



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Justice Bill

Notice of Amendments tabled on
20 May 2026 for Consideration Stage

Clause 1, Page 4

Leave out line 9 to line 15 on page 6

Ms Emma Sheerin
Ms Aoife Finnegan
Mrs Ciara Ferguson

Clause 1, Page 6, Line 17

At end insert ‘, and P is aged 18 or over at the time of the offence.’

Ms Emma Sheerin
Ms Aoife Finnegan
Mrs Ciara Ferguson

Clause 1, Page 6, Line 21

At end insert—

‘Persons aged under 18 convicted of a qualifying offence or, in exceptional circumstances, a recordable offence other than a qualifying offence

63JA.—(1) This Article applies where—

(a) P is convicted of a qualifying offence, or

- (b) P is convicted of a recordable offence other than a qualifying offence and paragraph (2) applies, and P was aged under 18 at the time of the offence.
- (2) This paragraph applies if, in accordance with the procedure to be prescribed in regulations under this Article—
- (a) the Chief Constable makes an application to the Northern Ireland Commissioner for the Retention of Biometric Material for a determination about the continued retention of P’s material beyond the day on which it would otherwise be required to be destroyed, and
- (b) the Commissioner determines that exceptional circumstances apply which warrant the retention of the material in the public interest.
- (3) P’s material may be retained until the end of the period of 3 years (“the last retention date”) beginning with the date on which P is convicted of the offence in question.
- (4) Where the Commissioner has made a determination under paragraph (5), P’s material may be retained—
- (a) until the end of a further period of two years beginning with the day following the last retention date (ending on “the last extended retention date”), or
- (b) if the material has been retained under paragraph (a), for a further period of two years beginning with the day after the last extended retention date.
- (5) If, in accordance with the procedure prescribed in regulations under this Article, the Chief Constable makes an application to the Commissioner before the last retention date (or the last extended retention date as the case may be), the Commissioner may determine that exceptional circumstances apply which warrant the continued retention of the material in the public interest.
- (6) If an application is made to the Commissioner for a determination under paragraph (2)(a) or (5) and (apart from this paragraph) the material would be required under Article 63F to be destroyed before the Commissioner has made a determination, the material may be retained until the Commissioner has decided whether to make a determination.
- (7) See also Article 63N regarding the application of this Article where P is convicted outside Northern Ireland.’

Ms Emma Sheerin
Ms Aoife Finnegan
Mrs Ciara Ferguson

Clause 1, Page 6

Leave out line 38 to line 15 on page 8

Ms Emma Sheerin
Ms Aoife Finnegan
Mrs Ciara Ferguson

Clause 1, Page 8, Line 19

Leave out ‘63M’ and insert ‘63K’

Ms Emma Sheerin

*Ms Aoife Finnegan
Mrs Ciara Ferguson*

Clause 1, Page 8, Line 20

Leave out ‘reference in Article 63J(1)’ and insert ‘references in Articles 63J(1) and 63JA(1)(a)’

*Ms Emma Sheerin
Ms Aoife Finnegan
Mrs Ciara Ferguson*

Clause 1, Page 8, Line 24

Leave out ‘references in Articles 63K(1), 63L(1) and 63M(1)(a)’ and insert ‘reference in Article 63K(1)’

*Ms Emma Sheerin
Ms Aoife Finnegan
Mrs Ciara Ferguson*

Clause 1, Page 8, Line 34

Leave out ‘63M’ and insert ‘63K’

*Ms Emma Sheerin
Ms Aoife Finnegan
Mrs Ciara Ferguson*

Clause 1, Page 8

Leave out line 37 to line 3 on page 9

*Ms Emma Sheerin
Ms Aoife Finnegan
Mrs Ciara Ferguson*

Clause 1, Page 9

Leave out lines 4 to 33

*Ms Emma Sheerin
Ms Aoife Finnegan
Mrs Ciara Ferguson*

Clause 1, Page 9

Leave out lines 34 to 40

Ms Emma Sheerin
Ms Aoife Finnegan
Mrs Ciara Ferguson

Clause 1, Page 12, Line 24

At end insert—

- ‘(4A) The Department of Justice must in regulations make provision—
- (a) requiring the Chief Constable, following a review under paragraph (2), to notify P of the fact that a review has been conducted and of the determination that has been made;
 - (b) conferring on P a right of appeal against a determination to retain P’s material under paragraph (2) and about the procedure on such appeals (including the payment of fees and the duty to notify P of the right to appeal);
 - (c) disqualifying any member of the Police Service of Northern Ireland for determining an appeal under paragraph (b);
 - (d) requiring the Chief Constable to notify P of the right to apply for confirmation that P’s material has been destroyed and to provide P with information about the application procedure.’

