



Building Societies Act 1986

1986 CHAPTER 53

PART VI

POWERS OF CONTROL OF THE COMMISSION

Powers in relation to asset or liability structure requirements

36 Powers in event of breach of limits on certain assets and liabilities

- (1) The provisions of this section have effect where, by reason of—
 - (a) its liabilities in respect of non-retail funds and deposits being in excess of the limit imposed on them by section 7(3), or
 - (b) its liabilities in respect of sums deposited with the society being in excess of the limit imposed on them by section 8(1), or
 - (c) its commercial assets of any class being in excess of the limits imposed on assets of that class by section 20(2) or (3), or
 - (d) its liquid assets being in excess of the limit imposed on them by section 21,the powers conferred by this section become exercisable by the Commission in relation to a building society (the limits referred to in paragraphs (a), (b), (c) and (d) above being referred to in this section as " the relevant statutory limits ").
- (2) The Commission may give the society a direction under subsection (3), (5) or (6) below.
- (3) A direction by the Commission under this subsection is a direction requiring the society, within a specified period, to submit for its approval a plan (in this section referred to as a " restructuring plan ") designed to secure the following purposes, that is to say—
 - (a) that the assets and liabilities of the society will not, by the end of the period of 12 months beginning with the date of the direction, exceed the relevant statutory limits as applied at the last day of that period, and
 - (b) that they will not thereafter exceed the relevant statutory limits.

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- (4) For the purpose of applying the relevant statutory limits as directed by subsection (3) (a) above—
- (a) in the case of a limit which operates by reference to the end of a financial year of a society, the financial year of the society shall be treated as ending on the day as at which the limits are to be applied ; and
 - (b) the assets and liabilities of the society shall be determined by reference to a balance sheet prepared by the directors by reference to that day and sent to the Commission within the period of three months beginning with that day ;
- and section 81(4) shall apply in the event of a default in complying with this provision as it applies in the event of a default in complying with subsection (2) of that section.
- (5) A direction by the Commission under this subsection is a direction requiring the society—
- (a) within the period of six months beginning with the date of the direction, to submit to its members for their approval at a meeting or by ballot the requisite transfer resolutions for a transfer of the business of the society to a company under section 97; and
 - (b) to notify the Commission of the result of the meeting or ballot.
- (6) A direction by the Commission under this subsection is a direction requiring the society, at its option, either—
- (a) within a specified period, to submit for approval a restructuring plan, or
 - (b) within the period of six months beginning with the date of the direction, to submit to its members for their approval at a meeting or by ballot the requisite transfer resolutions for a transfer of the business of the society to a company under section 97 ;
- and, within a specified period, to notify the Commission of the option it has decided to pursue.
- (7) Where a restructuring plan is submitted by a society to the Commission under subsection (3) or (6) above then—
- (a) if it appears to the Commission that the plan is reasonably likely to secure its purposes, the Commission shall approve it and direct the society to carry it out;
 - (b) if it appears to it that the plan is, with modifications, likely to secure its purposes and the Commission and the society agree on appropriate modifications within the period of 21 days from the date on which the Commission notifies the society of the modifications it proposes for the society's agreement, the Commission shall approve the plan as modified and direct the society to carry it out;
- but otherwise it shall reject the plan.
- (8) Where a meeting or ballot is held, in pursuance of a direction under subsection (5) or (6) above, for the purpose of voting on the requisite transfer resolutions, then—
- (a) if the resolutions are agreed to and the confirmation of the transfer by the Commission is obtained, the society shall proceed under section 97 to transfer its business to a successor company ;
 - (b) if either resolution is disagreed to, the society shall notify the Commission of that fact as soon as it is practicable to do so.

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- (9) In the event of the Commission receiving a notice from a society under subsection (8) (b) above, it may, if it thinks fit, serve on the society a direction requiring it, within a specified period, to submit to the Commission for its approval a restructuring plan; and if the Commission does so, subsection (7) above shall apply as if the plan had been submitted under subsection (3) above.
- (10) The Commission may, if it thinks fit, extend or further extend, any period during which a building society is to take any steps required of it under any of the foregoing provisions of this section and may do so whether or not application is made to it before the expiry of the period in question.
- (11) If a building society fails, within the period allowed to it under the foregoing provisions of this section—
- (a) where it has been given a direction under subsection (3) above, to submit a restructuring plan,
 - (b) where it has been given a direction under subsection (5) above, to submit to members the requisite transfer resolutions,
 - (c) where it has been given a direction under subsection (6) above, to either submit a restructuring plan or submit to members the requisite transfer resolutions,
 - (d) where it has been directed under subsection (7) above to carry out a restructuring plan, to secure the purpose of it specified in subsection (3)(a) above,
 - (e) to agree to the requisite transfer resolutions submitted to the members in pursuance of subsection (5) or (6) above, or
 - (f) where it has agreed to the requisite transfer resolutions, to proceed under section 97 to transfer its business to the successor company,
- or if the Commission rejects a restructuring plan under subsection (7) above, the powers conferred on the Commission by section 37 shall become exercisable in relation to the society.
- (12) In this section " confirmation ", " the requisite transfer resolutions " and " transfer " have the same meaning as in section 97.

37 Powers in event of breach of limits on assets or liabilities or abuse of purpose of building society

- (1) Where—
- (a) by virtue of section 36(11) the powers conferred by this section become exercisable in relation to a building society, or
 - (b) the Commission has reason to believe that the purpose or principal purpose of a building society has ceased to be that required by section 5(1) for the establishment of a building society under this Act,
- the Commission may present a petition to the High Court for the winding up of the society under the applicable winding up legislation or make an application to the High Court for an order giving directions to the society under subsection (2) below; and the power to present a petition or to make an application for such an order is available to the Commission whether or not it has previously made an application for such an order or presented a petition, as the case may be.
- (2) An order under this subsection is an order directing the society—

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- (a) in a case where the application is made under subsection (1)(a) above, to carry out the restructuring plan as directed in the order, and
 - (b) in a case where the application is made under subsection (1)(b) above, to modify its business as directed in the order.
- (3) An order under subsection (2)(b) above may require the society to take certain steps or to refrain from pursuing a particular course of action or to restrict the scope of its business in a particular way.
- (4) Where the High Court makes an order under subsection (2) above, the Commission shall give a copy of it to the central office and the central office shall keep the copy in the public file of the society.
- (5) The High Court shall not make an order winding up the society on an application under subsection (1)(b) above unless it is satisfied that the purpose or principal purpose of the society has ceased to be that required by section 5(1) for the establishment of a building society under this Act.
- (6) In the application of this section to a building society whose principal office is in Scotland, references to the High Court shall be read as references to the Court of Session.

