

**THE CHARITIES ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2008  
THE CHARITIES ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2013  
THE CHARITY TRIBUNAL RULES (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2010**

---

**IN THE CHARITY TRIBUNAL FOR NORTHERN IRELAND  
IN THE MATTER OF A REFERENCE PURSUANT TO SCHEDULE 4  
TO THE CHARITIES ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 2008**

---

**INITIAL DIRECTIONS**

**UPON** a Reference pursuant to paragraph 2(b) to Schedule 4 to the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 ('the Act') being made to the Charity Tribunal for Northern Ireland ('the Tribunal') by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland ('the Commission') on 25 January 2025;

**AND UPON** the said Reference being published on the judiciaryni website on Thursday, 17 April 2025;

**IT IS DIRECTED THAT**

1. Any application by any person, other than the Commission or the Attorney-General for Northern Ireland ('the Attorney-General') to be joined as a respondent to the determination of the Reference by the Tribunal, pursuant to paragraph 2(3) to Schedule 4 to the Act shall be made in writing by 4.00pm on Thursday, 19 June 2025 addressed to:

**The Secretary,  
The Charity Tribunal for Northern Ireland,  
Tribunal Hearing Centre,  
The Annex,  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor,  
Royal Courts of Justice,  
Chichester Street,  
Belfast, BT1 3JF**

or by email, within the same time period, to:

[Kevin.McQuillan@courtsdni.gov.uk](mailto:Kevin.McQuillan@courtsdni.gov.uk)

2. The Tribunal shall, in due course, invite the Commission, as the Referrer, to make written submissions before determining whether to:
  - (i) extend time, if applicable, for the making of an application by any person, pursuant to Rule 3 of the Charity Tribunal Rules (Northern Ireland) 2010 ('the Rules') to be joined as a respondent to the determination of the Reference by the Tribunal;
  - (ii) join any applicant as a respondent pursuant to paragraph 2(3) to Schedule 4 to the Act and Rule 38(6) of the Rules;
  - (iii) make any consequential Directions.
3. The Commission, as the Referrer, with the consent of the Attorney-General, is a party to these proceedings, pursuant to paragraph 1(3) to Schedule 4 to the Act
4. The Commission shall have permission to apply for further Directions.
5. The Attorney-General is entitled to be a respondent to these proceedings, if she wishes, pursuant to paragraph 1(4)(a) to Schedule 4 to the Act and her position in that regard has been requested by 15 May 2025.
6. A formal application to be joined as a respondent to the Tribunal's determination of the Reference, subject to permission to be so joined being granted by the Tribunal, shall be required from any person, including, but not exclusively -
  - (i) the trustee(s) of any charity that is likely to be affected by the Tribunal's decision on the Reference;
  - (ii) any such charity that is a body corporate;
  - (iii) any other person who is likely to be so affectedsubject to any such person consider that they satisfy the statutory criteria to be so joined as a respondent set out in paragraph 1(4) to Schedule 4 to the Act, subject to a decision by the Tribunal on any such application.
7. Any person making an application to be joined as respondent to the determination by the Tribunal of the Reference must be aware that determination of a Reference involves the Tribunal confining itself only to considering, and issuing its opinion, on the two discrete general questions of charity law in Northern Ireland upon which the Commission, as the Referrer, has sought the opinion of the Tribunal.

8. Any such person must explain in their application to be joined as a respondent to the determination of the Reference by the Tribunal, the category of person into which they consider they fall to be permitted by the Tribunal to be joined as a respondent, pursuant to paragraph 2(3)(b) to Schedule 4 to the Act.
9. If any such person makes application to be joined as a respondent on the basis that they consider they are likely to be affected by the determination of the Reference by the Tribunal, pursuant to paragraph 2(3)(b)(iii) to Schedule 4 to the Act, they must explain in their application the basis of that submission by strict reference to the said two precise two questions of charity law in Northern Ireland identified by the Commission in its Reference to the Tribunal.

Signed:       Damien McMahon,  
                  President,  
                  Charity Tribunal for Northern Ireland.

Date: 23 April 2025