Ms Emma Sheerin
Ms Aoife Finnegan
Mrs Ciara Ferguson

Clause 1, Page 12, Line 38

Leave out ‘63K(2) and (3), 63L(3) and (4) and 63M(4)’ and insert ‘, 63JA(1) and 63K(2) and (3)’

Ms Emma Sheerin
Ms Aoife Finnegan
Mrs Ciara Ferguson

Clause 1, Page 12, Line 41

Leave out ‘63Q’ and insert ‘63K’

Ms Emma Sheerin
Ms Aoife Finnegan
Mrs Ciara Ferguson

Clause 1, Page 13, Line 9

At end insert—

‘(e) disqualifying any member of the Police Service of Northern Ireland for determining an appeal under paragraph (d).’

Ms Emma Sheerin
Ms Aoife Finnegan
Mrs Ciara Ferguson

Clause 1, Page 13, Line 19

Leave out ‘63Q and 63S’ and insert ‘63K, 63N, 63R and 63S’

Ms Emma Sheerin
Ms Aoife Finnegan
Mrs Ciara Ferguson

Clause 1, Page 16, Line 22

Leave out ‘may’ and insert ‘must’

Ms Emma Sheerin
Ms Aoife Finnegan
Mrs Ciara Ferguson

Clause 1, Page 16, Line 27

At end insert—

‘(5A) Guidance issued under paragraph (5) must set out the information that a custody officer should provide in writing to P and to P’s solicitor, parent, guardian or appropriate adult, before P’s biometric material is taken, including—

- (a) the maximum period for which P’s material may be retained, and
- (b) the circumstances in which P has a right to appeal against a determination made on a review of the retention of P’s material and the procedure for such appeals.’

Ms Emma Sheerin
Ms Aoife Finnegan
Mrs Ciara Ferguson

Clause 1, Page 16, Line 31

After ‘(5)’ insert ‘and Article 63JA(2)’

Ms Emma Sheerin

Clause 21, Page 34, Line 5

At end insert ‘,and if—

- (a) the arrested person’s solicitor is present or is able to see and hear, and be seen and heard by, the officer and the arrested person by means of the live link, and
- (b) a report has been provided in writing by a police officer of at least the rank of Inspector which confirms that the use of the live link would not be contrary to the interests of justice and in particular would not prejudice the arrested person’s effective participation in the interview.

(3A) A report under paragraph (3)(b) must—

- (a) be included in the custody record relating to the arrested person, and
- (b) provide an assessment of—
 - (i) any ascertainable intellectual or communication impairment that may affect the arrested person’s ability to communicate effectively via live link;
 - (ii) any ascertainable mental or physical health condition affecting the arrested person; and
 - (iii) whether any reasonable adjustments are required to ensure that the use of the live link remains appropriate.’

Ms Emma Sheerin
Ms Aoife Finnegan
Mrs Ciara Ferguson

Clause 21, Page 33, Line 36

At end insert—

‘(1A) The appropriate consent under paragraph (1)(c) must be—

- (a) given in writing or orally by means of the live link;
- (b) preceded by an explanation by the custody officer, in language capable of being understood by the detainee, of—
 - (i) the nature of the live link arrangement;
 - (ii) the person’s rights; and
- (c) capable of being withdrawn at any time, in which case the custody officer must record the withdrawal of consent in the custody record.

(1B) Where the arrested person has not attained the age of 18, the oral explanation provided by the custody officer under Article 46ZA(1A)(b) must also be provided in writing using language that is appropriate to the child’s age, maturity and level of understanding.’