Power to determine extent of building society powers

38 Power to determine building society's powers

- (1) The Commission shall have power to determine whether a particular activity of a building society or its subsidiary is or is not within the existing powers of the society and may, if it thinks fit, take such professional advice as it considers it needs to enable it to make the determination.
- (2) A determination may be made under this section in relation to an activity which is proposed to be carried on as well as in relation to one which is being carried on.
- (3) The powers of the Commission in relation to a building society are exercisable—
- (a) on an application made by the society, requesting the Commission to make the determination,
 - (b) on an application made by the society at the direction of the central office under Part II of Schedule 2 to this Act, or
 - (c) on the Commission's own motion or on an application made by the society at its direction,
- as provided in subsection (4), (5), (6) or (8) below.
- (4) A building society may at any time, on complying with the following provisions of this section, make an application to the Commission for a determination under this section whether an activity specified in the application is or is not within its powers if the directors of the society are of the opinion that there is a doubt about the existence or extent of the powers to carry on the activity which requires to be resolved in the interests of the society.
- (5) A building society which has been directed by the central office under Part II of Schedule 2 to this Act to make an application to the Commission under this section shall, in accordance with the direction, make an application to the Commission for a

determination whether the activity specified in the application is or is not within its powers.

- (6) If it appears to the Commission at any time that a building society or its subsidiary is carrying on or is about to carry on an activity which is or may be outside the existing powers of the society, the Commission may, by notice to the society specifying the activity and its opinion, direct it to make an application for a determination under this section whether the activity is or is not within its powers and it shall be the duty of the society to comply with the direction.
- (7) A direction under subsection (6) shall require the application to be made within the period of 21 days beginning with the date on which the notice is given, but the Commission may extend or further extend the period within which the application is to be made.
- (8) If a building society fails, within the time allowed by or under subsection (7) above, to make an application as directed under subsection (6) above, the Commission may, of its own motion, proceed to make a determination under this section as if an application had been made by the society.
- (9) An application by a building society under subsection (4), (5) or (6) above shall be made in writing, signed by the secretary as such an application, and shall comprise—
 - (a) a statement of the question for determination, specifying the activity and the powers in question, the nature of the doubt and (except in the case of an application under subsection (6)) the arguments for and against the activity being within those powers, as they appear to the society, and
 - (b) such documents or draft documents and such other information as are necessary to enable the determination to be made.
- (10) The statement of the question for determination may, with the agreement of the Commission, be amended at any time before the determination is made and in that event further documents and other information may be included in the application.
- (11) The Commission may, by notice to the society, require a society making an application under subsection (4), (5) or (6) above to amend the statement of the question for determination or to furnish such further documents or other information or such explanations of the statement, documents or information as appear to it to be necessary to enable the determination of the question to be made ; and the Commission may allow or require the explanations to be made orally instead of in writing.
- (12) In this section and sections 39 and 40—
 - " activity " includes the exercise, or purported exercise, of any power under this Act, including the holding of any property or rights;
 - " existing", with reference to powers, means existing at the relevant date and, in relation to a building society, " existing powers " denotes the powers it has, or has adopted, under this Act, with any restrictions it has assumed, as at that date but disregarding anything done by the Commission and then in force (otherwise than under section 39 or 40) by virtue of which the society is precluded from exercising, or is subject to restrictions on the exercise of, its powers ;
 - " the relevant date", in relation to a building society, means—
 - (a) in a case where the Commission decides to proceed of its own motion, the date when the Commission so decides;

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- (b) in a case where the society makes the application at the direction of the central office, the date specified in the direction; and
 - (c) in any other case, the date on which the society makes the application.
- (13) Nothing in this section or section 39 or 40 implies that it is improper for the Commission to give to a building society or building societies generally an indication of the action it might or might not take in relation to any proposed activity of theirs; and if any determination comes to be made in relation to the activity the proceedings shall not be liable to be set aside by reason of the indication having been given.

39 The determination: notification, effect, appeal

- (1) A determination of the Commission under section 38 shall be in writing and, as soon as practicable after it is made, the Commission shall notify the society of the determination and the reasons for it.
- (2) On receiving notice of the determination the society shall, if it is a determination that the activity in question was outside its powers, forthwith send a copy of it to every person who the society has reason to believe will or may be affected by it other than a person whose only interest is as a shareholder in, or depositor with, the society.
- (3) Subject to subsection (4) below, the Commission shall, within the period of one month beginning with the date of the notice to the society under subsection (1) above, publish the determination in such manner as it thinks appropriate.
- (4) Where the determination is made on an application made by the society under section 38(4), the Commission may, on the application of the society, postpone the publication of the determination for such period as it thinks fit, not exceeding the period of six months beginning with the date of the notice to the society under subsection (1) above, if it appears to the Commission that it is just to do so.
- (5) A determination under section 38 shall bind all persons, whether or not (in the case of an application) they were parties to it and, subject to any appeal under subsection (8) below, shall be final and conclusive for all purposes.
- (6) Where the activity in question was at the relevant date being carried on by the society and the determination is that the activity is outside the powers of the society the directors of the society shall be personally liable, jointly and severally, for any loss or expense to the society consequent on the activity's being outside its powers (including, if a prohibition order under section 40 is made, any loss or expense consequent on the order).
- (7) If it appears to the Commission that proceedings under subsection (6) above have not been, but ought in the interests of the society to be, brought, the Commission may bring such proceedings in the name and on behalf of the society; and if it does so the Commission may indemnify the society against the costs or expenses incurred by the society in, or in connection with, proceedings brought by virtue of this subsection.
- (8) Any person affected by a determination under section 38 shall be entitled within the period of six weeks beginning with the date of the notice under subsection (1) above or such further period as the Court may allow, to appeal to the High Court against the determination in accordance with rules of court on the ground that it is erroneous in law and the Commission shall be made respondent on the appeal.

