



NORTHERN IRELAND
Legal Services
Commission

Business Plan 2007 - 2008



An executive summary of this document is also available in an accessible format if required i.e. Braille, large print, audio cassette or in a minority ethnic language.

*Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission
Business Plan 2007 - 2008*

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(Northern Ireland) order 2003,
Schedule 1, Article 16*

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Jim Daniell
Chairman

Foreword by the Chairman

I thought it important to outline why the Legal Services Commission is publishing a business plan for 2007/08 in March 2008.

Since my appointment as Chairman of the Commission on 12 November 2007, I have been impressed by the complexity and mix of factors that affect the way in which the Commission delivers services to the public. The availability of limited and finite funding in support of demand led services, legacy issues dating back to the days of the Legal Aid Department of the Law Society, outstanding financial management and accounting issues and the service provision model combine to produce a challenging operating environment. To this must be added the major change agenda associated with implementation of reforms to criminal and civil legal aid, including those deriving from the Access to Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2003.

In 2007 two major reviews of the Commission's effectiveness and funding arrangements were superimposed on the twin and inextricably linked agendas of sustaining quality service delivery and preparation for reform. The Landscape Review, with fieldwork carried out in March and April 2007, was one of the periodic reviews of effectiveness,

governance arrangements and relations with the sponsor department that take place in relation to all NDPBs. In the final quarter of 2007, the Northern Ireland Court Service and the Commission jointly sponsored a review of the Commission's financial requirements for 2007/08 and the ensuing three years covered by the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review. These reviews raised significant issues about the way in which we operate and, building on them, the Board has made important decisions to be carried through in this financial year and beyond. While the exercises have proved to be of considerable value to the Commission, together with uncertainties over funding they have contributed to a planning environment in a constant state of flux.

Previous versions of this plan were prepared earlier in 2007 and have guided the Commission in taking its work forward. Until now they have not been published owing to the constantly changing operating, planning and financial context. However, the Board is committed to public accountability through demonstrating to Parliament, stakeholders and the public how it will use the resources made available to it; and it will be held to account through judging its performance against the business plan. That is why

the plan is being published now. Work has already begun on the preparation of a corporate plan covering the period of the Comprehensive Spending Review from 2008/09 to 2010/11 and a business plan for 2008/09.

The Commission's staff are central to the delivery of the quality and efficient service to which the Board aspires and which the public have a right to expect. The Board will work with the staff to ensure that they are empowered to deliver in a rapidly changing environment. The Board also recognises the importance of communications and co-operation with the legal profession who play the major role in delivery of services on behalf of the Commission and with other stakeholders who contribute to delivery or who are affected by our work. We attach great importance to the early resolution of accounting and budgetary issues, including the publication of accounts and financial forecasting. And we set considerable store by effective delivery of existing services in line with challenging but achievable targets as well as by planning and implementing the reform agenda.

Particular thanks are due to the staff and senior management of the Commission for their commitment and hard work, often in difficult and demanding circumstances. And I should like to register my personal appreciation of the work of my predecessor, Sir Anthony Holland, who was the Commission's Chairman from 19 April 2004 to 31 July 2007; his extensive knowledge of legal aid issues and his standing in the legal profession were invaluable in addressing the reform agenda. Also I am grateful to my immediate predecessor, Ronnie Spence, who, as interim Chairman from 1 August until 11 November 2007, maintained momentum on a number of fronts and was especially helpful in introducing me to this role.

Jim Daniell
Chairman

Introduction by the Chief Executive

This document contains the Commission's business plan for 2007/08. The Commission's original intention had been to publish this year a new corporate plan covering the period to 2011 alongside its business plan for 2007/08; and indeed an initial draft was forwarded to the Northern Ireland Court Service in March 2007. However, the Northern Ireland Court Service decided to initiate a Landscape Review of the Commission which commenced in March 2007; the emerging findings from that Review became available in May 2007 and work commenced immediately on considering its important implications. The outcome of the Review, together with a plan of action in response to its recommendations, will be published on the Commission's website before the end of this financial year.

