

*Status: Point in time view as at 08/02/2022.*

*Changes to legislation: There are currently no known outstanding effects for the Northern Ireland Act 1998, SCHEDULE 4. (See end of Document for details)*

## SCHEDULES

### SCHEDULE 4

Section 16(10).

#### ANNEX A TO STRAND ONE OF BELFAST AGREEMENT

##### PLEDGE OF OFFICE

To pledge:

- (a) to discharge in good faith all the duties of office;
- (b) commitment to non-violence and exclusively peaceful and democratic means;
- (c) to serve all the people of Northern Ireland equally, and to act in accordance with the general obligations on government to promote equality and prevent discrimination;
- [<sup>F1</sup>(ca) to promote the interests of the whole community represented in the Northern Ireland Assembly towards the goal of a shared future;
- (cb) to participate fully in the Executive Committee, the North-South Ministerial Council and the British-Irish Council;
- (cc) to observe the joint nature of the offices of First Minister and deputy First Minister;
- (cd) to uphold the rule of law based as it is on the fundamental principles of fairness, impartiality and democratic accountability, including support for policing and the courts as set out in paragraph 6 of the St Andrews Agreement;]
- [<sup>F2</sup>(ce) to support the rule of law unequivocally in word and deed and to support all efforts to uphold it;
- (cf) to work collectively with the other members of the Executive Committee to achieve a society free of paramilitarism;
- (cg) to challenge all paramilitary activity and associated criminality;
- (ch) to call for, and to work together with the other members of the Executive Committee to achieve, the disbandment of all paramilitary organisations and their structures;
- (ci) to challenge paramilitary attempts to control communities;
- (cj) to support those who are determined to make the transition away from paramilitarism;
- (ck) to accept no authority, direction or control on my political activities other than my democratic mandate alongside my own personal and party judgment;]
- (d) to participate with colleagues in the preparation of a programme for government;
- (e) to operate within the framework of that programme when agreed within the Executive Committee and endorsed by the Assembly;
- (f) to support, and act in accordance with, all decisions of the Executive Committee and Assembly;
- (g) to comply with the Ministerial Code of Conduct.

[<sup>F3</sup>Paragraph 6 of the St Andrews Agreement says: We believe that the essential elements of support for law and order include endorsing fully the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the criminal justice system, actively encouraging everyone in the community to co-operate fully with the PSNI in tackling crime in all areas and actively supporting all the policing and criminal justice institutions, including the Policing Board.]

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### Textual Amendments

- F1** Sch. 4 pledge of office: (ca)-(cd) inserted (8.5.2007) by Northern Ireland (St Andrews Agreement) Act 2006 (c. 53), **ss. 7(1), 27(4)(5)** (as amended by Northern Ireland (St Andrews Agreement) Act 2007 (c. 4), s. 1(1)) (with s. 1(3)); S.I. 2007/1397, **art. 2**
- F2** Sch. 4 pledge of office: (ce)-(ck) inserted (4.5.2016) by Northern Ireland (Stormont Agreement and Implementation Plan) Act 2016 (c. 13), **ss. 7, 11(2)**
- F3** Sch. 4 pledge of office: words inserted (8.5.2007) by Northern Ireland (St Andrews Agreement) Act 2006 (c. 53), **ss. 7(2), 27(4)(5)** (as amended by Northern Ireland (St Andrews Agreement) Act 2007 (c. 4), s. 1(1)) (with s. 1(3)); S.I. 2007/1397, **art. 2**

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## CODE OF CONDUCT

- [<sup>F4</sup>1 (1) Ministers must at all times—
- (a) maintain the highest standards of conduct and behave in a way that upholds the highest standards of propriety;
  - (b) be accountable to the Assembly and the public for the decisions and actions of their departments and agencies, including stewardship of public funds and the extent to which key performance targets and objects have been met;
  - (c) uphold the Nolan principles;
  - (d) comply with this code and with rules relating to the use of public funds;
  - (e) operate in a way that is conducive to promoting good community relations and equality of opportunity, treating all those with whom they come into contact with consideration and respect;
  - (f) ensure that no conflict arises, or could be reasonably perceived to arise, between Ministers' public duties and their private interests, financial or otherwise, and comply with rules concerning conflicts of interest;
  - (g) refrain from using information gained in the course of their service for personal gain and from using the opportunity of public service to promote their private interests;
  - (h) ensure that official resources are not used for party political purposes;
  - (i) comply with rules regarding the management of official information;
  - (j) comply with rules on the acceptance of gifts and hospitality;
  - (k) uphold the political impartiality of the civil service, not asking civil servants to act in any way which would conflict with the Northern Ireland Civil Service Code of Ethics;

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- (l) make civil service and public appointments in accordance with relevant legislation and relevant recruitment codes; and ensure that the rules on management and conduct of special advisers, including discipline, are complied with.
- (2) “The Nolan principles” means the seven general principles of public life set out in the First Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life (Cm 2850) as revised or replaced from time to time.]

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**Textual Amendments**

- F4** Sch. 4 para. 1 substituted for words (8.2.2022) by Northern Ireland (Ministers, Elections and Petitions of Concern) Act 2022 (c. 2), ss. 5(1), 9 (with s. 5(2)(3))

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