- (9) On any appeal to the High Court under subsection (8) above the High Court may confirm, reverse or vary the determination appealed from.
- (10) In the application of this section to a building society whose principal office is in Scotland, references to the High Court shall be read as references to the Court of Session.
- (11) The Commission may, if it thinks fit, require a building society in whose case it has made a determination under section 38 to pay such fee as the Commission directs.

40 Power to make prohibition orders

- (1) On or at any time after making a determination under section 38 that a specified activity is outside the powers of a building society, the Commission shall, if it appears to it—
 - (a) that the activity is being carried on by the society, or
 - (b) that the activity has not been but, unless a prohibition order is made under this section, may be carried on by the society,serve on the society a notice of the Commission's intention to issue a prohibition order directed to the society.
- (2) A prohibition order under this section is an order prohibiting, subject to the saving or transitional provisions of the order, the continuance or, as the case may be, the carrying on of the activity specified in the order, either absolutely or unless conditions specified in the order are complied with, after a date specified in the order and requiring, subject to the saving or transitional provisions of the order, the disposal within a specified period of all assets acquired or otherwise in its possession by virtue of the activity.
- (3) A disposal of assets in pursuance of a prohibition order shall vest the assets in the transferee but without prejudice to any claim against the society by a person who had an interest in the assets.
- (4) The saving or transitional provisions which may be included in a prohibition order shall be such as appear to the Commission to be just having regard to the interests of shareholders of and depositors with the society and the interests of other persons who will be affected by the order; but the provisions shall not in any respect suspend the operation of the order beyond the period of one year.
- (5) A prohibition order may include a direction for treating assets of any description as assets of the class specified in the direction for the purposes of the requirements of Part III for the structure of commercial assets.
- (6) A notice under subsection (1) above of the Commission's intention to issue a prohibition order shall—
 - (a) specify the date on which the order is to be issued, being a date not earlier than the end of the period of 21 days beginning with the date of the notice;
 - (b) specify the terms of the order, including any saving or transitional provisions proposed to be included in it;
 - (c) inform the society of its right to make representations to the Commission before the order is issued as to the saving or transitional provisions to be included in the order; and
 - (d) inform the society of its duty under subsection (7) below.

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- (7) On receiving a notice under subsection (1) above the society shall forthwith send a copy of it to every other person whom it has reason to believe will or may be affected by the determination under section 38 on which the order will be founded.
- (8) Any person who may be affected by the determination under section 38 on which the order will be founded may, at any time before the order is made, make representations to the Commission as to the inclusion in it of saving or transitional provisions affecting his interests and they may be made orally or in writing.
- (9) After considering any representations made under subsection (8) above the Commission shall make the prohibition order with such saving and transitional provisions (if any) as it thinks just, shall issue the order by causing it to be served on the society and shall direct the central office to keep a copy of it in the public file of the society.
- (10) A prohibition order so made and issued shall, subject to subsection (15) below, take effect on the date specified in the order.
- (11) A copy of any order issued under subsection (9) above shall also be served on each director and on the chief executive of the society.
- (12) The requirement of subsection (11) above, so far as it relates to directors, is satisfied by serving a copy on each director whose appointment has been officially notified and the non-receipt of a copy by a director or the chief executive does not affect the validity of the direction.
- (13) Subject to subsection (14) below, a prohibition order shall remain in force until revoked by the Commission.
- (14) The Commission may suspend or revoke a prohibition order so far as it relates to an asset the disposal of which appears to it, on the application of the society, to be impracticable.
- (15) If, when a prohibition order has been made, an appeal is pending before the High Court under section 39(8) against the determination on which the order is founded the High Court may, on application made to it, order that the operation of the prohibition order be stayed until the determination of the appeal; but it shall not do so unless it is satisfied that it is in the public interest that it be stayed.
- (16) If a society contravenes a prohibition order issued against it under this section the Commission may certify the contravention in writing to the High Court; and the Court may thereupon inquire into the case and, after hearing any witnesses who may be produced against or on behalf of the society and after hearing any statement which may be offered in defence, may punish the society in like manner as if it had been guilty of contempt of the court.
- (17) In the application of this section to a building society whose principal office is in Scotland, references to the High Court shall be read as references to the Court of Session and references to staying shall be read as references to sisting.

Powers in relation to authorisation

41 Power to direct application to renew authorisation

- (1) If, with respect to a building society for which an authorisation is in force, the Commission has reason to believe that the society's business is or may be being conducted in a way that may not adequately protect the investments of shareholders and depositors then, subject to subsections (2) and (3) below, it may by notice direct the society to make an application under this section to renew its authorisation.
- (2) The power conferred on the Commission by this section is not exercisable more than once during any period of five years during the whole of which the society has held a current authorisation except where, during that period, the society has, under section 94, undertaken to fulfil the engagements of another society.
- (3) A notice under subsection (1) above shall require the society to make the application for renewal within such period as is specified in the notice, being a period not shorter than three nor longer than six months beginning with the date of the notice, but the Commission may, on representations being made to it, extend or further extend the period within which the application is to be made.
- (4) A notice under subsection (1) shall indicate the grounds on which the Commission has decided to give a direction under this section.
- (5) Authorisation, if renewed under this section, shall be granted unconditionally or subject to conditions as provided by subsection (6) or (7) below.
- (6) Subject to subsection (11) below, the Commission, on an application duly made for renewal of authorisation under this section, shall grant unconditional authorisation to the society if it is satisfied that—
 - (a) the society has qualifying capital of an amount which is not less than the prescribed minimum ;
 - (b) the society has adequate reserves and other designated capital resources;
 - (c) the chairman of the board of directors and any executive directors, the chief executive, the secretary and the managers (if any) are each fit and proper persons to hold their respective offices in the society ;
 - (d) the board of directors, with the chief executive and secretary, have the capacity and intention to direct the affairs of the society in accordance with the criteria of prudent management and have secured that those criteria are being satisfied ; and
 - (e) the investments of shareholders and depositors will be adequately protected without the imposition of conditions.
- (7) If the Commission, on an application so made, is not satisfied of the matters specified in subsection (6) above in relation to the society, it shall, subject to subsection (10) below—
 - (a) if it is satisfied that the imposition of conditions would secure the protection of the investments of shareholders and depositors, grant authorisation subject to such conditions to be complied with by the society (whether or not they correspond to any conditions in force as respects the current authorisation) as the Commission thinks fit to impose to secure that purpose ; or
 - (b) if not so satisfied, refuse to grant the authorisation;

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and if it refuses to grant authorisation under this section the authorisation current under section 9 shall expire on the date specified by the Commission in the notice of its refusal except where section 46(4) applies.

