

**EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM TO THE
ELECTORAL LAW ACT (NORTHERN IRELAND) 1962 (AMENDMENT)
ORDER 2005**

2005 No. 862

1. This Explanatory Memorandum has been prepared by the Northern Ireland Office and is laid before Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.
- 2. Description**
 - 2.1 This Order moves the date of the Northern Ireland Local Government General Elections on a permanent basis from the third Wednesday in May to the first Thursday in May.
- 3. Matters of special interest to the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments**
 - 3.1 None.
- 4. Legislative Background**
 - 4.1 The Electoral Law Act 1962 (Northern Ireland) provides for local elections in Northern Ireland. Section 11(1) provides that a local election shall be held every fourth year after 1973. Section 11(1A) provides that the election day is to be the third Wednesday in May.

This Order amends section 11(1A) of the 1962 Act to provide that the election day shall fall on the first Thursday in May. This would bring Northern Ireland into line with England and Wales.
- 5. Extent**
 - 5.1 This instrument extends to Northern Ireland only.
- 6. European Convention on Human Rights**
 - 6.1 The provisions in the draft order are compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights.
- 7. Policy Background**
 - 7.1 Ministers have decided that they want to move the date of the local elections in Northern Ireland on a permanent basis from the third Wednesday in May to the first Thursday in May. This is a purely administrative measure to bring Northern Ireland into line with the rest of the United Kingdom.
- 8. Impact**

8.1 A Regulatory Impact Assessment has not been prepared for this instrument as it has no impact on the public sector, business, charities or voluntary bodies.

9. Contact

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