Since its establishment on 1 November 2003, the Commission has been focusing on:

- addressing a wide range of inherited issues concerning legal aid;
- seeking to implement substantial improvements to business processes;
- engaging constructively with the providers of legal services; and,
- developing the reforms that will enable the Commission to fulfil its responsibilities under the Access to Justice (NI) Order 2003.

It would be an understatement to say that each of these tasks has in itself been challenging, but taken together they have represented, and continue to represent, a formidable undertaking for the Commission. Almost inevitably, progress has been mixed as we have striven with some success to deal with current issues whilst planning to move from the provision of publicly-funded civil legal services under the Legal Aid Advice and Assistance (NI) Order 1981 to new arrangements under the AJO 2003. Establishing predictability and control over expenditure on legal aid for criminal cases, particularly those in the very high cost category, has proved especially difficult.

In preparing this business plan, the Commission has been mindful of the potential impact of devolution of responsibility for law and order and justice issues to the Northern Ireland Executive. Ministers in the Executive who may become responsible for these matters will, of course, want to reach their own decisions about the future of legal aid. I am, however, confident that they will want to continue the broad thrust of the Commission's vision to target legal aid support on those people in Northern Ireland who need it most and for the issues that affect them most.

I wish to record my thanks to the Northern Ireland Court Service for their support and the staff of the Commission for their professional commitment and hard work in difficult and demanding circumstances.

Finally, the Commission is very aware of the impact of its present activities and the potential impact of reform of legal aid and it is committed to full and open consultation on these matters. It welcomes, therefore, comments on this business plan and the issues it covers

Gerry Crossan
Chief Executive

The Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission

The Commission is an executive Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) that is sponsored by the Northern Ireland Court Service (NICtS), itself a department of the Lord Chancellor.

Details of the Commission's relationship with the sponsor department are contained within the Management Statement and the Financial Statement, both of which are available on the Commission's website. www.nilsc.org.uk

The powers of the Commission are set out in Article 7 of the Access to Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2003.

In performing its functions in administering legal aid, the Commission operates within a complex body of legislation which includes;

- legal aid legislation dating back to 1965 (see Annex 3);
- certain articles of the Access to Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 (AJO);
- regulations, directions and guidance issued by the Lord Chancellor;
- the resources provided by Parliament through the NICtS;
- the European Convention on Human Rights; and,
- section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

The Commission is now in its fourth year as an NDPB. It is continuing to strive to improve the delivery of existing services and is working to establish new ways of delivering publicly funded legal services in Northern Ireland against its reform agenda.

This document contains the Commission's Business plan for 2007/08. It:

- explains the context within which this plan has been prepared;
- reviews progress in 2006/07;
- revisits the Commission's mission, aim, values and objectives; and,
- presents the Commission's business plan for 2007/08.

The Board of the Commission comprises ten members and a Chairman. The membership of the Board is given at Annex 1 to this document. The names of the senior management of the Commission are given at Annex 2 to this document. Further information on the Commission and its work can be found on the Commission's website at www.nilsc.org.uk or by contacting the Secretary to the Commission at:

The Northern Ireland Legal
Services Commission
2nd Floor Waterfront Plaza
Mays Meadow
Belfast
BT1 3BN

Context

The Commission is responsible for the granting of civil legal aid and payment for both civil and criminal legal aid in Northern Ireland. It is responsible for reforming civil legal aid; responsibility for the granting of criminal legal aid rests with the judiciary, while responsibility for a programme of reform is being taken forward by the NICTS.

The main activities of the Commission are to:

- adjudicate on the merits of applications for civil legal aid;
- determine and assess the fees in certain civil cases;
- pay fees assessed by the Taxing Master/ Appropriate Authority in certain civil and criminal cases;
- assess fees in certain Crown Court cases
- develop and introduce reformed civil legal services; and,
- support the Court Service reforms of criminal legal aid.

