

## News and Articles

### Former Interim Victims Commissioner Report leaves Elliott wanting movement

E-mail to a friend *November 8th, 2007 Tom Elliott MLA*



Ulster Unionist MLA Tom Elliott has stated that while the report of the former Interim Victims Commissioner Bertha McDougall should be implemented, the need for a full-time Commissioner is growing ever larger day by day.

Mr Elliott said: "The former Interim Victim Commissioners report was a welcome document that I endorsed as a start to a more extensive programme which would be headed by a full-time Commissioner. However, the appointment of a full-time Commissioner is yet to be made by the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister leaving Victims throughout Northern Ireland without a method by which to express their opinions and concerns."

Applications for the position of Victims commissioner were welcomed earlier in the year, but after failing to find a "suitable" candidate the First and Deputy First Ministers reopened the application process. This process is currently ongoing, and Mr Elliott hopes that the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister can quickly make a decision.

The Fermanagh and South Tyrone MLA went on to say, "The time that is being taken by the First and Deputy First Ministers to appoint a Victims Commissioner is scandalous. The need for someone to represent the victims is a real issue.

While Ian Paisley and Martin McGuinness sit together having a 'cosy' time in Stormont many people with real issues are being left to hurt out in the public. It is not good enough.

"I have recently learned that the report of Bertha McDougall is to be used to inform the evolving policy for a Victims Commissioner. What we really want is the implementation of the areas of this report that can be introduced quickly to happen. There is a vacuum in the Victims process that needs to be filled and the only 'show in town' is this current report. There is a real need to support victims, including the need for immediate finance to be given to the Northern Ireland Memorial Fund which has been under funded for the last number of years."

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