) ECS/ICS	33	31	20	18
28(2)(a) DCS	181	163	182	178
28(4) ECS/ICS	29	21	26	19
28(4) DCS	155	165	154	145
29(6)	38	37	36	42
46(3)	12	13	11	8
Total	658	637	620	627

Cases completed at single Commissioner				
Article	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
6	11	7	10	11
9(4)	0	0	0	0
18	21	18	15	16
28(4) ECS/ICS	10	2	3	5
28(4) DCS	103	100	91	73
29(6)	24	25	17	14
Total	169	152	136	119

Cases referred to panel				
Article	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
6	10	12	5	7
9(4)	1	0	0	0
18	26	26	15	9
28(4) ECS/ICS	4	7	2	0
28(4) DCS	21	21	14	11
29(6)	10	8	7	8
Total	72	74	43	35

DCS Oral Hearing Requests								
Article	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21	
	Refused	Granted	Refused	Granted	Refused	Granted	Refused	Granted
28(4) DCS	0	32	1	37	3*	58	1	60
29(6)	0	6	1	6	0	9	0	22
Total	0	38	2	43	3	67	1	82

* two decisions to refuse an oral hearing were overturned on appeal to the Chief Commissioner

Panel Hearings Held				
Article	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
6	43	45	56	71
9(4)	2	7	6	1
18	90	95	70	103
28(4) ECS/ICS	22	22	28	16
28(4) DCS	62	64	81	84
29(6)	15	15	19	31
Total	234	248	260	306*

* figures include all paper; audio and video hearings conducted throughout the year

Release Decisions

Article	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
6	12	3	10	9
9(4)	1	0	1	0
18	24	13	12	10
28(4) ECS/ICS	8	7	6	2
28(4) DCS	45	47	43	22
29(6)	18	14	12	8
Total	108	84	84	51

No Recommendations for Further Review (due to the proximity of custody expiry or licence expiry date in the individual case)

Article	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
6	0	1	0	0
9(4)	0	0	0	0
18	18	23	12	13
28(4) ECS/ICS	8	5	4	2
28(4) DCS	69	76	78	83
29(6)	13	11	19	16
Total	108	116	113	114

Recalls

Article	2017/18		2018/19		2019/20		2020/21	
	Recall	Not recalled	Recall	Not recalled	Recall	Not recalled	Recall	Not recalled
9(1)	8	0	2	0	5	0	4	0
28(2)(a) ECS/ICS	32	1	30	1	20	0	16	2
28(2)(a) DCS	178	1	154	7	177	5	167	9
Total	218	2	186	8	202	5	187	11

Licence Conditions – Recommendations

Article		2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
8(3)	Condition(s) cancelled	6	8	7	6
	Condition(s) not cancelled	1	0	1	2
	Condition(s) varied	2	4	4	5
	Condition(s) not varied	0	1	0	1
	Proposed Conditions (s) - agreed	0	1	1	3
	Proposed Conditions (s) – not agreed	0	0	0	0
24(5)	Consultation - agreed	10	5	0	0
	Consultation - not agreed	1	0	0	0
	Consultation - partially agreed	2	0	0	0
	Condition(s) varied - agreed	5	18	13	8
	Condition(s) varied - not agreed	1	0	0	0
	Condition(s) inserted - agreed	10	0	0	0
	Condition(s) inserted - partially agreed	1	0	0	0
	Condition(s) cancelled - agreed	3	0	0	1
	Variation and insertion agreed	3	0	0	0
	Variation and cancellation agreed	1	0	1	0
	Proposed Conditions(s) - agreed	0	15	14	16
	Proposed Conditions(s) – not agreed	0	0	0	0
Total		46	52	41	42

Protected Information Cases

By their very nature, these types of cases are complex and fall outside the normal timetables set out in the Parole Commissioners' Rules 2009. The timetable can become unavoidably protracted. Once the Commissioners have been advised of the existence of such protected information and a gist of that information has been provided by the Secretary of State, the single Commissioner will refer the matter to a panel as soon as is practicable in order to have the process of the appointment of a Special Advocate advanced and a timetable set. The panel must carefully consider all the information put to them and hear any arguments in regard to disclosure and the sufficiency or otherwise of the gist provided. This necessitates a procedure of direction hearings, exculpatory reviews and open and closed hearings before a decision can be made.

There has been one Protected Information case this year, which was carried forward from the previous year with no additional cases received in-year. The information is ordinarily, but not always, concerned with national security issues. In these circumstances the Commissioners are required to review the gist of the information certified by the Secretary of State and consider whether there is sufficient specificity to allow the prisoner to make representations. The Special Advocate will act in the interests of the prisoner in regard to the protected information.

The panel will make its decision based on the statutory test of whether the prisoner poses a risk of harm/serious harm and consider whether that risk can be safely managed in the community.

Judicial Challenges/Reviews

There has been an increase in the number of challenges this year.

There were six cases carried forward from the previous year, including the case for civil action for damages and

nine new pre-action letters received. Three of the new pre-action cases received were concluded in year. In the first case the prisoner had a change in attitude and did not pursue his application for a Judicial Review. In the second where the panel's decision not to release was being challenged, a further review referral had been received by the Parole Commissioners, so the application for leave for a Judicial Review was withdrawn and case was dismissed. In the third the panel decision not to release was challenged and there was a rolled up hearing where the judge granted the application for leave to apply for a Judicial Review but dismissed the substantive case.

