

Judicial Communications Office

24 February 2021

VICTIMS' PAYMENTS BOARD

The Lord Chief Justice today announced that he will be appointing Mr Justice McAlinden as President of the Victims' Payments Board with effect from 1 March 2021.

The Victims' Payments Board will be responsible for determining who is entitled to payment in respect of an injury caused by a Troubles-related incident. The framework on entitlement is set out in the Victims' Payments Regulations 2020, which establish the Troubles Permanent Disablement Payment Scheme, and the Secretary of State's Guidance which was published on 14 August 2020.

On 6 November 2020, the Lord Chief Justice appointed Mr Justice McAlinden as interim President of the Board to assist the Department of Justice with the development of the Troubles Permanent Disablement Payment Scheme. His appointment as President marks an important step in moving towards establishing the Board. In a statement, Mr Justice McAlinden said:

"I am honoured to be appointed by the Lord Chief Justice as President of the Victims' Payments Board. As interim President I have worked closely with the team established by the Department of Justice to establish the administrative arrangements for the payment scheme. On 23 February 2021, 26 legal, medical and ordinary members of the Board were sworn into office.

Last week I had constructive meetings with representatives from the main groups supporting the victims of the Troubles. I hope these form the start of positive working relationships enabling victims to have trust in the Board. The many victims deserve the recognition and payments to which they are entitled. The recent Court of Appeal decision made it clear that the Executive Office is under a legal duty to make these payments and I would encourage all to work together to ensure the full implementation of the scheme which the legislation envisages."

NOTES TO EDITORS

The Troubles Permanent Disablement Payment Scheme is established by section 10 of the Northern Ireland (Executive Formation etc) Act 2019 and the Victims' Payments Regulations 2020. The Regulations were commenced on 24 February 2020 and the Department of Justice was designated as the relevant department on 24 August 2020.

Schedule 1 to the Regulations provides for the Lord Chief Justice to appoint a person as the President of the Victims' Payments Board. The legal, medical and ordinary members of the Board were appointed by the Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission. A legal member must be a member of the Bar or a solicitor of the Court of Judicature of at least five years' standing. A medical member must be a registered medical practitioner. An ordinary member may be appointed if it appears to the Department of Justice that the person has appropriate knowledge or experience.

ENDS

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