- (8) If the Commission refuses to grant authorisation to a building society under this section it shall inform the central office of the fact and the date on which the current authorisation of the society expires; and the central office shall record that date in the public file of the society.
- (9) Subsections (6) and (7) of section 9 apply as respects the imposition of conditions on the renewal of authorisation under this section as they apply as respects the imposition of conditions under that section.
- (10) The provisions of Schedule 3 to this Act regulating—
 - (a) the making and determination of applications for authorisation,
 - (b) the furnishing of information or additional information in connection with such applications, and
 - (c) the imposition of conditions of authorisation,apply in relation to authorisation under this section.
- (11) The making of an application under this section at the direction of the Commission shall not preclude the Commission, at any time while the application is pending, from imposing conditions on the society's authorisation under section 42 or revoking the society's authorisation under section 43 ; but if it revokes the authorisation the proceedings under this section shall abate.
- (12) An authorisation granted under this section shall be treated for the purposes of this Act as an authorisation granted under section 9 and in particular subsection (9) of that section shall apply as if any conditions had been imposed under subsection (5) of that section.
- (13) Any expression used in this section to which a meaning is given by section 9(13) has that meaning in this section.
- (14) This section shall expire at the end of the period of 5 years beginning with the date on which this Act is passed unless continued in force by an order under subsection (15) below.
- (15) The Treasury may from time to time by order provide that this section shall continue in force for a period not exceeding 5 years from the coming into operation of the order.
- (16) The power to make an order under subsection (15) above is exercisable by statutory instrument but no such order shall be made unless a draft of it has been laid before and approved by a resolution of each House of Parliament.
- (17) Section 45 applies for the interpretation of "adequate reserves" and "designated capital resources" in subsection (6) above.

42 Imposition of conditions on current authorisation

- (1) If, with respect to a building society for which an authorisation is in force, the Commission considers it expedient to do so in order to protect the investments of shareholders or depositors, it may, subject to subsection (7) below, impose conditions to be complied with by the society.

- (2) Section 45 has effect for the purpose of any determination whether or not it is expedient to exercise the powers conferred by this section.
- (3) Failure by a society to comply with conditions imposed under this section shall render it liable, if other conditions are not imposed on it under this section, to have its authorisation revoked under section 43(1).
- (4) The conditions that may be imposed by the Commission under this section may—
 - (a) relate to any activities of the society, whether or not those for which authorisation is required ; and
 - (b) require the society to take certain steps or to refrain from adopting or pursuing a particular course of action or to restrict the scope of its business in a particular way.
- (5) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (4) above, conditions imposed under this section may—
 - (a) impose limitations on the issue of shares, the acceptance of deposits or the making of advances or other loans ;
 - (b) require the society to take steps with regard to the conduct of the business of any subsidiary or other associated body; and
 - (c) require the removal of any director or other officer.
- (6) The Commission may impose conditions under this section where it proceeded under section 41 or where it proceeded under section 43 with a view to revoking the society's authorisation.
- (7) The Commission shall not impose conditions under this section except in accordance with the provisions of Part III or, where applicable, Part IV of Schedule 3 to this Act; and the other provisions of that Part shall have effect in relation to the imposition of conditions under this section.
- (8) Conditions imposed under this section—
 - (a) may be varied from time to time (and notwithstanding any pending appeal) by agreement between the Commission and the society ; and
 - (b) may be revoked at any time by the Commission if it is satisfied that the investments of shareholders and depositors will be adequately protected without the conditions.
- (9) Any expression used in this section to which a meaning is given by section 9(13) has that meaning in this section.

43 Revocation of authorisation

- (1) The Commission may, subject to subsection (4) below, revoke a building society's authorisation if—
 - (a) it appears to the Commission that at no time during a financial year of the society which began and ended during the currency of the authorisation did the society raise funds or accept deposits of money in pursuance of the authorisation;
 - (b) it appears to the Commission that a period of six months has elapsed since the end of a financial year of the society without the society's having sent to it the annual accounts for that year as required by section 81(2);

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- (c) the Commission is satisfied that, where the society's authorisation is subject to conditions, a condition has not been complied with by the society ; or
 - (d) the Commission considers it expedient to do so in order to protect the investments of shareholders or depositors.
- (2) Section 45 has effect for the purposes of any determination whether or not it is expedient to exercise the power conferred by subsection (1)(d) above.
- (3) The Commission shall revoke a building society's authorisation if—
 - (a) the society has requested it to revoke its authorisation;
 - (b) the society has requested the central office to cancel its registration;
 - (c) the society has failed, when directed to do so under section 41, to make an application for the renewal of its authorisation within the period allowed under that section;
 - (d) the society has, under section 93 or 94 amalgamated with or transferred all its engagements to another building society; or
 - (e) the requisite initial step has been taken to wind up or dissolve the society.
- (4) The Commission shall not revoke a society's authorisation under subsection (1) above except in accordance with the provisions of Part IV of Schedule 3 to this Act; and the other provisions of that Part shall also have effect in relation to revocation under this section or the imposition of conditions under section 42 instead of revocation under this section.
- (5) Where a society's authorisation is revoked under subsection (1) or (3) above the provisions of subsections (6), (7) and (8) below shall have effect.
- (6) Subject to subsection (7) below, any obligation to make a payment to the society which, by virtue of section 9(1), the society is prohibited from accepting shall be wholly rescinded.
- (7) If, when a society's authorisation is revoked, a member is under an obligation to make payments to the society which represent instalments of the amount due by way of subscription for a share in the society and which, by virtue of section 9(1) the society is prohibited from accepting, the obligation shall (subject to anything in the rules of the society or any agreement between the society and the member) be suspended in respect of each instalment for the period during which no authorisation is in force; and accordingly, if reauthorisation is granted, the sum due shall again become payable by instalments.
- (8) It shall be the duty of the society to make reasonable arrangements for using the funds of the society to meet applications by depositors with or holders of shares in the society (being applications made in accordance with the rules of the society) for repayment of the money deposited or subscribed by them.
- (9) Where a society's authorisation is revoked under this section, the Commission shall inform the central office of the fact and the date on which the revocation takes effect and the central office shall record that date in the public file of the society.
- (10) In this section " the requisite initial step ", with reference to the winding up or dissolution of a building society, means the following—
 - (i) in the case of a winding up by the court, the making of the winding-up order;
 - (ii) in the case of a voluntary winding up, the passing of the resolution for voluntary winding up ;