Ms Emma Sheerin

Ms Aoife Finnegan
Mrs Ciara Ferguson

Clause 21, Page 34, Line 12

At end insert—

‘(5A) Paragraph (4) is to be read as if it required the officer to record in the arrested person’s custody record any issues or interruptions that arose during the live link arrangement.’

Ms Emma Sheerin
Ms Aoife Finnegan
Mrs Ciara Ferguson

Schedule 4, Page 60

Leave out lines 20 to 24

Ms Emma Sheerin
Ms Aoife Finnegan
Mrs Ciara Ferguson

New Clause

After clause 26 insert—

‘Suspension of driving licence following drink or drug driving charge

Suspension of licence in interests of public safety following drink or drug driving charge

26A.—(1) The Road Traffic (Northern Ireland) Order 1981 is amended as follows.

(2) After Article 12 insert—

“Suspension of licence because of drink or drug driving charge

Suspension of licence because of drink or drug driving charge

12A.—(1) This Article applies where the Department is notified by the Police Service of Northern Ireland that a licence holder (“L”) has been charged with one or more of the following offences—

- (a) causing death, or grievous bodily injury, by careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs under Article 14(1) of the Order of 1995,
- (b) driving or attempting to drive a mechanically propelled vehicle on a road or other public place whilst unfit to drive through drink or drugs under Article 15(1) of the Order of 1995,
- (c) driving or attempting to drive a motor vehicle on a road or other public place with an alcohol concentration above the prescribed limit under Article 16(1)(a) of the Order of 1995,

(d) failing to provide a specimen without reasonable excuse under Article 18(7) of the Order of 1995.

(2) If the Department is satisfied that it is necessary to suspend L's licence in the interests of public safety, the Department may serve notice in writing on L suspending the licence from such date as may be specified in the notice, not being earlier than the date of service of the notice, for a period to be prescribed in regulations made under this paragraph.

(3) On receipt of notice served under paragraph (2), L must deliver the licence and its counterpart to the Department immediately, and a person who without reasonable excuse fails to do so is guilty of an offence under this Order.

(4) Where L's licence is suspended under paragraph (2) but L—

(a) is not in possession of his licence and its counterpart in consequence of the fact that he has surrendered them to a constable, and

(b) delivers them to the Department immediately on their return,

L is not in breach of the duty under paragraph (3).

(5) On the delivery of a suspended licence and its counterpart to the Department, the Department must endorse the counterpart of the licence with particulars of the suspension and return the licence and its counterpart to the holder.

(6) Regulations under paragraph (2) may not be made unless a draft of them has been laid before, and approved by a resolution of, the Assembly.

Driving after suspension of licence or suspension of authorisation conferred by Community or Great Britain licence

12B.—(1) A person who drives a motor vehicle of any class on a road otherwise than in accordance with a licence authorising him to drive a motor vehicle of that class in Northern Ireland is guilty of an offence if at any earlier time the Department—

(a) has in accordance with Article 12A(2) suspended such a licence,

(b) has served a notice on that person in pursuance of Article 15EA(2) requiring the person to deliver to the Department a Community licence authorising him to drive a motor vehicle of that or a corresponding class in Northern Ireland, or

(c) has served a notice on that person in pursuance of Article 19HA(2) requiring him to deliver to the Department a Great Britain licence authorising him to drive a motor vehicle of that or a corresponding class in Northern Ireland.”.

(3) After Article 15E insert—

“Suspension of authorisation conferred by Community licence because of drink or drug driving charge

15EA.—(1) This Article applies where the Department is notified by the Police Service of Northern Ireland that a Community licence holder (“L”) who is normally resident in Northern Ireland at the time has been charged with one or more of the following offences—

(a) causing death, or grievous bodily injury, by careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs under Article 14 of the Order of 1995,

(b) driving or attempting to drive a mechanically propelled vehicle on a road or other public place whilst unfit to drive through drink or drugs under Article 15(1) of the Order of 1995,

- (c) driving or attempting to drive a motor vehicle on a road or other public place with an alcohol concentration above the prescribed limit under Article 16(1)(a) of the Order of 1995,
- (d) failing to provide a specimen under Article 18(7) of the Order of 1995.