There have been a variety of reasons submitted as challenges to the decisions made by the Commissioners ranging from very general assertions that the decision is unreasonable to the failure to consider relevant information.

Of the six cases carried forward from the previous year, four of them were completed in year. One was completed at pre-action stage when the applicant's application for leave was denied. One case concluded when the applicant's appeal to the Supreme Court was denied. Following a successful appeal by DoJ and the applicant in another case, the PCNI panel hearing was allowed to proceed to a conclusion. Finally, in a case that challenged matters relating to the legislative framework, the judgement went against the applicant who then lodged an appeal. It was decided that as PCNI had only been an interested party, they no longer needed to be involved in this case. Two other cases are ongoing. A total of eight cases have been carried forward.

One of the most significant judicial reviews faced by the Commissioners in the last year relates to the decision to release Mr Stone. The Court of Appeal in the case of McGuinness [2020] NICA 64 found that the period spent by Mr Stone on licence following his release under the Good Friday Agreement should be taken into account when calculating his Tariff. This

meant that the PCNI were allowed to reinstate and proceed with the oral hearing that had been suspended pending the resolution of the matter before the courts. A release decision was issued on 25.01.2021. Judicial review proceedings challenging the release decision and the legality of Rule 22(3) of the PCNI Rules were then issued. The Court ordered the disclosure of a summary of the reasons for the decision. PCNI then disclosed the full reasons section of the decision with minor redactions relating to the health of Mr Stone. The applicant is seeking further disclosure of the redacted information, the full decision and all relevant papers. The case is ongoing. Rule 22 is currently being reviewed by the Department (see below).

Quality Issues

Following the Toal 1 decision by the Court of Appeal in 2019 [2019] NICA 37, it was made clear that the Commissioners do have the power to direct the attendance of witnesses at our hearings. The Court made it clear that it envisaged the Commissioners would only have to exercise this power rarely. However, the clarification provided has been most welcome and has meant that in appropriate cases which previously may not have benefited from oral evidence from expert and relevant witnesses, the Commissioners can ensure such evidence is available to them.

In previous reports I and my predecessor discussed the difficulties created by the continued use by the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) of its significant Risk of Serious Harm (sROSH) test. The view of Commissioners is that the test we are obliged to consider (in cases involving life sentence prisoners or those serving indeterminate or extended custodial sentences) is that set out in the legislation, namely whether it is no longer necessary to protect the public from serious harm that a prisoner be confined. Serious harm is defined as "*death or serious personal injury whether physical or psychological*". Our concern was that the PBNI test did not reflect the statutory

test which the Commissioners had to apply. Last year I indicated that, following the Toal 2 judgement from the Court of Appeal in 2019 [2019] NICA 34, further discussions had taken place with PBNI regarding the resolution of this issue. I am happy to report that progress has indeed been made and we continue to work with PBNI colleagues to ensure that reports and witness evidence from PBNI officers reflects the wording of our statutory tests.

Parole Commissioners' Rules

Understandably perhaps, progress in relation to the longstanding Review of the Parole Commissioners' Rules (Northern Ireland) 2009 has been significantly interrupted by the public health crisis. Changes to Rule 22, to reflect changes to the equivalent Rule in England and Wales made after the Worboys judgement, have progressed and are now imminent. Dealing with the implications of those changes which will require the Commissioners to provide a summary of our reasoning in cases to victims and others is likely to be a major area of work for us in the coming year.

Stakeholder Engagement

The last year has of course been challenging for everyone and there have been significant impacts upon PCNI but also on our stakeholders especially PBNI and NIPS. I am glad to report though that we have worked closely together, especially in the early months of the pandemic to ensure that parole hearings could continue in a meaningful way. We worked together to put in place the technology that allowed hearings to take place and to allow witnesses and legal representatives to take part. Such hearings are now regarded as normal for us but that was not the case in the spring of 2020 when it was unclear whether hearings could re-commence. The relationships that we had established with these key stakeholders made finding the technological solutions more straightforward.

I have reported above some of the difficulties that inevitably arose as a result of the pandemic including a significant impact on risk reduction activity and the suspension of pre-release testing. More recently the improvement in the public health crisis has begun to have a positive impact on these matters. It will be important to continue to work with our stakeholders in this regard to ensure that prisoners can evidence progress in addressing their risk factors, a matter that is often at the heart of PCNI decision-making.

We have also engaged in useful dialogue with Healthcare within the prisons. The role of Healthcare is vital in assisting us to discharge our statutory functions in relation to both public safety and the rehabilitation of prisoners.

It has also been the case that we have been proactive in keeping communication open between the agencies in order to resolve any emerging difficulties. We also hold productive meetings with our sponsors and the Department of Justice and I am grateful to officials in both the Northern Ireland Court Service and the Department for their positive approach and engagement.

Commissioners

During this financial year the PCNI lost five experienced Commissioners due to retirements and Commissioners choosing not to be reappointed. All five Commissioners, Mr Nigel Stone, Dr Shelagh Mary Rea, Mrs Linda McHugh, Dr Linda Blud and Judge Piers Grant, made a significant contribution to the work of the Parole Commissioners during their tenure. I would like to take this opportunity to express my thanks for their years of hard work and dedication throughout their time in office.