- (iii) in the case of dissolution by consent of the members, the execution of the instrument of dissolution.

44 Reauthorisation

- (1) Where the authorisation of a building society has expired under section 41(7) or been revoked under section 43(1), or (3)(c), the Commission may, on an application duly made for the purpose, grant reauthorisation to the society under this section.
- (2) Reauthorisation is authorisation to raise funds or accept deposits of money to the extent authorisation to do so is required by section 9(1).
- (3) Reauthorisation under this section shall, if granted, be granted unconditionally or subject to conditions as provided by subsection (4) or (5) below.
- (4) The Commission shall grant unconditional reauthorisation to the building society if it is satisfied that—
 - (a) the society has qualifying capital of an amount which is not less than the prescribed minimum ;
 - (b) the society has adequate reserves and other designated capital resources;
 - (c) the chairman of the board of directors and any executive directors, the chief executive, the secretary and the managers (if any) are each fit and proper persons to hold their respective offices in the society ;
 - (d) the board of directors, with the chief executive and secretary, have the capacity and intention to direct the affairs of the society in accordance with the criteria of prudent management and, in so far as those criteria fell to be satisfied before the date of the application, have secured that they are being satisfied ; and
 - (e) the investments of shareholders and depositors will be adequately protected without the imposition of conditions.
- (5) If the Commission is not satisfied of the matters specified in subsection (4) above in relation to the society it shall—
 - (a) if those matters are or include the matters specified in paragraphs (a) and (c), refuse to grant authorisation ;
 - (b) in any other case, if it satisfied that the imposition of conditions would secure the protection of the investments of shareholders and depositors, grant reauthorisation subject to such conditions to be complied with by the society as the Commission thinks fit to impose to secure that purpose ; or
 - (c) if not so satisfied, refuse to grant reauthorisation.
- (6) Subsections (6) and (7) of section 9 apply as respects the imposition of conditions on reauthorisation as they apply as respects the imposition of conditions under that section.
- (7) The provisions of Schedule 3 to this Act regulating—
 - (a) the making and determination of applications for authorisation,
 - (b) the furnishing of information or additional information in connection with such applications, and
 - (c) the imposition of conditions of authorisation,apply in relation to reauthorisation under this section.

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- (8) Reauthorisation granted under this section shall be treated for the purposes of this Act as authorisation granted under section 9 and in particular subsection (9) of that section shall apply as if any conditions had been imposed under subsection (5) of that section.
- (9) On granting reauthorisation under this section, the Commission shall inform the central office and the central office shall record that fact, and the date on which the reauthorisation was granted, in the public file of the society.
- (10) Section 45 applies for the interpretation of "adequate reserves " and " designated capital resources " in subsection (4) above.

45 The criteria for prudent management

- (1) If it appears to the Commission that there has been or is, on the part of a building society or its directors, a failure to satisfy any one or more of the following criteria of prudent management, it shall be entitled to assume for the purposes of its relevant prudential powers that the failure is such as to prejudice the security of the investments of shareholders or depositors.
- (2) The prudential powers relevant for the purposes of this section are its powers—
 - (a) under section 42, to impose conditions on a society's authorisation, and
 - (b) under section 43, to revoke a society's authorisation,by reference to its expedience for the protection of the investments of shareholders or depositors.
- (3) For the purposes of this Act, the criteria of prudent management are—
 - 1. Maintenance of adequate reserves and other designated capital resources.
 - 2. Maintenance of a structure of commercial assets which satisfies the requirements of Part III.
 - 3. Maintenance of adequate assets in liquid form.
 - 4. Maintenance of the requisite arrangements for assessing the adequacy of securities for advances secured on land.
 - 5. Maintenance of the requisite accounting records and systems of control of business and of inspection and report.
 - 6. Direction and management—
 - (a) by a sufficient number of persons who are fit and proper to be directors or, as the case may be, officers, in their respective positions,
 - (b) conducted by them with prudence and integrity.
 - 7. Conduct of the business with adequate professional skills.
- (4) Nothing in this section implies that it is improper for a determination for any purpose of the Commission's relevant prudential powers to take account of other factors than the criteria in subsection (3) above.
- (5) The Commission, with the consent of the Treasury, may, by order in a statutory instrument, specify descriptions of capital resources of building societies which, for the purpose of the first criterion in subsection (3) above, are to be aggregated with reserves for that purpose, to the extent and subject to any conditions specified in the order.
- (6) An instrument containing an order under subsection (5) above shall be subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of either House of Parliament.

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- (7) A failure to satisfy any of the first five criteria in subsection (3) above shall be treated, for the purposes of this section, as a failure on the part of a society's directors prudently to conduct the affairs of the society.
- (8) A failure on the part of the society to comply with the conditions to which its authorisation is subject shall be treated, for the purposes of this section, as a failure on the part of the society's directors prudently to conduct the affairs of the society.
- (9) Any carrying on by a building society or its subsidiary of an activity which has been determined, whether by the Commission under section 38 or by any court, to have been beyond the powers of the society shall be treated, for the purposes of this section, as a failure on the part of the society's directors prudently to conduct the affairs of the society.
- (10) The following provisions apply for the interpretation of the list of criteria in subsection (3) above in their application to a building society, that is to say—
 - "adequate", except with reference to liquidity, means adequate having regard to the range and scale of the society's business;
 - "adequate", with reference to liquidity, means of such proportion and composition as is required by section 21(1) and "liquid form", in relation to assets, means assets which are of an authorised character for the purposes of that subsection;
 - "business" includes business the society proposes to carry on and references to the business of the society include, where other bodies are associated with it, references to the business of those associated bodies;
 - "requisite", with reference to the arrangements for assessing the adequacy of securities, means such as are required by section 13;
 - "requisite", with reference to accounting records and systems of control, means such as are required by section 71;
 - "sufficient", with reference to the number of directors and officers, means sufficient having regard to the range and scale of the society's business.

