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KELLY - BUCKLE BROTHERS NEED TO RESOLVE VICTIMS COMMISSIONERS DELAY

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Commenting on the revelations that the Victims Commissioners appointed by OFMDFM still have no legal status to enable them to carry out their work, SDLP Equality Spokesperson Dolores Kelly MLA stated:

“This is a truly shocking state of affairs and a damning indictment of the inefficiency at the heart of the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister. After the hype and fanfare around the announcement of the victims commissioners appointments we find that they have been left hanging out to dry by the very people who appointed them. I had previously raised concerns around this issue at the OFMDFM committee and I am glad that Margaret Ritchie has taken up her concerns directly with OFMDFM this morning.

It is clear that the Commissioners want to get on with their work, they want to engage with victims and survivors, and they want to make a real difference in dealing with the myriad of complex issues they face. To find that they still do not have the legal authority to carry out any of this work simply beggars belief.

The First Minister and the Deputy First Minister need to get a hold of this situation immediately. They need to move from posing and posturing to pushing through legislation that will help the commissioners and victims and survivors groups. People across the North are rightly concerned and angered by this situation. The Victims Commissioners deserve better than this. Victims and survivors deserve better than this, but sadly, to find that once again the emperor does not seem to have any clothes seems to be becoming a regular theme at the centre of government.

The Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister need to prove that there is some substance behind the spin. Ian Paisley and Martin McGuinness need to prove that when faced with real decisions on important issues that they can deliver. I hope that when the pressure is on and leadership is required that we do not see more ‘buckle brothers’ than chuckle brothers.”

ENDS

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