I continue to be grateful for the excellent work done by Commissioners and for the diligent way in which they discharge their statutory responsibilities.

Secretariat

The Commissioners continue to receive excellent support from our staff in the Secretariat. There have been some changes to personnel over the last 12 months but this has not affected the quality of the team. The Commissioners' Secretariat are based on the 1st Floor Mezzanine in Laganside Court, Oxford Street. However, during the Covid-19 pandemic the staff were unable to avail of the office accommodation. The Secretariat was fortunate to have immediate secure access to technology to enable working from home during the pandemic. Working remotely for over a year has been challenging but staff have demonstrated their adaptability and commitment to business continuity, while innovating, adapting and increasing their use of digital technology. The impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic will continue to be evident for some time but the PCNI and the Secretariat are committed to learning from the experiences and bringing together best practice developed during the pandemic. I am grateful to the staff for their dedication and work during these uncertain times as they continued to provide sustained services during an extremely challenging time.

Governance

We continue to enjoy productive working relationships with our sponsors in both the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service (NICTS) and the Department of Justice. I would like to express my thanks to Peter Luney who acted as Chief Executive to the NICTS for three years and then Chief Operating Officer of NICTS during the last year. Peter maintained a productive professional relationship with the Commissioners and worked closely with the Commissioners to facilitate the performance of their statutory functions, while being respectful of their independence. Peter will be leaving Courts and Tribunals this year, after 31 years, to take up a new role in the Executive Office in Stormont. I should like to take this opportunity to thank Peter for his support and guidance and to wish him well as he prepares to take up his new position.

Mr Dermot Harkin, in his temporary role as Head of Tribunal Services in NICTS, has now been acting Secretary to the Parole Commissioners for almost two years. He has developed an excellent understanding of the work of the Commissioners and provides productive advice and direction to both the Secretariat and Commissioners.

Going Forward

As discussed above, we are expecting the long-awaited changes to Rule 22 to be enacted in the coming weeks. The main impact of this change will be to place an obligation on the Commissioners to provide a summary of our reasons to victims and others if they make such a request and unless there are exceptional circumstances such a summary should not be provided. It is difficult for us to estimate the burden this will place on the Commissioners or the impact it will have on our work but by the time my next Annual Report comes to be written, the implications of this change should be much clearer.

I am also hopeful that as the public health situation continues to improve, we will return to holding hearings in person. This is the situation envisaged by the Rules and, although in conjunction with NIPS and others, we have put in place an effective alternative to in-person hearings, it is important to return to a situation where we meet prisoners face to face in the near future consistent with public health advice.

Resources

The Chief Commissioner and the other Parole Commissioners are Departmental appointees appointed under The Criminal Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2008 and are therefore statutory office holders. All Commissioners serve on a part-time basis and are fee paid. They are supported by a Secretariat of 15 who are civil servants appointed to the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunal Services.

This report discloses the remuneration paid to Commissioners and staff and the running costs of the organisation.

Fees and Expenses

The PCNI are paid on a case fee basis and a pro-rata fee for undertaking other non-casework business. The case rates payable to each category of Commissioners during 2020/21 were as follows:

Article under CJO or LSO	Article Description	Single Commissioner	Chair of Panel (Legal)	Other Panel Member (Psych/Criminal Justice)
Article 6	Lifer Release Decision	£898	£914	£539
Article 8(3)	Variation of Licence (Lifer)	£359	-	-
Article 9(1)	Recall Recommendation (Lifer)	£180	-	-
Article 9(4)	Recall Review	£898	£914	£539
Article 18	ECS/ICS Release	£898	£914	£539
Article 24(5)	Variation of Licence (ECS/ICS)	£359	-	-
Article 28(2)a	Recall Recommendation (ICS/ECS/DCS)	£180	-	-
Article 28(4)	Recall Review (ICS/ECS/DCS)	£718	£686	£359
Article 29(6)	Further Review of Article 28(4)	£718	£686	£359
Article 46(3)	Pre-tariff Review:			
	• Single Commissioner	£539	-	-
	• Interviewing Commissioner	£539	-	-
	Review request for panel hearing on DCS case:	£180	-	-

Commissioners are also paid allowances for travelling and subsistence in accordance with prescribed scales.

Financial Summary

Expenditure incurred by the Department of Justice in providing for the work of the Commissioners in the year ending 31 March 2021 is detailed below:

PCNI Expenditure – Financial Year 2020/21						
	2015/16 (£000)	2016/17 (£000)	2017/18 (£000)	2018/19 (£000)	2019/20 (£000)	2020/21 (£000)
Commissioners' Remuneration	£836	£945	£874	£929	£947	£896
Commissioners' Travel, Accommodation and Expenses	£74	£63	£67	£64	£64	£4
Legal Costs	£29	£50	£89	£64	£32	£86
Premises	£120	£103	£104	£100	£111	£106
General Administration	£80	£84	£47	£58	£53	£32
Staff Salaries	£499	£487	£505	£495	£525	£541
Total Expenditure	£1,638	£1,732	£1,686	£1,710	£1,732	£1,665

APPENDIX A

Membership of the Parole Commissioners for Northern Ireland between 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021