Appeals

46 Rights of appeal

- (1) A building society which is aggrieved by a decision of the Commission—
 - (a) to refuse to grant authorisation,
 - (b) to revoke authorisation, or
 - (c) to impose conditions or as to the conditions imposed,may appeal against the decision to a tribunal constituted in accordance with section 47.
- (2) Any person in relation to whom the Commission, in deciding to refuse to grant or to revoke authorisation or to impose conditions, makes a determination that a person is not a fit and proper person to hold, or as the case may be, to remain in an office in the society or imposes a requirement that he be removed from an office in the society, may appeal against the decision so far as it relates to that determination or requirement.
- (3) The revocation of a society's authorisation shall not have effect until—
 - (a) the end of the period within which an appeal can be brought against the Commission's decision to revoke it; and

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- (b) if such an appeal is brought, until it is determined or withdrawn.
- (4) Subsection (3) above applies in relation to the expiry of a society's authorisation on a refusal to grant authorisation under section 41 as it applies to the revocation of a society's authorisation.
- (5) Subject to any order of the tribunal made under section 47 (5), an appeal under subsection (1)(c) or (2) above shall not affect the operation, pending the determination of the appeal, of any condition which is the subject of the appeal; and no determination of an appeal by any person under subsection (2) above shall affect the revocation for the purposes of which the Commission made its determination or requirement in relation to that person.
- (6) In this section and section 47—
 - " conditions " means conditions to be complied with by a building society and imposed on the grant of authorisation under section 9, on the renewal of authorisation under section 41, on reauthorisation under section 44, or under section 42 ;
 - " grant " includes renew; and
 - " revoke " means revoke under section 43(1).

47 Determination of appeals

- (1) Where an appeal is brought under section 46, a tribunal to determine the appeal shall be constituted in accordance with subsection (2) below.
- (2) The tribunal shall consist of—
 - (a) a chairman appointed by the Lord Chancellor or the Lord Advocate, and
 - (b) two other members appointed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.
- (3) The chairman shall be a barrister, solicitor or advocate of at least seven years standing; and the other two members shall be persons appearing to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to have respectively experience of accountancy and experience of the business of building societies or of other financial institutions.
- (4) On any appeal against any decision of the Commission the question for the determination of the tribunal shall be whether, for the reasons adduced by the appellant, the decision was unlawful or not justified by the evidence on which it was based.
- (5) The tribunal may, on the application of the building society concerned, order that the operation of any condition which is the subject of an appeal by the society be suspended pending the determination of the appeal.
- (6) The tribunal may confirm or reverse the decision which is the subject of the appeal but shall not have power to vary it except by directing the Commission—
 - (a) in the case of an appeal against a decision to refuse to grant authorisation, to determine the conditions to which the grant of authorisation is to be subject;
 - (b) in the case of an appeal against a decision to revoke authorisation, to determine the conditions or different conditions subject to which the authorisation is to continue in force, as the case may be ;
 - (c) in the case of an appeal against the imposition of conditions or as to the conditions imposed by the decision, to determine the conditions or different

conditions subject to which the authorisation is to be granted or is to continue, as the case may be.

(7) Where by virtue of subsection (6) above the tribunal directs the Commission to determine conditions or different conditions, the Commission shall by notice to the society concerned impose such conditions to be complied with by the society as it considers expedient in order to protect the investments of shareholders or depositors and—

- (a) Part III of Schedule 3 to this Act shall apply subject to the modifications made by paragraph 9 of that Schedule; but
- (b) the society concerned may appeal to the tribunal against any of those conditions ;

and on any such appeal the tribunal may confirm or reverse the Commission's decision with respect to the conditions which are the subject of the appeal or may direct the Commission to determine different conditions.

(8) Where by virtue of subsection (7) above the tribunal, on an appeal against any conditions, directs the Commission to determine different conditions, the other provisions of that subsection shall apply as they apply where the tribunal gives such a direction by virtue of subsection (6) above.

(9) Where the tribunal reverses a decision of the Commission to refuse to grant authorisation, it shall direct the Commission to grant it; and where the tribunal reverses a decision of the Commission to make the grant of authorisation subject to conditions, it shall direct the Commission to grant it unconditionally.

(10) Notice of a tribunal's determination, together with a statement of its reasons, shall be given to the appellant and to the Commission ; and unless the tribunal has directed the Commission to determine conditions or, in any other case, the tribunal directs otherwise, the determination shall come into operation when the notice is given to the appellant.

(11) The Treasury may out of money provided by Parliament pay to the persons appointed as members of a tribunal under this section such fees and allowances in respect of expenses as the Treasury may determine and any other expenses incurred for the purposes of this section.

48 Costs, procedure and evidence

(1) A tribunal may give such directions as it thinks fit for the payment of costs or expenses by any party to the appeal.

(2) On an appeal under section 46(2) the building society in relation to which the determination was made, or upon which the requirement was imposed, shall be entitled to be heard.