The Commission's expenditure in 2006/07 was £74.7m in cash terms which consisted of:

- Grant-in-Aid of £5.4m to finance the running of the Commission, and
- Legal Aid Fund of £69.3m to provide legal aid for assisted persons.

The Commission is working to a recently agreed staffing complement of around 140 although, despite extensive efforts to recruit and retain staff, it has not yet been possible to achieve this level of staffing.

About 60% of the legal aid expenditure is in respect of criminal cases where the decision to award legal aid rests with the courts, and the quantum is not determined by the Commission. In 2006/07 around £10m of this related to a small number of very high cost cases and it is likely that such cases will form a significant element of spend in 2007/08. The lack of advance knowledge of the timing and quantum of such cases makes it difficult for the Commission to negotiate adequate funding in advance through the spending review process. This has invariably led to a need to secure additional funding within the financial year concerned.

In an attempt to address this recurring problem, NICTS has been in intensive negotiations with HM Treasury to try to secure a more manageable financial baseline for the Commission.

The Government's spending plans for 2007/08, including additional funding secured by the NICTS and provide for total expenditure of £90.7m in resource terms and £84.1m in cash.

On its establishment, the Lord Chancellor provided the Commission with a range of objectives in relation to the systems and

organisation in support of the delivery of publicly funded legal services, the relationships with the Commission's key stakeholders, civil legal services and resources. These objectives remain valid for the Commission and fall into the following categories:

- ensuring appropriate systems are in place to support access to justice;
- targeting Social Need;
- securing value for money for quality legal services;
- transitional arrangements in moving from the legal aid arrangements underpinned by the Legal Aid, Advice and Assistance (NI) Order 1981 and supporting regulations towards the reforms provided for in the Access to Justice (NI) Order 2003; and,
- the development and maintenance of appropriate links with stakeholders, including the legal profession, lay agencies, the Northern Ireland Court Service and other interested bodies.
- the work of the Commission is conducted within the Government's wider policies and objectives, including:
 - its public expenditure plans and priorities;
 - the drive for more efficient public services; and,
 - a focus on customers.

In working to these policies and objectives, the Commission is particularly focused on securing greater predictability and control over its expenditure, and on sustaining an effective, efficient and competitive supply base for publicly funded legal services.

Other Planning Assumptions

In carrying out its functions and planning for the future the Commission takes account of the desirability of:

- maintaining a broadly consistent approach to equality of access to justice across the United Kingdom; and,
- maintaining a relationship between the eligibility criteria for welfare benefits and the threshold for free legal advice and services.

Performance in 2006/07

The Commission's first corporate plan set out two main corporate objectives:

- to improve the delivery of existing legal aid services, and
- to reform publicly funded legal services.

The business plan for 2006/07 set four priority objectives:

- to commence reformed civil legal services by the autumn of 2007;
- to deliver existing criminal legal aid services;
- to deliver existing civil legal aid services; and,
- to enhance the Commission's capability.

It became apparent during 2006/07 that the objective of commencing those reformed civil legal services requiring legislative change by September 2007 was unattainable. In such a complex area, with several discrete but interdependent projects, our experience in 2006/07 highlighted the importance of undertaking a realistic assessment of the time and resource requirements for policy development, consultation and preparation for implementation before committing to commencement dates. Moreover, the Commission was clear that a commitment to early implementation of the reform agenda could not divert resources away from service delivery. A revised implementation date of November 2008 has now been identified, although that will require validation in the light the devolution timetable and the

availability of resources for implementation. Nevertheless, much was achieved in 2006/07 in moving forward with reform and policy development. Draft guidance and a major consultation on proposals for a draft funding code were prepared and carried out, as was a consultation on an associated Equality Impact Assessment. A consultation document on a registration scheme for solicitors was issued in March 2007 and research carried out into how such an initiative could be deployed as a means of supporting quality assurance among providers.