(2) If the Department is satisfied that in the interests of public safety it is necessary to suspend L's authorisation to drive in Northern Ireland, the Department may serve notice in writing on L suspending authorisation from such date as may be specified in the notice, not being earlier than the date of service of the notice, for a period to be prescribed in regulations made under this paragraph.

(3) On receipt of notice served under paragraph (2), L must deliver the licence and its counterpart to the Department immediately and a person who without reasonable excuse fails to do so is guilty of an offence under this Order.

(4) Where L receives notice under paragraph (2) but L—

- (a) is not in possession of his licence and its counterpart in consequence of the fact that he has surrendered them to a constable, and
- (b) delivers them to the Department immediately on their return,

L is not in breach of the duty under paragraph (3).

(5) On the delivery of a suspended licence and its counterpart to the Department, the Department must endorse the counterpart of the licence with particulars of the suspension of authorisation to drive in Northern Ireland and return the licence and its counterpart to L.

(6) Regulations under paragraph (2) may not be made unless a draft of them has been laid before, and approved by a resolution of, the Assembly.”

(4) In Article 16(1) (appeals relating to licences)—

- (a) in sub-paragraph (b) omit “or”,
- (b) in sub-paragraph (c) at end insert, “or—
- (d) suspension of a licence in pursuance of Article 12A(2),”,
- (c) for “15C or 19G” substitute “15C, 15EA, 19G or 19HA”.

(5) After Article 19H insert—

“Suspension of authorisation conferred by Great Britain licence because of drink or drug driving charge

19HA.—(1) This Article applies where the Department is notified by the Police Service of Northern Ireland that a Great Britain licence holder (“L”) who is normally resident in Northern Ireland at the time has been charged with one or more of the following offences—

- (a) causing death, or grievous bodily injury, by careless driving when under the influence of drink or drugs under Article 14 of the Order of 1995,
- (b) driving or attempting to drive a mechanically propelled vehicle on a road or other public place whilst unfit to drive through drink or drugs under Article 15(1) of the Order of 1995,
- (c) driving or attempting to drive a motor vehicle on a road or other public place with an alcohol concentration above the prescribed limit under Article 16(1)(a) of the Order of 1995,
- (d) failing to provide a specimen under Article 18(7) of the Order of 1995.

(2) If the Department is satisfied that in the interests of public safety it is necessary to suspend L's authorisation to drive in Northern Ireland, the Department may serve notice in writing on L suspending authorisation from such date as may be specified in the notice, not being earlier than the date of service of the notice, for a period to be prescribed in regulations made under this paragraph.

(3) On receipt of notice served under paragraph (2), L must deliver the licence and its counterpart to the Department immediately and a person who without reasonable excuse fails to do so is guilty of an offence under this Order.

(4) Where L receives notice under paragraph (2) but L—

(a) is not in possession of his licence and its counterpart in consequence of the fact that he has surrendered them to a constable, and

(b) delivers them to the Department immediately on their return,

L is not in breach of the duty under paragraph (3).

(5) On the delivery of a suspended licence and its counterpart to the Department, the Department must endorse the counterpart of the licence with particulars of the suspension of authorisation to drive in Northern Ireland and return the licence and its counterpart to L.

(6) Regulations under paragraph (2) may not be made unless a draft of them has been laid before, and approved by a resolution of, the Assembly.”.’

Mr Jonathan Buckley

Mr Paul Frew

New Clause

After clause 26 insert—

‘Duty to notify Department for Infrastructure where licence holder charged with drink or drug driving offence

26B.—(1) The Road Traffic (Northern Ireland) Order 1995 is amended as follows.

(2) After Article 21 insert—

“Duty to notify Department where licence holder charged with drink or drug driving offence

21A.—(1) This Article applies where one of the following persons is charged with one or more offences under Articles 14(1), 15(1), 16(1)(a) or 18(7)—

(a) the holder of a driving licence (within the meaning of Article 2 of the Road Traffic (Northern Ireland) Order 1981),

(b) a Community licence holder who is normally resident in Northern Ireland, or

(c) a Great Britain licence holder who is normally resident in Northern Ireland.

