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## EXPLANATORY NOTE

*(This note is not part of the Order)*

This Order makes provision with respect to local elections in Northern Ireland.

Article 3 amends the restrictions on the expenses which a third party may incur in respect of an election to bring the law into line with that in respect of local government elections in Great Britain consequent on the enactment of section 131 of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (“the Political Parties Act”).

Articles 4(3) and (4), 12 and 20 make amendments consequent on the changes to the method of registration made by Schedule 3 to the Representation of the People Act 2000.

Article 4(2) increases the limits on candidates' election expenses.

Articles 5, 6, 7 and 9 make changes to the law in respect of local election petitions corresponding to changes made in respect of parliamentary election petitions by Schedule 17 to the Political Parties Act. Article 8 amends the law in respect of the incapacities following conviction for a corrupt or illegal practice at a local election to bring it into line with that at parliamentary elections as a result of the enactment of section 136 of the Political Parties Act.

Articles 10, 11, 13, 14, 22 and 23 amend the local elections rules in Schedule 5 to the Electoral Law Act (Northern Ireland) 1962 (as substituted) to make provision equivalent to that which the amendments in Schedule 2 to the Registration of Political Parties Act 1998 made to the parliamentary elections rules in Schedule 1 to the Representation of the People Act 1983. The amendments give returning officers the power to reject nomination papers which include a description which is likely to lead voters to associate the candidate with a registered political party unless the description is authorised by or on behalf of the registered nominating officer of that party. They also provide for the inclusion of emblems of registered parties on ballot papers. The amendments include provision equivalent to the amendments made by section 38 of the Political Parties Act to the parliamentary elections rules.

The amendments made by articles 15 and 16, 18, 19 and 24 correspond to those made to the parliamentary elections rules by section 13 of the Representation of the People Act 2000.

Article 17 makes minor changes to the definitions of two of the specified documents which need to be presented at polling stations in order to obtain a ballot paper.

Article 21 makes a belated amendment to take account of the amendment made by section 11(5) of the Elected Authorities (Northern Ireland) Act 1989 (c. 3).

Articles 25 and 28 amend the law on local elections to bring it into line with that on parliamentary elections as a result of the enactment of paragraph 3 of Schedule 17 to, and paragraph 13 of Schedule 18, to the Political Parties Act, respectively.

Articles 26 and 27 introduce amendments corresponding to those made in respect of parliamentary elections by paragraphs 5 and 6 of Schedule 6 to the Representation of the People Act 2000, respectively.