Proposals for a revised test for financial eligibility for civil legal aid were developed and the Commission consulted extensively with stakeholders in 2006/07 in modelling alternative methods of funding money damages cases. On Community Legal Services (CLS), the Commission achieved its objectives for 2006/07 of researching ways of introducing a revised model of service delivery (involving the public, private and voluntary sectors); and, under the auspices of a CLS pilot, it undertook a competitive tendering exercise to procure publicly funded services in the field of immigration in February 2007, awarding a contract to the Northern Ireland Law Centre.

While the Commission did not achieve its objective of introducing statutory fees for all civil business by March 2007, important progress was made through the Civil Fees Working Group, particularly in respect of the development of a standard fee system for Children Order cases in the Family Care Centre.

The Commission is committed to ensuring equality and diversity within the organisation. A draft equality scheme and a draft disability action plan have been submitted to the Equality Commission, and staff have received training on Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

Other areas covered by the objectives identified in the 2006/07 business plan were not fully achieved to the Commission's satisfaction. Sustaining service delivery on the criminal and civil side and keeping work in progress down to acceptable levels proved challenging, with recruitment problems, staff turnover and sickness contributing to the difficulties. Nevertheless, it is to the credit of the management team and the staff that every effort was made to keep work in progress to a minimum. In particular:

- the number of outstanding assessments of Legal Advice and Assistance cases (Green Form) fell from around 9500 in April 2006 to just over 4000 in March 2007;
- the backlog of reports on cases under the Criminal Crown Court '1992 Rules' was reduced from 931 reports awaiting assessment on 31 March 2006 to 50 reports awaiting assessment on 31 March 2007; and,
- under the Criminal Crown Court '2005 Rules' 80% of authorisations of payment for claims (excluding exceptionality) were made within 10 weeks. However, work in progress in criminal (Magistrates' Court) assessments increased from around 2600 in April 2006 to 5371 in March 2007.

This increasing backlog demonstrated the importance of securing standard fees in this area.

In relation to the issue of certificates the Commission ensured that :

- the period between 'emergency' applications received and certificate granted for civil legal aid was 95% within 1 day;
- the period between 'emergency' applications received and certificate granted for ABWOR was 94% within 1 day; and,
- the period between 'emergency' applications received and certificate granted for Children Order cases was 94% within 1 day.

Major issues remained in the field of financial management and governance, many of these having their origins in the circumstances associated with the transfer of responsibility for publicly funded legal services from the Legal Aid Department of the Law Society to the Commission:

- the absence of audited accounts and annual reports since the Commission's establishment;
- major difficulties in the forecasting of financial commitments on criminal legal aid;
- continued evidence through internal audit reports of the need to strengthen basic control systems and ensure their full implementation; and,
- weaknesses in corporate governance and financial management and control arrangements.

In order to address these issues an extensive review of financial management in the Commission was commissioned by the Northern Ireland Court Service, working to the terms of reference used by Treasury in reviews of financial management in central government departments. This was followed by a decision by the Northern Ireland Court Service in November 2006 to appoint one of its officials to act as the Commission's Director of Finance to address a number of immediate priorities in respect of financial management and accountability.

In March 2007, the Northern Ireland Court Service appointed consultants to carry out a Landscape Review of the Commission, in accordance with the normal practice of periodic reviews of NDPBs, their fitness for purpose and their relationship with their sponsor departments. Fieldwork for the review was carried out in April and May 2007 and it is expected that the report of the Review will be published in the first quarter of 2008. The Review's broad conclusion was that while there had been significant progress in some key areas of the reform of civil legal services, the Commission's current structures and governance arrangements were in need of major overhaul if they were to:

- deliver Government's objectives on Access to Justice and value for money;
- serve the needs of all users and stakeholders; and,
- provide appropriate governance, accountability and risk management.

The Review said that these findings were rooted in failures in direction and focus and that an immediate step change was required to rebalance the priorities of the organisation and the application of resources in favour of financial management and delivering service excellence.