(2) Within 72 hours of the licence holder being charged, a constable or member of police support staff must notify the Department of—

(a) the name, address, sex and date and place of birth of the licence holder,

(b) the offence or offences with which the licence holder has been charged, and

(c) such particulars of the circumstances alleged to constitute the offence or offences as are necessary to provide reasonable information about them.”.’

Mr Jonathan Buckley

Mr Paul Frew

New Clause

Before clause 24 insert—

‘Minimum age of criminal responsibility

A24.—(1) For Article 3 of the Criminal Justice (Children) (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 (age of responsibility) substitute—

“Age of responsibility

3.—(1) Subject to paragraph (2), it shall be conclusively presumed that no child under the age of 12 can be guilty of an offence.

(2) The presumption in paragraph (1) does not apply in respect of a child aged 10 or 11 if the Director of Public Prosecutions decides that there is compelling reason to require the prosecution of the child in the public interest.

(3) Before taking a decision under paragraph (2), the Director of Public Prosecutions must take account of—

- (i) the seriousness of the alleged offence or offences,
- (ii) the risk of harm to the public posed by the alleged offender, and
- (iii) the best interests of the child.

(4) Nothing in this Article shall prevent the police from—

- (a) interviewing or investigating a child aged 10 or 11 to seek information in connection with an offence, but only if an appropriate adult is present at all interviews and during the taking of biometric material;
- (b) arresting a child aged 10 or 11 where a police officer has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the child has committed, or is about to commit, an offence;
- (c) charging a child aged 10 or 11 with a criminal offence.

(5) A reference to “offence” in this Article includes any act or omission which, if committed by a person above the age of criminal responsibility, would constitute an offence.

(6) In paragraph (4)(a) “appropriate adult” has the meaning given in Article 3A(4).”.

(2) This section comes into operation on such day falling within the period of 2 years beginning with the date on which this Act receives Royal Assent as the Department may by order appoint.

(3) Before appointing a day under subsection (2) the Department must take reasonable steps to ensure that the following actions have been taken in preparation for the change to the minimum age of criminal responsibility—

- (a) adequate arrangements have been made within the youth justice system, including the provision of such training and guidance as may be necessary to persons and bodies exercising functions in relation to the youth justice system in accordance with section 53 of the Justice (Northern Ireland) Act 2002, and
- (b) the following persons or bodies have updated, where necessary, any relevant code of practice, guidance or other information for which they have responsibility—
 - (i) the Youth Justice Agency,
 - (ii) the Director of Public Prosecutions, and
 - (iii) the Chief Constable of the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

(4) For the purposes of subsection (3) “youth justice system” means the system of criminal justice in so far as it relates to children.’

Mr Doug Beattie

New Clause

After clause 23 insert—

‘Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland

Police Ombudsman: power to submit a report to appropriate authority during investigation

23A. In section 56 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 (formal investigation by the Ombudsman) after subsection (5) insert—

“(5A) If, at any time during an investigation under this section the Ombudsman believes that the appropriate authority, on consideration of the matter, would be likely to determine that the special conditions in subsection (5B) are satisfied, the Ombudsman may, whether or not the investigation is complete, submit to the appropriate authority—

- (a) a statement of the Ombudsman’s belief and the grounds for it; and
- (b) a written report on the investigation to that point.

(5B) The special conditions are—

- (a) that misconduct proceedings would not prejudice any criminal proceedings,
- (b) that there is sufficient evidence, in the form of written statements or other documents, without the need for further evidence, whether written or oral, to establish on the balance of probabilities that the conduct of the member of the police force concerned constitutes gross misconduct, and
- (c) that it is in the public interest for the member of the police force concerned to cease to be a member without delay.”’

Miss Nuala McAllister

New Clause

After clause 23 insert—

‘Police Ombudsman: power to submit a report to appropriate authority before criminal proceedings concluded

23B.—(1) Section 59 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 1998 is amended as follows.

(2) In subsection (1), after paragraph (b) insert—

“(c) criminal proceedings initiated by the Director in relation to the subject matter of such a report have not concluded but the Ombudsman believes that the appropriate authority, on consideration of the matter, would be likely to determine that the special conditions in subsection (1ZA) are satisfied.