Chief Commissioner

Mr Paul Mageean qualified as a solicitor in 1991 and was originally in private practice. In 1995 he joined the Committee on the Administration of Justice as their Legal Officer during which time he successfully brought a number of cases to the European Court of Human Rights. Subsequently he worked for Criminal Justice Inspection Northern Ireland from 2005 until 2008 when he was appointed as the first Director of the Graduate School for Professional Legal Education at the University of Ulster. From 2013 until 2018 he was the Director of the Institute of Professional Legal Studies at Queen's University Belfast. He served as a member of the NI Human Rights Commission from 2017 until 2020. He also serves as a member of the Parole Board in the Republic of Ireland and sits as a member of the Policing Authority in the Republic of Ireland. He was appointed as Chief Commissioner of PCNI in September 2019.

Commissioners from a Legal Background

Judge Desmond Marrinan was called to the Bar of Northern Ireland in 1972 and later to the Irish Bar and the Bar of the Supreme Court of New South Wales. He specialised in criminal law, EC law and professional negligence until appointed a County Court judge in 2003. He served as such until 2018 dealing mostly with criminal trials in the Crown Court and he continues to sit as a Deputy County Court Judge. From 2008-2011 he sat as the Recorder of Londonderry. He was formerly the Vice-Chair of the Law Reform Advisory Committee. From 1971-1978 he lectured in public law at the Queen's University of Belfast and latterly was an external examiner for the Institute of Professional Legal Studies at QUB. In June 2019 the Department of Justice appointed Judge Marrinan to conduct an independent review into hate crime legislation in Northern Ireland. His review of hate crime legislation in Northern Ireland was presented to the Minister of Justice and published in December 2020.

Ms Christine Glenn qualified as a barrister in 1980. She was the Justices' Chief Executive in the Inner London Magistrates' Courts Service until 2001 and Chief Executive of the Parole Board for England and Wales from 2001 until March 2009. She sat as a judge in the First Tier Tribunal, dealing with asylum and immigration cases. She served as a member of the Thames Valley Courts Board from its inception until 2010. She also worked as a consultant on parole and criminal justice, including advising governments and training parole boards in Cyprus, the Cayman Islands, Montserrat, Anguilla, and the British Virgin Islands. She has worked as a Visiting Expert at the United Nations and Far East Institute in Japan and has also presented on parole and its impact on reducing prison overcrowding at the United Nations Congress on Crime in Brazil 2010. She is a member of the Association of Paroling Authorities International Training and Development Committee, representing the international division.

Mrs Anne Fenton MBE has been a qualified solicitor since 1978. She was Director of the Institute of Professional Legal Studies at Queen's University, Belfast from 1998 to 2013. She is a legal member of the Review Tribunal and in 2005 she was appointed by the Lord Chancellor to hear Restricted cases before that Tribunal. From January 2014 to August 2019 she was Under-Treasurer of the Inn of Court of Northern Ireland.

Mr Noel Phoenix qualified as a solicitor in Northern Ireland in 1983 and has practised for many years in criminal law across the entire range of court tiers in the jurisdiction. He was admitted to the Roll of Solicitors in England and Wales in 2005 and is a qualified Advanced Advocate. He holds a Master's Degree in Human Rights and Criminal Justice and serves as a member of the Human Rights and Equality Committee of the Law Society of Northern Ireland. Noel was appointed as a Notary Public in 2006 and he served on the Solicitor's Disciplinary Committee between 2008 and 2019. Noel has served as a part time trainer at The Institute of Professional Legal Studies since 1998 and

was appointed as a Training Principal for LPC trainees in 2007. He was appointed a Parole Commissioner in 2014 and a legal chair of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Appeals Panel in 2017. Noel has had a high profile in negotiations for the remuneration of legal aid practitioners and was elected as chairman of the Solicitors Criminal Bar Association in 2018. He continues in private practice as a senior partner in a leading law firm.

Professor John Jackson is a professor of Law at the University of Nottingham and a qualified barrister. He was previously Dean of the School of Law at University College Dublin and has taught at several other universities including Queen's University Belfast, the University of Sheffield, the City University, London and University College Cardiff. He has held visiting professorships at Hastings College of the Law, University of California and the Faculty of Law, University of New South Wales and was a Fernand Braudel Senior Fellow at the European University Institute in 2007 – 2008. From 1998 to 2000 he was an Independent Assessor for the Northern Ireland Criminal Justice Review and he has been a Sentence Review Commissioner since 2012.

Mr Jeremy Mills qualified as a solicitor in 1990. He spent 15 years with a firm of corporate solicitors in Belfast and was a partner for 10 years. Between 2007 and 2012 Jeremy served as a part time Legal Chairman of the Northern Ireland Valuation Tribunal. From 2008 to 2012 he was also a member of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's Independent Review of Decisions Panel. He was a member of the Board of Bryson Charitable Group from 2008 until 2018. In 2009 he was appointed to Transport Northern Ireland's panel of independent Public Inquiry Inspectors. He is also a non-executive Director of the Odyssey Trust Company and its subsidiary, W5.

