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## KELLY - TIME TO MAKE VICTIMS COMMISSIONERS WORK

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SDLP victims spokeswoman Dolores Kelly MLA has said the controversy surrounding the appointment of four victims commissioners should not detract from the serious issue of dealing with victims.

The Upper Bann MLA, who sits on the OFMDFM committee, said she was unhappy at the lack of consultation surrounding the process and at the manner on how news of the appointments leaked out.

She said: “The process of appointing four victims commissioners has been nothing short of farcical.

“It would appear that the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister have attempted to appoint a commissioner to represent all sections of society because they could not agree on just one.

“However, at no time was the SDLP, the committee of OFMDFM or the Executive were consulted on four appointments.

“The first we learned of the news was from press reports which is extremely unsatisfactory

“In fact, the committee was told only recently that the appointment of a single commissioner would be announced shortly.

“Therefore, it has come as a surprise to learn of the appointment of four people.

“This poses a serious question as to whether there will be any legal implications surrounding the appointments and I think it is important we are told what legal advice OFMDFM received in relation to this matter.

“Furthermore, I would ask if these appointments will have any affect on the Eames/Bradley report and who now will have the greatest authority.

“However, now that we have four commissioners it is important that we make it work and get on with the serious business of dealing with victims issues.”

ENDS

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