(1ZA) The special conditions are—

- (a) that misconduct proceedings would not prejudice any criminal proceedings.
- (b) that there is sufficient evidence, in the form of written statements or other documents, without the need for further evidence, whether written or oral, to establish on the balance of probabilities that the conduct of the member of the police force concerned constitutes gross misconduct; and
- (c) that it is in the public interest for the member of the police force concerned to cease to be a member without delay.”.

(3) In subsection (2) at end insert—

“(d) where subsection (1)(c) applies—

- (i) a written statement of his belief that the appropriate authority, on consideration of the matter, would be likely to determine that the special conditions in subsection (1ZA) are satisfied; and
- (ii) a written report of the investigation to date.”.’

Miss Nuala McAllister

New Clause

After clause 23 insert—

‘Advertising sexual services

Advertising sexual services

23A. After Article 64A of the Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008 (paying for sexual services of a person) insert—

“Advertising sexual services

64B.—(1) A person (A) commits an offence if A—

- (a) publishes or displays, or causes or allows to be published or displayed, including digitally, an advertisement whose purpose is to promote, facilitate or offer sexual services provided by another person (B) in exchange for payment; or
- (b) coerces B to publish or display, including digitally, an advertisement whose purpose is to promote, facilitate or offer B’s sexual services in exchange for payment; and
- (c) A knows, or ought reasonably to know, that the advertisement has that purpose.

(2) A commits an offence under paragraph (1) regardless of whether A secures personal financial gain, or personally benefits in any way, from publishing or displaying the advertisement, or causing or allowing it to be displayed or published.

(3) A person guilty of an offence under this Article is liable—

- (a) on summary conviction, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale or both;
- (b) on conviction on indictment, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding seven years.

(4) In this Article “sexual services” has the same meaning as in Article 64A(4A) and (4B).”.’

Mr Paul Frew

New Clause

After clause 30 insert—

‘Accommodation of women prisoners

Accommodation of women prisoners

30A. In Rule 90 of the Prison and Young Offenders Centre Rules (Northern Ireland) 1995 at end insert—

“(3A) The Department of Justice must issue guidance on the operation of this rule.

(3B) Nothing in this rule shall prevent the Department of Justice from making individualised accommodation arrangements for a prisoner, in accordance with guidance issued under paragraph (3A), where the Department considers it necessary to do so to safeguard the welfare or dignity of a prisoner, provided that the arrangements do not include the accommodation of a man in prison accommodation in which one or more women are held.

(3C) In this rule “man” and “woman” (or “women”) have the meaning given by section 212(1) of the Equality Act 2010.”’

Mr Timothy Gaston

New Clause

After clause 1 insert—

‘Duty to provide information to persons whose biometric data is taken

1A. Before Article 64 of the Police and Criminal Evidence (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 (Destruction of fingerprints and DNA profiles: introductory) insert—

“Duty to provide information to persons whose biometric data is taken

63C.—(1) Where fingerprints, a DNA sample or a DNA profile are taken from a person under any statutory power, the responsible officer must, at the time of collection, provide that person with written information setting out—

- (a) the statutory basis on which the material is being taken;
- (b) the period for which the fingerprints, DNA sample or DNA profile may be retained under this Part;
- (c) the circumstances in which the material must be destroyed;
- (d) the person’s rights in relation to the retention and destruction of the material; and
- (e) how the person may obtain further information about the retention and use of their biometric data.

(2) Where the retention period applicable to that person’s biometric material changes as a result of—

- (a) the person being charged with, or convicted of, an offence;

(b) the expiry of a previous retention period;
(c) the making, renewal or expiry of a national security determination; or
(d) any other change in the person’s legal status relevant to retention under this Part,
the responsible officer must as soon as reasonably practicable provide the person with written notice.

(3) The written notice must include—

- (a) the change in the retention period;
- (b) the new retention period; and
- (c) the person’s rights in relation to the continued retention of the material.

(4) The Department may by regulations make further provision about the form, content and manner of providing information under this section.

(5) In this section “responsible officer” means—

- (a) the Chief Constable, or
- (b) any person authorised by the Chief Constable for the purposes of this section.

(6) Regulations under subsection (3) are subject to negative resolution.”.’

