

REVIEW OF MARCHES AND PARADES IN SCOTLAND

Sir John Orr

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Dear Colleague

INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF MARCHES AND PARADES – YOUR VIEWS

I have been asked by Jack McConnell MSP, the First Minister, to carry out an independent review of the procedures for authorising marches and parades in Scotland.

I want to make sure that I identify the issues surrounding marches and parades from a variety of viewpoints: from those who want to march; from communities affected by marches; and from the authorities who have responsibility for making decisions about marches and ensuring local safety. I will be looking at specific issues about:

- The period of notice required to be given to local authorities, the police and communities for proposed marches and parades (currently 7 days);
- The best way to ensure community input into decisions about marches and parades;
- The basis for determining when to restrict, refuse or re-route marches and parades;
- The number of marches and parades occurring in communities and the effects these have; and
- The costs of policing marches and parades.

I want to listen to and take account of the range of views on this subject. If you have comments that you think would help inform my review and are relevant to the issues I am considering, I would be interested in hearing from you. Please write to me at:

Sir John Orr,
Review of Marches and Parades in Scotland
c/o Area 2-F, Victoria Quay
The Scottish Executive
EDINBURGH
EH6 6QQ

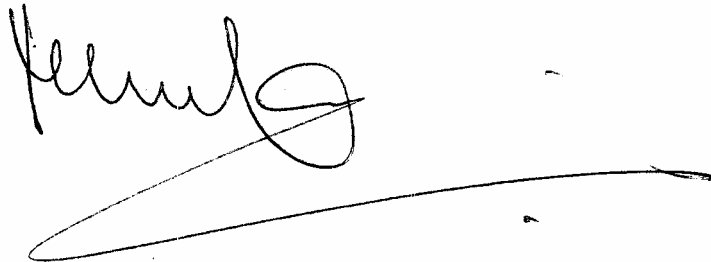
You can also email me at: john.orr@scotland.gsi.gov.uk. As part of my work, I intend to meet with a broad cross section of people.

I have written to a wide range of people to gather views as part of the first stage in my review. I would, of course, be happy for you to forward my letter on to others for their interest and for you to circulate it through your own networks if appropriate.

I expect the review to take around 6 months to complete and aim to submit my report to the First Minister by the end of December 2004. To ensure that I can consider your views as I develop my recommendations, please send them to me by **Friday 24 September 2004**.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Orr', with a long, sweeping horizontal line underneath it.

SIR JOHN ORR

REVIEW OF MARCHES AND PARADES IN SCOTLAND - REMIT

Background

Sir John Orr has been appointed to carry out an independent review of current arrangements for taking decision on marches and parades. He has been asked to make recommendations that will help local authorities reach decisions that reflect an appropriate range of views. His recommendations will respect the rights that organisations and individuals have to organise marches and parades in light of the views of communities.

Remit and Scope

The review will be looking at the procedures for authorising all marches and parades in Scotland. It will:

- Identify the issues surrounding marches and parades from the view of those who wish to march, the communities affected by marches and the authorities who have responsibility for making decisions about marches and ensuring local safety;

The review will be looking at specific issues around:

- The period of notice required to be given to local authorities, the police and communities for proposed marches and parades;
- The best way to ensure community input into decisions about marches and parades;
- The basis for determining when to restrict, refuse or re-route marches and parades;
- The number of marches and parades occurring in communities and the effects these have; and
- The costs of policing marches and parades.

Statutory framework

The statutory framework which applies to all marches and parades is set out in the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982. It is assumed that the statutory framework will continue to apply to all marches and parades and that the local authority will continue to have the statutory responsibility for deciding whether a march or parade should go ahead.

Timescale and Reporting

The review will take 6 months to complete and Sir John will submit his final report and recommendations to the First Minister in December 2004. The final report will recommend action that can be taken to improve the decision making process, look at how the views of communities can be fed effectively into the decision making process and how best to balance the needs and wishes of communities and the rights of groups and individuals to hold or participate in marches and parades.

Methods of working

The review will make sure that interested parties can contribute their views to the review. Sir John has invited views from a broad range of interests and intends to supplement this written consultation with meetings with a wide range of organisations, including national organisations, councils and community groups. He will also be accepting submissions from members of the public who wish to voice their opinions. Comments should be sent to him at: Sir John Orr, Review of Marches and Parades, c/o Area 2-F, Victoria Quay, EDINBURGH, EH6 6QQ, email john.orr@scotland.gsi.gov.uk.