(3) The Treasury may, after consultation with the Council on Tribunals, make regulations with respect to appeals under section 46; and those regulations may in particular make provision—

- (a) as to the period within which and the manner in which such appeals are to be brought;
- (b) as to the manner in which such appeals are to be conducted, including provision for any hearing to be held in private;

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- (c) for requiring any person, on tender of the necessary expenses of his attendance, to attend and give evidence or produce documents in his custody or under his control and for authorising the administration of oaths to witnesses;
 - (d) for granting to any person such discovery or inspection of documents or right to further particulars as might be granted by a county court in England and Wales or Northern Ireland or, in Scotland, for granting to any person such recovery or inspection of documents as might be granted by the sheriff;
 - (e) for enabling an appellant to withdraw an appeal or the Commission to withdraw its opposition to an appeal and for the consequences of any such withdrawal;
 - (f) for taxing or otherwise settling any costs or expenses directed to be paid by the tribunal and for the enforcement of any such direction ;
 - (g) for enabling any functions in relation to an appeal to be discharged by the chairman of the tribunal; and
 - (h) as to any other matter connected with such appeals.
- (4) A person who, having been required in accordance with regulations under this section to attend and give evidence, fails without reasonable excuse to attend or give evidence shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale.
- (5) A person who intentionally alters, suppresses, conceals, destroys or refuses to produce any document which he has been required to produce in accordance with regulations under this section, or which he is liable to be so required to produce, shall be liable—
- (a) on conviction on indictment, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years or to a fine or both ;
 - (b) on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum.
- (6) The power to make regulations under this section is exercisable by statutory instrument which shall be subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of either House of Parliament.

49 Further appeals on points of law

- (1) An appeal shall lie to the High Court at the instance of the building society or other person concerned or of the Commission on any question of law arising from any decision of a tribunal under section 47 ; and if the court is of the opinion that the decision was erroneous in law, it shall remit the matter to the tribunal for re-hearing and determination by it.
- (2) In the application of this section to a building society whose principal office is in Scotland, references to the High Court shall be construed as references to the Court of Session.
- (3) No appeal to the Court of Appeal or to the Court of Appeal in Northern Ireland shall be brought from a decision under subsection (1) above except with the leave of that court or of the court or judge from whose decision the appeal is brought.
- (4) An appeal shall lie, with the leave of the Court of Session or the House of Lords, from any decision of the Court of Session under this section, and such leave may be given on such terms as to costs, expenses or otherwise as the Court of Session or the House of Lords may determine.

Advertising etc.

50 Powers to control advertising

- (1) If, with respect to any building society for which an authorisation is in force, the Commission considers it expedient to do so in the interests of persons who may invest by way of shares in or deposits with the society, the Commission may give the society a direction under this section.
- (2) A direction given to a building society under this section may do all or any of the following—
 - (a) prohibit the issue by the society of advertisements of all descriptions;
 - (b) prohibit the issue by the society of advertisements of any specified description;
 - (c) require the society to modify advertisements of a specified description in a specified manner;
 - (d) prohibit the issue by the society of any advertisements which are, or are substantially, repetitions of a specified advertisement;
 - (e) require the society to take all practicable steps to withdraw any specified advertisement, or any specified description of advertisement, which is on display in any place;and a direction under this section shall be in writing.
- (3) Not less than seven days before giving a direction under this section the Commission shall give the society and, subject to subsection (9) below, every director and the chief executive of the society notice that it proposes to give the direction and stating the grounds for the proposed direction.
- (4) In any case where—
 - (a) the Commission has given a society notice under subsection (3) above, and
 - (b) within the period of seven days beginning with the date on which the notice was given, representations (whether made in writing or orally) are made to the Commission by the society,the Commission shall take those representations into account in deciding whether or not to proceed to give the direction.
- (5) On giving a direction under this section the Commission shall give the society and, subject to subsection (9) below, every director and the chief executive of the society, notice of the direction, stating also the grounds for giving it.
- (6) The Commission may not give a direction under this section on grounds other than those stated, or grounds included in those stated, in the notice under subsection (3) above.
- (7) A direction under this section—
 - (a) may be revoked or varied by a further direction under this section; and
 - (b) shall be revoked by notice to the society.
- (8) If a building society fails to comply with a direction under this section, then—
 - (a) the society shall be liable on conviction on indictment or on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding, on summary conviction, the statutory maximum ; and
 - (b) any officer of the society who is also guilty of the offence shall be liable—

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- (i) on conviction on indictment, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years or to a fine 01 both; and
 - (ii) on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum.
- (9) Where any provision of this section requires notice of a direction under it to be given to every director of a building society that requirement is satisfied by giving notice to each director whose appointment has been officially notified and the non-receipt of a notice of the direction by a director or the chief executive does not affect the validity of the direction.
- (10) In this section—
- " advertisement" includes every form of advertisement, whether documentary, by way of sound broadcasting or by television or other pictorial means; and references to the issue of advertisements shall be construed accordingly ; and
 - " specified " means specified in a direction under this section.

51 Power to avoid apparent association with other bodies

- (1) If, as regards a building society and another body corporate which is not an associated body by virtue of section 18, it appears to the Commission that persons who might invest in or otherwise deal with that other body may be misled into believing that there is such a business relationship between the society and that body as indicates that the society has assumed an obligation to discharge that body's liabilities in any event, the Commission may give the society a direction under subsection (2) below.
- (2) A direction under this subsection is a direction requiring the society—
- (a) if they are available to it, to assume and make exercisable, or to make exercisable, as regards a body specified in the direction, the powers conferred by section 18; or
 - (b) to take such steps as are agreed with the Commission for the purpose of removing the appearance of a business relationship with the specified body which indicates the assumption of an obligation of the description referred to in subsection (1) above ;
- and, within a specified period, to notify the Commission of the course it has decided to take.
- (3) The steps that a building society may be required to take for the purpose of complying with a direction under subsection (2) above may relate to the conduct of its business or to its business relationship (if any) with the other body and, in particular, may require the removal of any person from any office in the society or that body.
- (4) A direction under subsection (2) above shall—
- (a) specify the matters which appear to the Commission to be capable of giving rise to such a belief as is mentioned in subsection (1) above ;
 - (b) specify the period within which the society must comply with the direction;
 - (c) require the society, if it decides to comply with the direction by taking steps to secure the purpose mentioned in subsection (2)(b) above, to notify the Commission of the steps it proposes to take.