In the letter of appointment of 22 June 2007 to the interim chairman, the Lord Chancellor said that he endorsed the need to rebalance the Commission's priorities and said that his priorities for the Commission were as follows:

- a. the performance of the Commission in respect of decision taking and payment processing functions must be examined and improvements made. This should form part of the Commission's Business plan for the year;
- b. the reform programme must continue as it is required to provide the Commission with the control it requires to operate within its financial settlement; and,
- c. the financial and governance arrangements within the Commission must be addressed as a matter of urgency

These priorities were reiterated in the current Chairman's letter of appointment issued in October 2007.

Mission, Aim, Values, Objectives

In its first corporate plan, the Commission defined its mission, aim and values as follows:

Mission

The Commission will promote fair and equal access to justice in Northern Ireland in its provision of publicly-funded legal services.

Aim

Our aim is to provide high quality, customer focused services that target those in greatest need, promote social inclusion and demonstrate value for money.

Values

The Commission is committed to these values in doing its work:

- Fairness and equity
- Integrity and honesty
- Responsiveness to our customers' needs
- Commitment to quality
- Valuing and developing our staff
- Openness and accountability

These definitions continue to remain valid and provide an essential building block for the Commission's 2007/8 business plan

Strategic objectives

The first corporate plan set out two main corporate objectives:

To improve the delivery of existing legal aid services;

and

To reform publicly funded legal services.

These objectives continue to be appropriate but It is now clear, from the experience of recent years and from the 2007 Landscape Review, that the achievement of these two objectives in a balanced manner and the successful management of the transition from the existing to reformed arrangements for legal aid requires the adoption of a third objective.

To strengthen the governance arrangements to enable the Commission to carry out effectively all its responsibilities.

Thus, the Commission's 2007/08 business plan rests on these three broad objectives together with a proactive communications strategy.

2007/08 Business plan

This section sets out the main actions that the Commission plans to undertake in 2007/08 and outcomes it wishes to secure under the three main objectives described in the previous section. It takes account of the initial feedback from the Landscape Review and of the availability of resources in this financial year. There is an element of artificiality in publishing targets and timelines in the final quarter of the year; but the plan reflects what has been achieved and a realistic assessment of the standards of performance to which the Commission should aspire and be measured against within the available resources. In some cases it may be apparent now that targets will not be attained this year, but that will be a spur on us to improve performance in the forthcoming corporate planning period covered by the Comprehensive Spending Review (2008/09 to 2010/11). Planning for that period is currently under way and will be an opportunity to refine objectives and targets further and add to them.

The programme of action has to be viewed against the Commission's medium to long term vision for publicly funded legal aid services in Northern Ireland that will ensure that public funding will be available to the people who need it most to address the issues that affect them most and in ways that provide the best value for the taxpayers' money. That vision includes the development of the Commission as a high quality public body and:

- the development of reformed civil legal services including;
 - putting in place a funding code as a means of determining the categories of case that qualify for legal aid,
 - the establishment of a registration scheme for providers of publicly funded legal services; and,
 - the provision of an alternative to the present approach of funding for money damages
- the introduction of community legal services;
- the development of criminal defence services.

Strategic Theme 1 – Delivering Effective Publicly-funded Legal Services

We will improve performance in service delivery by working to the following targets:

Criminal Legal Aid

75% of authorisations of payments for claims paid under Crown Court Rules (excluding claims citing exceptionality) to be made in 6 weeks;

80% of authorisations of payment for claims paid under Magistrate's Court 1992 Rules to be made in 12 weeks.

Civil Legal Aid

The period between “emergency” applications received and certificate granted to be:

- 75% within 1 day
- 80% within 2 days
- 100% within 3 days

The days between application received and certificate for legal aid granted in Children Order and Assistance by way of representation (ABWOR) cases:

- 75% within 1 day
- 80% within 2 days
- 100% within 3 days

75% of adjudication decisions on applications for civil legal aid to be made within 20 weeks of the application being received.