Mr John F Gibbons qualified as a solicitor in 1991, and manages his own law firm, which he established in 1995. He was recently sworn in as a Legal Member of

the Victims Payment Board, dealing with claims around pensions for victims of the Troubles. He was sworn in as a Legal Member of the Mental Health Review Tribunal for Northern Ireland, in January 2015, and then became its Deputy Chairman in 2019. He chaired the Solicitors Disciplinary Tribunal between 2009 and 2020 and was a trustee board member and treasurer of Citizens Advice, Belfast, between 2008 and 2014. In 2010 he was appointed a Legal Chairman of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's Independent Appeals panel and between 2012 and 2020 he was the Legal Chair to the Pharmaceutical Society for Northern Ireland's Fitness to Practice scrutiny committee.

Ms Maura Hutchinson qualified as a solicitor in 1996 and worked for a number of years in a City of London legal practice. She set up and managed a grant-giving programme (Awards for All) in the charity and voluntary sector in Northern Ireland and was a solicitor at Law Centre (NI) until 2010. Maura currently sits as a Judge of the First Tier Tribunal - Immigration and Asylum Chamber and as a Deputy Judge of the Upper Tribunal. She is also an Adjudicator of the Traffic Penalty Tribunal Northern Ireland, a part-time Chairperson of the Social Security Appeal Tribunals and a legal member of the Review Tribunal and is appointed to hear Restricted Cases within that Tribunal. Maura was appointed to the Victims Payment Board, as a legal member, in 2021.

Mrs Marian Killen was admitted as a solicitor in Northern Ireland in 1978 and in England and Wales in 2016. She held a number of legal positions in the Northern Ireland Office, Court Service and Northern Ireland Civil Service before being appointed to the post of Assistant Crown Solicitor in 2007 which she held until 2017. She is a trained Mediator and Solicitor Advocate and served for many years on a number of Law Society and other Committees. In addition to her role as a Commissioner, Marian was appointed as a Deputy District Judge (civil) in the County Court and a Deputy Master in the High Court in 2009. She

was appointed as a Legal Assessor to the Nursing and Midwifery Council's Fitness to Practise Tribunal in 2017 and as a Chair of the Health Care Professional Council's Fitness to Practise Tribunal in 2017. In 2018 she was appointed as a Legal Assessor to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's Fitness to Practise Tribunal and was appointed as Legal Advisor to Social Work England's Fitness to Practise Tribunal in 2018.

Mr James Scholes qualified as a barrister in 1973. He was appointed Deputy Director of Public Prosecutions in 2008 and served as Acting Director of Public Prosecutions from 2009 to 2011. He was appointed a Civil Service Commissioner in 2012 and he currently serves on the Board of Chest Heart and Stroke.

Mr Niall Small qualified as a Solicitor in 1992. He worked in private practice for 10 years before becoming a founding partner in the firm of Small & Marken Solicitors in Antrim. He has been reappointed to the Guardian Ad Litem Solicitor Panel in Northern Ireland and has recently been appointed as a legal chair of the HSCB Disciplinary Committee for Dental, Optometry and Pharmaceutical services. He is a trained mediator and has qualified as a Solicitor Advocate. He has held several positions with a number of voluntary organisations throughout Northern Ireland. He was sworn in as a Legal Member of the Review Tribunal for Northern Ireland, on 7 September 2020.

Mr Timothy Thorne qualified as a barrister in 1987. He practiced mainly in the fields of criminal defence and prosecution. He was a Deputy Assistant Judge Advocate General sitting in Courts Martial and is a fee-paid judge in the First Tier Tribunal, in the Immigration & Asylum Chamber and the Care Standards Tribunal. He was also a Deputy Chairperson of the National Health Service Tribunal and a consultant trainer to the Inns of Court School of Law in London. He is also presently a non-Executive Director of a legal training company.

Mr Mark Finegan was admitted as a solicitor in 1993. He spent ten years as a solicitor in private practice before joining the Department of the Director of Public Prosecutions in 2003 as a Senior Public Prosecutor. Since 2010 he has worked as a Senior Principal Legal Officer in the Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland. He is a qualified Solicitor Advocate and has been a member of the Crown Court Rules Committee since 2011.

Mr Martin O'Brien has been a practising barrister at the Bar of Northern Ireland for 31 years, specialising in employment and discrimination law. He has a Master's degree in Human Rights and Emergency Law, and for 18 years was an academic lecturer at the Institute of Professional Legal Studies at Queen's University Belfast. Martin was called to the Bar of Ireland in 1998 and served as a part time Judge of Employment Tribunals from 1998-2009. He is also a part-time Judge of Appeals Tribunals, and an Adjudicator of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Appeal Panel. Martin is a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. In addition to sitting on a number of boards and committees, Martin is also the Chairman of a children's Safeguarding Advisory Panel.

Commissioners from a Psychiatry and Psychology Background

Dr Adrian Grounds was a University Senior Lecturer in forensic psychiatry at the Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge, and an honorary consultant forensic psychiatrist in the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough NHS Foundation Trust, until retiring in 2010. He is now an honorary research fellow at the Institute of Criminology, and a medical member of the First Tier Tribunal (Mental Health) in England. He has also been a Sentence Review Commissioner since 1998.

