

## **PRESS RELEASE**



**Embargoed until 4.30pm Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2004**

### **Press Statement**

#### **Public Appointment in Northern Ireland**

#### **Lord Chancellor Appoints Chair to Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission**

The Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs, Lord Falconer, has appointed Sir Anthony Holland to chair the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission, following the resignation of Sir Kenneth Bloomfield KCB.

The Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission (the Commission) is a Non-Departmental Public Body established under the provisions of the Access to Justice (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 and replaced the Legal Aid Department of the Law Society of Northern Ireland on 1 November 2003. The Commission is responsible for administering publicly funded legal services and is accountable to the Secretary of State

for Constitutional Affairs.

Sir Anthony is currently Chair of the Northern Ireland Parades Commission. He has an extensive background in the legal profession in England and Wales, and was President of the Law Society of England and Wales from 1990 to 1991.

His appointment as Chair of the Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission is with effect from 19 April 2004 and is for a period of three years. His remuneration will be £41,040 per annum. Sir Anthony is also Chair of the Standards Board for England, for which he receives £52,400 per annum.

All appointments are made on merit and political activity plays no part in the selection process. However, in accordance with the original Nolan recommendations, there is a requirement for appointees' political activity (if any declared) to be made public. Sir Anthony has not carried out any political activity in the past five years.

This appointment has been made in accordance with The Commissioner For Public Appointment's Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies.

### **Notes for the editor**

#### **The Northern Ireland Legal Services Commission**

The establishment of the Legal Services Commission is a key aspect of the modernisation of publicly funded legal services in Northern Ireland. The Commission has statutory responsibility for publicly funded legal services in Northern Ireland. It has been tasked with obtaining best value for money including the administration of the current legal aid scheme.

**The Chair's role is to:**

- ◆ Give appropriate leadership to the Commission including formulating and overseeing the Commission's strategy for discharging its statutory duties and ensuring it delivers effectively;
- ◆ ensure an effective relationship between the Commission and its sponsor (the Northern Ireland Court Service), high standards of propriety and efficient use of resources; and
- ◆ represent the views of the Commission to the general public.

**The Members duties include:**

- ◆ ensuring that the general guidelines laid down by the Government concerning non-departmental public bodies are fully adhered to, and that the Commission complies with any statutory or administrative requirements for the use of public funds;
- ◆ ensuring that the Commission operates within the limits of its statutory authority and any delegated authority agreed with the Northern Ireland Court Service;
- ◆ contributing to internal Commission debate and decision-making on strategic policy formulation and planning, and key operational policy issues relating to

the delivery of publicly funded legal services;

If you have any further queries about this or other court related matters please contact:

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