

**MINUTES OF THE PLENARY MEETING OF THE LIFE SENTENCE  
REVIEW COMMISSIONERS HELD ON THURSDAY 15 JUNE 2006**

*Commissioners:*

<b>Mr Peter Smith QC (Chairman)</b>	<b>Mr Donal McFerran</b>
<b>Mr Thomas Craig</b>	<b>Dr Patrick McGrath</b>
<b>Dr Ruth Elliott</b>	<b>Ms Clodach McGrory</b>
<b>Mrs Anne Fenton</b>	<b>Mr Stephen Murphy</b>
<b>Dr Ronald Galloway</b>	<b>Mrs Elsbeth Rea</b>
<b>Mrs Mary Gilpin</b>	<b>Prof Andrew Sanders</b>
<b>Dr Adrian Grounds</b>	<b>Dr Oliver Shanks</b>
<b>Prof Peter Hepper</b>	<b>Mr Nigel Stone</b>
<b>Prof John Jackson</b>	<b>Prof Herbert Wallace</b>
<b>Mr John Leckey</b>	

*Secretariat:* Mrs Sheena McKittrick

*Apologies*

<b>Ms Teresa Doherty</b>	<b>Dr Duncan Morrow</b>
<b>Mr Brian Garrett</b>	<b>Mrs Elaine Peel</b>
<b>Dr Damien McCullagh</b>	<b>Judge Derek Rodgers</b>

1. The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.
2. The Prison Service had given an undertaking that a security assessment from the PSNI and/or Prison Security would routinely be provided for terrorist prisoners and that the minutes and decisions of Multi-Disciplinary Group meetings would now be included for all prisoners. Reports on Multi-Agency Sex offenders Risk Assessment and Management (MASRAM) would also soon be routinely provided.
3. The matter of Community Resettlement Plans (CRPs) had now been resolved but if panels were not happy with the plans provided they should not hesitate to ask for more specific information even if this meant adjourning a hearing. However Commissioners agreed that a better name would be Community Management Plan as it is derived from a risk assessment.
4. A copy of the criteria used to select suitable prisoners for the Martin House facility had not yet been requested but would be done before the next meeting.
5. Following the intervention of the Commissioners no further correspondence had been received on the non-payment of Legal Aid.
6. The Prison Service had agreed to put in place a procedure to have "confidential information" validated at HQ level before it is submitted to the Commissioners.
7. Diversity training for the Commissioners had not yet been sourced but would be done before the next meeting.

8. Commissioners heard a report from the latest legal group meeting which included details of all recent and current judicial reviews, one of which had gone against the Commissioners and another two in which the judge had found in their favour.
9. Commissioners heard that the decision had been issued in one further case since the paper on the current caseload had been circulated.
10. The content and recommendations of the Bridges report on Anthony Rice was discussed in detail. The report had identified failure in many areas and similar findings might emerge from any report into a similar case considered by the Commissioners. Commissioners heard that there are currently no Probation approved hostels in Northern Ireland, but that hostels here are independently managed and take prisoners on an *ad hoc* basis determined by bed space rather than suitability. There was also a serious lack of properly trained or social work staff.
11. A recent recall case also raised doubts as to whether the licence conditions being recommended by Commissioners are actually being enforced. Commissioners' decisions rely heavily on the conditions attached and so they need to know if these are not working. For all these reasons it was agreed that it was now time to reopen dialogue with PBNI through the Prison Service.
12. The date of the next meeting was set as Thursday 7 December 2006 at 10.00am.

**20 June 2006**

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**MINUTES OF THE PLENARY MEETING OF THE LIFE SENTENCE  
REVIEW COMMISSIONERS HELD ON THURSDAY 7 DECEMBER 2006**

<b>Mr Peter Smith QC (Chairman)</b>	<b>Mr Donal McFerran</b>
<b>Mr Thomas Craig</b>	<b>Dr Patrick McGrath</b>
<b>Dr Ruth Elliott</b>	<b>Ms Clodach McGrory</b>
<b>Prof Herbert Wallace</b>	<b>Mr Stephen Murphy</b>
<b>Dr Ronald Galloway</b>	<b>Mrs Elsbeth Rea</b>
<b>Mrs Mary Gilpin</b>	<b>Prof Andrew Sanders</b>
<b>Mr John Leckey</b>	<b>Dr Oliver Shanks</b>
<b>Prof Peter Hepper</b>	<b>Mr Nigel Stone</b>
<b>Dr Damien McCullagh</b>	<b>Mr Brian Garrett</b>
<b>Mrs Elaine Peel</b>	

*Secretariat:* Mrs Sheena McKittrick, Mr Brian McCready, Mrs Moya Cushley

**Apologies**

<b>Ms Teresa Doherty</b>	<b>Dr Duncan Morrow</b>
<b>Judge Derek Rodgers</b>	<b>Prof John Jackson</b>

1. The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.
2. Commissioners had not yet received the promised explanation of tests and a glossary of terms used in psychology reports. This would be followed up before the next meeting.
3. A checklist of required documents had produced for suggested insertion at the front of prisoners' dossiers and was currently being considered by the Lifer Management Unit.
4. There was still no confirmation from NIPS that a process for the validation of "confidential information", which was not the subject of a complaint to the Prisoner Ombudsman, had been set up. This would be followed up before the next meeting.
5. The Prison Service had given an assurance that the minutes of MASRAM meetings should now be routinely included in dossiers.
6. Diversity training for the Commissioners had still not been sourced but would be done before the next meeting.
7. The Secretariat had seen a demonstration of the recording equipment used by the Court Service and considered it suitable for the Commissioners' purposes. Funding had subsequently been secured and the next step was a practical trial in the prison.
8. The Chairman had written to the Director General of the Prison Service to draw attention to Commissioners' concerns in respect of serious flaws in a recent case. The reply had not addressed any of the relevant issues so it was the Chairman's intention to write again.
9. On a separate point the Director General had mentioned the pressures on resources in forensic psychology and psychiatric support and pointed out that there were no academic courses available in these subjects in Northern Ireland. Commissioners undertook to contact the Director General in an attempt to help rectify this deficit.
10. The draft Criminal Justice Order detailed plans for the LSRC to become the Parole Commissioners for Northern Ireland and gave them three additional functions  
- Indeterminate sentences for public protection (serious specified offences carrying a maximum sentence exceeding ten years);  
- Extended sentences for public protection (sexual or violent offences carrying less than ten years);and  
- Review of recalls
11. Criminal Justice Division was still currently working on the draft which would subsequently be issued for consultation. It was agreed that while it was not for the Commissioners as a whole to comment on the legislation in principle, individuals would be free to comment directly if they wished but to ensure the legislation was as good as possible, it was agreed that it would be beneficial for the Commissioners to be involved at an early stage. It was also agreed that another group should deal with the parallel issue of rehabilitation for both existing lifers and the new prisoners covered by the Order.

12. Extra resources would obviously be required to process the work generated by the commencement of this Order. Calculation of this was an administrative task that should be taken forward by the Secretary.
13. Commissioners heard a report from the latest legal group meeting which included the Chairman's suggestion that Commissioners should actively try to assure the quality of their work. Following a wide-ranging discussion it was agreed that there was no need to form committees such as those used by the Parole Board but that some scrutiny would be welcomed.
14. The quality of reports etc being provided to the Commissioners would continue to be routinely monitored by panels and any inadequacies reported to the Chairman who would take it up with the appropriate authority.
15. Commissioners heard details of the current caseload including ongoing judicial review proceedings in three cases.
16. The next meetings were scheduled for Thursday 29 March and Thursday 14 June 2007.

**19 December 2006**