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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Commission to investigate naming of play park**

The Equality Commission is to conduct an investigation into a decision made by Newry and Mourne District Council to retain the name “The Raymond McCreesh Park” for a Council-owned play park in Newry.

The investigation will consider whether, in making its decision, the Council has failed to comply with commitments made in its Equality Scheme: namely to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity across the nine equality groups, and to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

Under paragraph 11 of Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 the Equality Commission is empowered to conduct an investigation where it believes that a public authority may have failed to comply with its approved Equality Scheme.

After consideration by its Statutory Duties Investigation Committee, the Commission is satisfied that it would be appropriate to have a belief that such a failure may have occurred in this instance. This is not a determination of whether or not such a failure has in fact occurred.

The Equality Commission will not be commenting further upon the facts or issues involved in this case until the investigation is complete.

#### **Notes**

Section 75 of the NI Act 1998 requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between persons of different religious belief, political

opinion, racial group, age, marital status, or sexual orientation; between men and women generally; between persons with a disability and persons without; and between persons with dependants and persons without.

Public authorities are also required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between people of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

Schedule 9 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 provides that the Equality Commission may conduct an investigation under paragraph 11 where it believes that a public authority may have failed to comply with its approved Equality Scheme.

Under paragraph 10 of Schedule 9, a person directly affected by a designated public authority not acting in compliance with its Equality Scheme may complain, first to the public authority itself; and then, if they are dissatisfied with the response of the public authority, they may complain to the Equality Commission, who may decide to investigate their complaint.