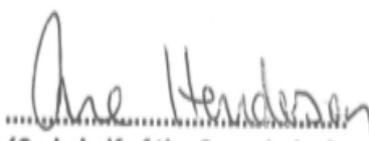

**DECISION MADE IN RELATION TO THE PROTEST AGAINST THE MID ULSTER PRIDE
PARADE NOTIFIED TO TAKE PLACE ON SATURDAY 19TH SEPTEMBER 2020 IN
COOKSTOWN**

1. The following is the decision of the Parades Commission in relation to the protest against the Mid Ulster Pride parade notified to take place on Saturday 19th September 2020.
2. Section 8 (1) of the Public Processions (Northern Ireland) Act 1998, provides that:

“The Commission may issue a determination in respect of a proposed public procession imposing on the persons organising or taking part in it such conditions as the Commission considers necessary.”
3. The Commission has noted the details provided on the 11/3 form submitted on 9th September 2020 concerning the protest against the Mid Ulster Pride parade notified to take place on Saturday 19th September 2020.
4. The Commission has given careful consideration as to whether to exercise its power under Section 8. It has done so within the relevant legal and statutory framework, constituted in the main by the 1998 Act, the various instruments made thereunder (in particular the “Guidelines” and the Human Rights Act 1998).
5. The purpose is stated as *'to register the opposition of Cookstown Free Presbyterian Church (and possible the FP clergy of Mid-Ulster) to the Pride event.'*
6. The proposed protest is notified for 40 participants, to take place opposite the Danske Bank on James Street, Cookstown.
7. The protest is planned for Saturday 19th September, for 1 hour, from 3pm to 4pm.
8. The organiser has stated *'Mid-Ulster has a sizeable religious and Evangelical Community (Cookstown having not less than 14 churches within the town, and many more in the outlying areas), many of whom hold legitimate traditional Christian views on morality, and are dismayed by this proposed Pride event.'*
9. The following information has been provided by the organiser *'I intend to present a religious message either before or after the parade passes, and hold a silent protest during the parade. As in January, the protest will be marshalled by elders and ministers from the FPC, and all placards will be restricted to relevant Bible passages, excepting a banner which will identify the protest aims.'*

10. The organiser has stated '*In respect of Covid-19, wearing of masks will be stipulated, and singing will not occur. Protestors will be briefed beforehand by remote means, and be asked to disperse quickly after the event.*'
11. The Commission has informed the organiser that responsibility for compliance with current Covid-19 Regulations and the public health risks of the parade are the responsibility of the organiser. The Commission has advised the organiser to consult with all relevant authorities regarding such public health risks.
12. The Commission has considered all representations and information received. It has considered the protest's purpose, timing and other relevant issues.
13. The Commission has considered the need to issue a determination as outlined at paragraph 2 above against the factors outlined in its statutory guidelines, including the potential disruption to community life.
14. The Commission has decided that the imposition of conditions upon this protest at this time, is not appropriate.
15. The proposed protest has been brought to the attention of the Minister of Health, the Chief Constable of the PSNI, the Chief Medical Officer and the Chief Scientific Advisor.
16. This decision by the Commission does not confer approval of the proposed protest.

Signed: 
(On behalf of the Commission)

Date: 16th September 2020