Mr Gerry Carroll

New Clause

Before clause 24 insert—

‘Review of minimum age of the minimum age of criminal responsibility

A24.—(1) The Department must—

(a) Review the operation of Section (A24) [*New clause ‘Minimum age of criminal responsibility’ tabled by Emma Sheerin MLA on 30 April 2026*]—

- (i) generally, and
- (ii) with a view to considering the future age of criminal responsibility, and

(b) prepare and publish a report on that review.

(2) The Department must lay a copy of the report before the Assembly.

(3) In carrying out the review, the Department must consult such persons as it considers appropriate.

(4) The report on the review must be prepared, published and laid before Assembly no later than 12 months after the end of the review period.

(5) The “review period” is the period of 5 years beginning with the day on which section A24 comes into force.

(6) The Department may, for a purpose mentioned in subsection (2), require a person mentioned in subsection (3) to provide them with such information as the person holds in relation to the exercise of functions under this Act as it considers appropriate.

(7) The purposes are—

- (a) the carrying out of the review mentioned in subsection 1,
- (b) the monitoring of the exercise of functions following the end of the review period.

(8) The persons are—

- (a) the Chief Constable of the Police Service of Northern Ireland;
- (b) the Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service;
- (c) local authorities;
- (d) the Youth Justice Agency;
- (e) the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People;
- (f) the Legal Services Agency Northern Ireland;
- (g) the Probation Board for Northern Ireland;
- (h) the Public Prosecution Service for Northern Ireland.’

Mr Gerry Carroll

New Clause

After clause 30 insert—

‘PART 4A

PROTESTS

Guidance on engagement with protestors

30A.—(1) The Department for Communities and the Department of Justice must jointly prepare and issue guidance for all relevant public bodies and authorities on their engagement with protestors.

(2) In preparing the guidance, the Departments must collaborate with relevant bodies, including—

- (a) community and voluntary sector organisations;
- (b) human rights organisations;
- (c) representatives of protest groups;
- (d) such other persons as the Departments consider appropriate.

(3) Guidance issued under this section must be underpinned by the principles of the European Convention on Human Rights, including the rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly.

(4) The guidance must include information about—

- (a) authorisation processes relevant to protests, including applications to the Parades Commission;
- (b) the use of public land for the purposes of protest;
- (c) insurance requirements, including public liability insurance;
- (d) the need for engagement by protest organisers with the Police Service of Northern Ireland;
- (e) liaison arrangements before, during and after a protest;
- (f) any other matter which the Department for Communities, the Department of Justice, or any collaborating body considers relevant.

(5) Public bodies and authorities must have regard to the guidance issued under this section when exercising any function relating to protests.’

Mr Gerry Carroll

New Clause

After clause 30 insert—

‘Annual report on compliance with guidance

30B.—(1) The Department for Communities must, in consultation with the Department of Justice, prepare and publish an annual report on the extent to which public bodies and authorities have complied with the guidance issued under section 30A.

(2) The report must be laid before the Assembly.’

Mr Gerry Carroll

New Clause

After clause 30 insert—

‘Annual external review by the Police Ombudsman

30C.—(1) The Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland must conduct an annual external review of the handling of protests by the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

(2) A review under subsection (1) must include specific consideration of the treatment of the following groups—

- (a) persons from a minority ethnic group;
- (b) persons from the Catholic or nationalist community;
- (c) minoritised groups;
- (d) persons with a disability.

(3) The Ombudsman must publish a report of each review and lay it before the Assembly.’

Mr Gerry Carroll

New Clause

After clause 30 insert—

‘Annual review by the Police Service of Northern Ireland

30D.—(1) The Chief Constable must ensure that the Police Service of Northern Ireland conducts an annual review of its handling of protests.

(2) A review under subsection (1) must include specific consideration of the treatment of—

- (a) persons from a minority ethnic group;
- (b) persons from the Catholic or nationalist community;
- (c) minoritised groups;
- (d) persons with a disability.

(3) The Chief Constable must publish a report of each review.’

Mr Gerry Carroll

New Clause

After clause 30 insert—

‘Interpretation of this Part

30E.— In this Part—

“protest” includes any assembly, demonstration or gathering held for the purpose of expressing views on a matter of public interest.’

Mr Gerry Carroll