Professor Peter Hepper is a Professor Emeritus of Psychology at the Queen's University of Belfast. He was Head of School of Psychology for 13 years and

has served as Chair of the Irish Football Association Appeals Committee, Non-Executive Director Ulster Hospitals Trust. He is a Chartered Psychologist, a Fellow of the British Psychological Society and a member of the European Association of Threat Assessment Professionals. He has been a Visiting Professor at Kyushu University, Japan, University New South Wales, Australia, and Vanderbilt University, USA. Professor Hepper is a qualified hostage negotiator and forensic interviewer of children. He trains individuals and organisations in interview and interrogation techniques. He is trained in linguistic threat analysis, behavioural indicators of violence and violent attacks, risk and threat assessment, including, assessment and management of espionage threats, and transnational organised crime. He has taught and trained students and professionals on The Psychology of Serial Killers, “profiling” and sex crimes.

Dr Damien McCullagh is a Consultant Clinical & Forensic Psychologist in private practice having formerly Lead Clinical Psychologist within the Learning Disability Directorate of the Southern Trust (2000-2017). He is a Chartered member of the British Psychological Society & a registered Forensic and Clinical Psychologist with the Health & Care Professions Council. He has been appointed to the Review Tribunal as a lay member in 2020. Dr McCullagh previously worked as a Principal Psychologist with the Northern Ireland Prison Service where he had primary responsibility for providing psychological risk assessments on Life Sentence Prisoners to the Life Sentence Review Board (1997-2000). He previously held posts in Adult and Child Psychology Services in the Republic of Ireland and with Sperrin Lakeland Health and Social Services in Omagh (1989-1997). Dr McCullagh is an Honorary Lecturer in Forensic Risk Assessment at Queen's University, Belfast. He is also an Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) accredited Behavioural Investigative Advisor. He has previously been the Chairman of the Board of Governors of Drumragh Integrated College in Omagh from 1995-2005.

Dr Micaela Greenwood is an independent business psychologist and management consultant. Her previous positions include Principal Occupational Psychologist at the Police Service of Northern Ireland and Associate Director of the MSc in Occupational Psychology at Queen's University of Belfast. Micaela was appointed as a Sentence Review Commissioner in 2015.

Mrs Deborah McQueirns is an independent Registered and Chartered Forensic Psychologist, Chartered Scientist and Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society (BPS). Her previous positions include Principal Forensic Psychologist in female and high secure prisons, Consultant Psychologist in private healthcare specialising in forensic learning disability and acquired brain injury and specialist forensic psychologist in forensic mental health. She is currently working as a consultant practitioner psychologist and trainer. Her particular areas of expertise are in personality disorder, acquired brain injury, forensic learning disability, ASD and mental health. Mrs McQueirns is also a PhD researcher at the University of Portsmouth in narrative identity and agency in older male prisoners.

Mr Emmet Murray is a Health and Care Professions Council registered and British Psychology Society Chartered Forensic Clinical Psychologist, currently working in the area of Adult Mental Health and Child Protection. He was previously a Principal Psychologist with the Northern Ireland Prison Service and is currently an Expert Advisor with the National Policing Improvement Agency.

Dr Shelagh-Mary Rea was a Consultant Psychiatrist with specialist status in General Adult Psychiatry and Old Age Psychiatry. She practiced as a Consultant in Old Age Psychiatry for twenty-four years in the Northern Sector of the Western Health and Social Care Trust areas until her retirement in 2010. She worked as a part-time medical member of the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority for Northern Ireland from April 2009 until her retirement in December 2018. She is a Fellow of the Royal College of Psychiatrists.

Ms Claire Hunt is a Registered Psychologist, Chartered Forensic Psychologist and an associate fellow of the British Psychological Society. She has worked as a Forensic Psychologist for 24 years. She is a psychologist member of the Parole Board for England and Wales and she also works part-time in mental health services, as a Consultant Psychologist. Ms Hunt has been working as an expert witness in criminal and family law proceedings for 16 years and regularly attends court to provide expert testimony. Previously she worked in HM Prison Service for 11 years, working with high risk offenders, both male and female.

Mrs Siobhan Keating is a Registered Psychologist (HCPC) and Chartered Forensic and Clinical Psychologist (BPS). She currently works as a Consultant Psychologist in Belfast Health & Social Care Trust in the forensic learning disability and mental health inpatient secure services. Previously she was a Principal Psychologist with the Northern Ireland Prison Service and a Senior Occupational Psychologist with the Dept. of Employment (NW England). She is an Associate Fellow of the British Psychological Society.

Dr Linda Blud is a Chartered Psychologist, a Registered Forensic Psychologist and Chartered Scientist. She served as a member of the Parole Board in England and Wales between 2004 and 2012 and was re-appointed to the Board in 2017. She served as a member of the MOJ Correctional Services Accreditation and Advisory Panel of England and Wales between 2008 and 2016 and a member of Scottish Government Accreditation Panel for Offender Programmes between 2006 and 2010. She was a Principal Psychologist at HMP's Offending Behaviour Programmes Unit from 1995 – 2001. Since that time she has worked as an independent forensic psychology consultant and has worked with a number of prison psychology services in Europe and America, including Northern Ireland, where she provided support with programme delivery and risk assessment between 2011 and 2015.