75% of authorisations of payment to be made within 6 weeks of claims being received across all areas of civil business including:

Legal Advice and Assistance (LAA)

- ABWOR
- Children Order
- Civil Assessment

These targets will be supported by performance indicators and management action to ensure that, where possible, actions take place well within the target period. The differing degrees of complexity of cases means that in some categories identified

above, it is not realistic to provide for 100% achievement within a particular target time. However, management information on the longer running cases will be kept under review in order to ensure that they are processed as quickly as possible.

Strategic Theme 2 - Reforming Publicly Funded Legal Services

Reform and policy development of publicly funded legal services is an essential part of the overall strategy of sustaining quality service delivery on a basis that is affordable. While the focus in 2007/08 is on developing policies and external consultation, we will also start the process of preparing the organisation internally for implementation. With this in mind, the Commission attaches importance to developing its programme management and project planning capacity to enable it to set realistic target dates for implementation and ensure that interdependencies are fully taken into account. Staffing capacity and skills, business processes and IT are amongst the issues to be addressed in the planning process.

For 2007/08 the key milestones are as follows:

- prepare and consult on funding code criteria/guidance and procedures by 31 March 2008;
- prepare and consult on a reformed financial eligibility test by 1 March 2008;

- establish a standard fee remuneration mechanism for Children Order cases dealt with in the Family Care Centre by 1 January 2008;
- produce options for changes to the statutory charge to inform regulatory changes and providing greater harmony between the statutory charge in Northern Ireland and England and Wales by 31 March 2008;
- prepare and consult on a plan for the development of Community Legal Services from 1 March 2008;
- consult key stakeholders on alternatives to the current arrangements for the provision of legal aid in money damages cases by July 2007; and,
- conduct a mapping exercise of legal aid practitioners to underpin a registration scheme by 1 February 2008.

**Strategic Theme 3 –
Strengthening Governance,
Internal Systems and Financial Management**

Corporate Governance is about:

- accountability;
- leadership and decision-making; and
- securing effective, efficient delivery within available resources.

The focal point for this is the Board, supported by the Top Management Team. The Board will operate in accordance with its role as set out in the Management Statement and, in particular, will:

- meet monthly with Northern Ireland Court Service attendance in an observer capacity, and produce a set of minutes which will be published on the website and accessible to staff and the general public;
- provide strategic leadership and be the prime decision-making body, advised by its committees and working groups as appropriate;
- have a balanced agenda with some standing items including service delivery, financial performance, risk management and at least quarterly reports from the Audit Committee;
- satisfy itself that the Top Management Team has the capacity to manage the Commission effectively and implement the change agenda and HR framework;
- develop and secure implementation of a strategy for external communications, including preparing the ground for devolution of policing and justice services.

The Board Secretary is responsible for securing the implementation of Board decisions through the Commission's staff, reporting to the Chairman as appropriate.

Internal Systems

Significant resources will be devoted to providing internal audit coverage across all key business areas in an effort to identify areas of control weakness and to offer recommendations as to how these areas could be strengthened. Supporting this will be the continued development and embedding of comprehensive risk management procedures.

Financial Management

Further to the Review of Financial Management which reported in September 2006, a major programme of work in this area is being sustained throughout 2007/08 and will continue into the next corporate planning period. It includes initiatives in the following areas:

- the production of accounts dating back to the Commission's inception;
- developing accounting, forecasting and budgeting systems fit for purpose;
- better interface management;
- management and financial information systems that enable business managers to report on, and the Board to monitor and challenge, in year spend and variances;
- updated financial systems supporting debt recovery processes; and,
- publication of a comprehensive financial procedures manual.

