

**THE PANEL OF PARTIES IN THE NI EXECUTIVE
ON PARADES AND PROTESTS; FLAGS, SYMBOLS AND EMBLEMS AND
RELATED MATTERS; AND THE PAST**

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Background

The 'Together: Building a United Community' Strategy was published on 23 May 2013 reflecting the Executive's commitment to improving community relations and continuing the journey towards a more united and shared society. The Strategy outlines a vision based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation. It provides the framework for government action in tackling sectarianism, racism and other forms of intolerance while seeking to address division, hate and separation.

When announcing their intention to publish the Strategy, the First Minister and deputy First Minister recognised the difficulties that had prevented agreement from the five Executive parties on certain issues. They proposed a way forward involving the establishment of an independently chaired Panel of Parties in the NI Executive ("Panel") to consider parades and protests; flags, symbols and emblems and related matters; and the past.

Terms of Reference

An independently chaired Panel will be invited to:

"Bring forward a set of recommendations by the end of 2013 on parades and protests; flags, symbols, emblems and related matters stemming from the past that will provide long-term and sustainable solutions that are in the best interests of this community and will make the peace more resilient going forward. In doing so the Group will seek the views of, and evidence from, interested stakeholders on how best to address the issues that cause community division."

Membership

The First Minister and deputy First Minister will appoint an independent Chair and Vice Chair from outside the political parties and, in addition to the First Minister/deputy First Minister representatives and the Junior Ministers, invite two nominations from the remaining Executive parties to form the Panel.

The Panel will determine which stakeholders should be invited to join the Panel and which organisations should be asked to give evidence.

It will also determine how often and in what format it will meet.

Timescale

The Panel will report regularly to the First Minister and deputy First Minister. It is anticipated that they will receive draft recommendations by late November or early December.

Key Deliverables

- Report including Recommendations.
- Identification of Next Steps/Future Work.