Mrs Dawn Harris is a BPS (British Psychological Society) Chartered Forensic Psychologist, Associate Fellow of the BPS and a registered HCPC (Health Care and Professions Council) Forensic and Clinical Psychologist, and an accredited Psychotherapist. She previously worked in the Scottish Prison Service, becoming Head of Psychology for a maximum security prison and open, low secure prison. She is experienced in the assessment and treatment of offending behaviour, and is co-author of the Sex Offender Treatment Programme currently being delivered in Scotland in both the prison and community settings, and also wrote the anger management programme that is currently being delivered in Scotland in the prison setting. Dawn has a specialist interest in the assessment and treatment of psychological trauma, particularly within the offending population. She co-founded and owned a private psychiatric hospital in 2015 which specialised in treating people with a history of psychological trauma, and was the first specialised hospital in the UK. She developed and now delivers BPS approved training to professionals in Trauma Informed Practice. Dawn is also a risk assessor for the Risk Management Authority in Scotland, authorising her to assess people considered at high risk of committing further sexual and/or violent offences and are potentially facing an Order of Lifelong Restriction. Dawn currently works in independent practice providing a highly specialist forensic and clinical service.

Dr Andrea Higgins is an HCPC registered Practitioner Psychologist. She is a Consultant Clinical Psychologist with the Ministry of Justice, UK and has worked in a variety of clinical and forensic settings, providing specialist services including the assessment of risk of reoffending, which is an area of special interest for her. She is the former Clinical Director of "Aware", an organisation for Depression and Bipolar disorder providing services across the Republic of Ireland. She has completed doctoral training in forensic clinical psychology and associated specialities and is experienced in the identification and management of risk of reoffending in

both community and prison populations. Dr Higgins is the former chair of the Division of Clinical Psychology within the Psychological Society of Ireland and Vice-Chair of the Neurological Alliance of Ireland. She has a special interest in offending behaviour in the context of neurological conditions and mental health issues. In 2013, she established a clinical psychology service in a specialist neuropsychiatric hospital, providing services to patients with neurological, neuropsychiatric and mental health conditions. She is a member of the European Huntington's Disease Network working groups.

Commissioners from a Criminal Justice Backgrounds

Mr Nigel Stone was Senior Lecturer in Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of East Anglia (UEA) and is now a Visiting Fellow there. Until 1997 he also served in the Probation Service for 25 years, holding a joint appointment as Probation Officer and Head of Home Office sponsored training programmes for probation students at UEA. He was a criminologist member of the Parole Board for England and Wales 1997-2007 and was reappointed to the Board in 2010.

Mr Stephen Murphy CBE is a former Director General of the National Probation Service for England and Wales, prior to which he was Chief Probation Officer first in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight and then in Northumbria. He is a former member of the Parole Board for England and Wales on which he served from 1995 to 2005 and 2010 to 2020.

Mrs Elaine Peel is currently a Company Director. She was formerly an Assistant Chief Probation Officer with 24 years' experience of working with offenders. During her time with the Probation Board for Northern Ireland she was instrumental in setting up a wide range of multi-agency services for prisoners and their families and the implementation of the first programmes to deal with domestic violence in Northern Ireland. She

was a Director of the National Community Justice Training Organisation.

Mrs Alexandra Delimata is a self-employed consultant who works primarily with community groups, enterprises and small businesses in North West Ireland. Until 2004, she was Corporate Secretary of The Travel Partnership Corporation, an international consortium of travel associations. Prior to relocating to Ireland in 2001, she was Assistant Director, Corporate Development, for the International Air Transport Association (IATA) in Geneva.

Mrs Ruth Laird CBE is a human resource professional with particular experience in organisational development, equality and diversity. She was formerly Director of the National Trust, Director of HR, BBC, and a Fair Employment Commissioner. Ruth has held appointments as a Judicial Appointments Commissioner, Civil Service Commissioner and Independent Assessor for Public Appointments. She has served as a non-executive Director of the Northern Ireland Prison Service and Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority, and as a member of the Legal Services Civil Appeal Panels. She was a Board member of Business in the Community, a founder member of the Employers' Forum on Disability and a council member of Ulster University. She is currently a panel member for Police Misconduct Hearings, a part-time member of the Review Tribunal and a non-executive Director of the Western Health and Social Care Trust. Ruth was appointed recently as an Ordinary Member of the Victims' Payments Board for Northern Ireland.

Professor Duncan Morrow is an academic in the Ulster University where he is Director of Community Engagement. Until 2012 he was Chief Executive of the Community Relations Council (CRC) and has taken an active role in peace building and the legacy of violence in the past. Professor Morrow was also a Sentence Review Commissioner for Northern Ireland. He is chair of the Scottish Government Independent Advisory Group on Hate Crime, Prejudice and Community Cohesion.

Miss Linda McHugh is a Management Consultant and a Board Member of a number of voluntary sector organisations. She is a former Vice-Chair of Community Housing Association and a former member of the Audit Committee of the Law Society. She was an Independent Member of the Parole Board for England and Wales from 2002 until 2009 and was a non-executive member of its Management Board and Chairman of its Audit and Risk Management Committee.