Specific high level financial milestones for 2007/08 are as follows:

Milestones	Target Date
Report to HM Treasury on resource consumption of the Commission up to March 2007	June 2007
Prepare statutory accounts and annual Reports for audit - 2003/04 & 2004/05 2005/06 2006/07	May 2007 August 2007 October 2007
Review existing forecasting model and report on recommendations for its replacement with less complex and more automated process	November 2007
Ensure that financial systems and debt recovery processes are capable of supporting statutory charge reforms	March 2008

Communications

Ongoing operational issues, the reform programme, the forthcoming devolution of justice responsibilities and accountability requirements make effective external communications an imperative for the Commission – with a particular focus on potential users of legal aid, the legal profession and the voluntary sector, other stakeholders in the justice system, and public representatives. In 2007/08 we are commissioning consultants to prepare a communications strategy for the Commission and assist with its implementation. Deriving from this strategy and from arrangements

already in place, such as the protocol agreed with the Northern Ireland Law Society and (in draft form) with the Bar Council, we will adopt the following actions:

- Monthly business meetings with the Law Society and quarterly meetings involving the Society’s President and the Commission’s Chairman and/or Chair of the Access to Justice Committee
- Regular contact with the Bar Council

- circulars to practitioners on matters of operational importance or about reform proposals – to be shared in advance draft form with the NICtS, the Law Society and the Bar Council;
- six “Road Shows” for practising solicitors in different locations throughout Northern Ireland;
- launch of an “e”zine for practitioners on legal aid issues;
- quarterly meetings of the Voluntary Sector Forum, to include key voluntary organisations in the advice sector and the Department of Social Development;
- meetings as necessary of the Civil Legal Services Stakeholder Group, including practitioners, the judiciary and the voluntary sector (particularly focusing on proposed changes to legal aid arrangements);
- attendance at Magistrate’s Court User Groups;
- revision of the Commission’s website to develop a more user-friendly interface; and,
- meetings between Board Members and MLAs from the main political parties.

In addition, communications will continue to be facilitated through such means as the publication of consultation documents and interviews and articles placed with the media.

Annex 1 The Board of the Commission

Les Allamby

Jim Daniell Chairman from 12 November 2007

Fiona Donnelly Appointed from 1 September 2006

Joseph Donnelly Appointed from 1 September 2006

Brian Fee

Breidge Gadd

Dr Jeremy Harbison

Sir Anthony Holland Chairman until 31 July 2007

Wilson Matthews Appointed from 1 September 2006

Hilary McCartan Appointed from 1 September 2006

Miceal McCoy

Ronnie Spence Interim Chairman from 1 August to 11 November 2007

Annex 2 The Top Management Team of the Commission

Gerry Crossan	Chief Executive
Dr Theresa Donaldson	Director of Policy and Service Development
Lesley Johnston	Director of Finance

Annex 3 Legal Aid Legislation

- The Legal Aid Advice and Assistance (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 as amended;
- The Legal Aid (General) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1965 as amended;
- The Legal Aid (Assessment of Resources) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1981 as amended;
- The Legal Aid in Criminal Proceedings (Costs) Rules (Northern Ireland) 1992 as amended;
- The Legal Aid for Crown Proceedings (Costs) Rules (Northern Ireland) 2005
- The Legal Aid (Remuneration of Solicitors and Counsel in County Court Proceedings) Order (Northern Ireland) 1981
- Other legislation which impacts directly and indirectly upon the administration of legal aid including:
 - The Solicitors (Northern Ireland) Order 1976;
 - The Judicature (Northern Ireland) Act 1978;
 - The County Courts (Northern Ireland) Order 1980;
 - The Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002;
 - The Proceeds of Crime Act 2002;
 - The Nationality Immigration and Asylum Act 2002;
 - The Civil Partnerships Act 2004;
 - The Criminal Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2005;
 - The Strasbourg Agreement;
 - The European Directive 2002/8/EC;
 - The European Convention on Human Rights given effect in domestic law through the Human Rights Act 1988;
 - Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998; and,
 - Regulations, directions and guidance issued by the NICTS and the Lord Chancellor.



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