Mrs Elsbeth Rea OBE is a retired social worker. She has worked as both a Senior Probation Officer with the Probation Board for Northern Ireland, as a lecturer in Social Work at Queen's University Belfast and for various social work and social care bodies and agencies on a sessional basis. She is currently a Lay Magistrate and a Lay Member of the Bar Disciplinary Committee. She has held public appointments with the Northern Ireland Committee of Ofqual, the Ulster Community and Hospitals Trust, the Police Authority for Northern Ireland and the Eastern Health and Social Services Council

Mrs Debbie Hill is a barrister (non-practising). She began her career in Youth Justice before working in the Probation Service as a District Manager responsible for courts and as the District Sex Offender Specialist. She re-trained as a barrister. She is currently an independent member of the Parole Board for England and Wales, a lay member of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board and the Mental Health Review Tribunal for Wales. Mrs Hill is currently sitting as a Chair for the General Chiropractic Council fitness to practice Panels and is also a lay member/Chair for the MPTS fitness to practice hearings.

Ms Mary Barnish is a former senior probation officer who worked for London Probation for 35 years. Her management roles have included the family courts service, programmes for women offenders, victims unit, and a public protection unit responsible for the assessment and supervision of high risk offenders. From

2002 -2005 she was seconded to HM Inspectorate of Probation for England & Wales, auditing accredited programmes and conducting effective supervision inspections, including a thematic inspection on domestic violence. More recently she was a member of London Probation's Inspection and Standards unit where her responsibilities included HR and complaints investigations and conducting serious case reviews.

Mrs Louisa Fee qualified as a Solicitor in September 2004. She worked in General Private Practice until October 2017 specialising in Family and Criminal law. She was appointed to the Guardian Ad Litem panel in 2012. In November 2017 she was appointed legal advisor for the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland, and thereafter became the Director of Legal Services in October 2018. She was appointed to the Civil Legal Services Appeals Panel in April 2019. She was sworn in as a Legal Member of the Mental Health Review Tribunal for Northern Ireland in August 2019. She has been appointed to the Board of Governors at Park Education Centre, Aquinas Grammar School and St Bride's Primary School Belfast.

Mr Mike Fowkes is a former police officer who served in Devon and Cornwall Police for thirty years. As a Senior Investigating Officer he led numerous murder and major crime investigations. Following retirement from the police, one of his roles involved carrying out investigatory work for a specialist criminal defence law practice, who represented clients facing serious criminal allegations. He is currently working as a chair and panel member on Fitness to Practise Hearings for the Health and Care Professions Tribunal Service and the General Pharmaceutical Council. He is also a chair of Mental Health Act Hearings, reviewing the cases of patients detained for treatment in secure mental health services hospitals and making decisions to either uphold their detention, or to discharge them. His voluntary roles included working with young offenders and helping in the recruitment of new Magistrates.

Mr Jarlath Kearney is currently an Equality Commissioner for Northern Ireland, appointed by the Secretary of State in 2016. He is an experienced senior strategy advisor. In 2018, he was appointed as a National Expert for the European Commission's TAIEX Programme on a project of institutional transformation, equality and rights, and democratic development in the Balkans region. Jarlath was previously a Board member of both the Arts Council for Northern Ireland and the Community Relations Council. He holds Masters Degrees in Human Rights Law and Journalism Studies, and writes a regular column for The Irish News.

Mr Ciaran McQuillan qualified as a Solicitor in 1994. He worked in private practice for 12 years specialising in Personal Injury litigation and Criminal Law. In 2006 he joined the Public Prosecution Service of Northern Ireland. He has served as an Assistant Director for the last 10 years and is presently head of the Serious Crime Unit. He was a member of the Law Society's Advocacy Working Party for 12 years and in 2013 was appointed to the Magistrates Court Rules Committee.

Ms Tracy Overing was called to the Bar of Northern Ireland in 2004. She specialises in the area of children and family law and continues to practise in other areas of law including criminal, matrimonial and judicial review. Ms Overing is a well-respected member of the profession with extensive experience in complex cases of fact and law including the sexual abuse of children, domestic abuse, ward ship, adoption, public and private law proceedings with domestic and international elements, Hague Convention and Non-Hague Convention proceedings. She has completed additional training to become an Advanced Advocate. Ms Overing appears in all court tiers and has been involved in a number of cases which have set legal precedent. In October 2014 Ms Overing was appointed as Chair of the Disability Appeals Tribunals conducting appeal hearings in the application of social security law. She continues in this post to date.

Mrs Vilma Patterson spent over 30 years in the construction industry as a Director and Shareholder of John G Duff (Annandale) Ltd. Interested in skills development for the industry she is a past member of the Training Committee for the Construction Industry Training Board for Northern Ireland. She was the founding Chair of the Women in Business Network, and is a former Board Member of the Women on the Move Network which works to support and encourage female entrepreneurship. Ms Patterson is past Chairman of the Probation Board for Northern Ireland and she has been a non-executive member of the Audit Committee of the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland, a Civil Service Commissioner for Northern Ireland and member of the Parades Commission for Northern Ireland. She is a former Member and Chair of the Independent Monitoring Board for HMP Maghaberry and Chairman of the Association of Members of Independent Monitoring Boards for Northern Ireland. She has served as a member of the Prison Service Pay Review Body and the Armed Forces Pay Review Body. She is a current Member of the Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland.

Parole Commissioners for Northern Ireland

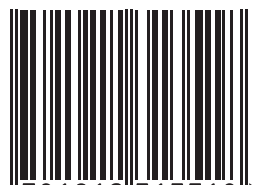
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