- (5) Where a building society, in pursuance of subsection (2)(b) above notifies the Commission of steps which it proposes to take to secure the purpose mentioned in that paragraph then—
- (a) if it appears to the Commission that the steps proposed are reasonably likely to secure that purpose, the Commission shall approve them and direct the society to carry them out;
 - (b) if it appears to the Commission that the steps proposed are, with modifications, likely to secure that purpose and the Commission and the society agree on appropriate modifications within the period of 21 days from the date on which the Commission notifies the society of the modifications it proposes for their agreement, the Commission shall approve the steps as modified and direct the society to carry them out;
- but otherwise the Commission shall reject the society's proposals.
- (6) If the Commission rejects a society's proposals under subsection (5) above the Commission shall direct the society, within a specified period, to take the steps specified in the direction.
- (7) Any direction under subsection (2), (5) or (6) above shall be given by the Commission by notice served on the society.
- (8) The Commission may, if it thinks fit, extend, or further extend, any period during which a building society is to take any steps required of it under any of the foregoing provisions of this section and may do so whether or not application is made to it before the expiry of the period in question.
- (9) If a building society fails, within the period allowed to it under the foregoing provisions of this section, to comply with a direction under subsection (2) or (6) above, the Commission may serve on the society an aggregation notice to take effect on such date as is specified in the notice.
- (10) An aggregation notice under subsection (9) above is a notice directing that, from the date specified in the notice until the notice is withdrawn by the Commission, the assets and liabilities of the body specified in the notice will be aggregated with those of the society for the purposes of the provisions of this Act requiring aggregation of assets or liabilities ; and where such a notice is served, and whilst it remains in force, the assets and liabilities of the body specified in the notice shall for the purposes of those provisions be aggregated with those of the society in accordance with the aggregation rules in force under sections 7(10), 8(3) and 20(9).
- (11) A copy of any aggregation notice served on a building society under subsection (9) above shall, whilst in force, be kept in the public file of the society.
- (12) In this section—
- "business relationship " includes the use of business names and the holding by one individual of offices in more than one body;
 - " specified " means specified in a direction under any provision of this section; and " the provisions of this Act requiring aggregation of assets or liabilities " are sections 7, 8 and 20.

Information

52 Powers to obtain information and documents etc.

- (1) This section applies to information, documents or other material, or explanations of matters, which relate to the business of a building society or its plans for future development and, in relation to the obtaining under this section of information or explanations or the production under this section of documents or other material to which it applies " the purposes of its supervisory functions " means the purposes of the discharge by the Commission of any of its functions under Part I, section 9, the foregoing sections of this Part, Part X and sections 107 and 108.
- (2) Where a building society has subsidiaries or other associated bodies this section also applies to information, documents or other material, or explanations of matters, which relate to, or also relate to, the business, or the plans for future development, of every such subsidiary or associated body.
- (3) Where the Commission has grounds under section 51(1) for giving a direction to a building society under subsection (2) of that section in relation to another body corporate this section also applies to information, documents or other material, or explanations of matters, which relate to the business of that other body.
- (4) This section does not authorise any requirement in relation to information, documents or other material to be imposed on a subsidiary of or other body associated with a building society unless that body carries on business in the United Kingdom ; but a requirement may be imposed under this section on a building society in relation to information, documents or other material in the possession or control of a subsidiary or associated body outside the United Kingdom.
- (5) Subject to subsection (4) above, the Commission may by notice to a building society, subsidiary or associated body—
 - (a) require the body to which it is addressed to furnish to it, within a specified period or at a specified time or times, such specified information as the Commission considers it needs for the purposes of its supervisory functions;
 - (b) require the body to which it is addressed to produce to it, at a specified time and place, such specified documents or other material as the Commission considers it needs for the purposes of its supervisory functions;
 - (c) require the body to which it is addressed to provide to it, within a specified period, such explanations of specified matters as the Commission considers it needs for the purposes of its supervisory functions;
 - (d) require the body to which it is addressed to furnish to it a report by an accountant approved by the Commission on, or on specified aspects of, information or documents or other material furnished or produced to the Commission.
- (6) Where, by virtue of subsection (5)(a), (b) or (c) above the Commission has power to require the furnishing of any information, the production of any document or material or the provision of any explanation by a building society or other body, the Commission shall have the like power as regards any person who is or has been an officer or employee or agent of the society or other body, as the case may be, or, in the case of documents or material, appears to the Commission to have the document or material in his possession or under his control.

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- (7) Where any person from whom production of a document or material is required under subsection (6) above claims a lien on the document or material, the production of it shall be without prejudice to the lien.
- (8) Nothing in the foregoing provisions of this section shall compel the production by a barrister, solicitor or advocate of a document or material containing a privileged communication made by him or to him in that capacity or the furnishing of information contained in a privileged communication so made.
- (9) Where, by virtue of subsection (5) or (6) above, the Commission requires the production by a building society or other body or any other person of documents or material, the Commission may—
 - (a) if the documents or material are produced, take copies of or extracts from them and require that person or any other person who is a present or past director or officer of, or is or was at any time employed by, the building society or other body to provide an explanation of the documents or material; and
 - (b) if the documents or material are not produced, require the person who was required to produce the documents or material to state, to the best of his knowledge and belief, where the documents or material are.
- (10) Any person who, when required to do so under this section, fails without reasonable excuse to furnish any information or accountant's report, to produce any documents or material, or to provide any explanation or make any statement, shall be liable on summary conviction—
 - (a) to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale; and
 - (b) in the case of a continuing offence, to an additional fine not exceeding £200 for every day during which the offence continues.
- (11) Any building society which furnishes any information, provides any explanation or makes any statement which is false or misleading in a material particular shall be liable, on conviction on indictment or on summary conviction, to a fine which, on summary conviction, shall not exceed the statutory maximum.
- (12) Any person who knowingly or recklessly furnishes any information, provides any explanation or makes any statement which is false or misleading in a material particular shall be liable—
 - (a) on conviction on indictment, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years or to a fine or both ; and
 - (b) on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum.
- (13) In this section "specified" means specified in a notice under this section and " agent ", in relation to a building society, or any subsidiary or other body associated with it, includes its bankers, its accountants and solicitors and its auditors.

53 Confidentiality of certain information obtained by Commission

- (1) Subject to the provisions of this section and section 54, no information obtained by or furnished to the Commission under or for the purposes of this Act and relating to the business of a building society or other body or its or their plans for future development or to any person who is or has been or has been appointed or, in the case of a director, nominated or proposed as, an officer of a building society or other body may be disclosed (otherwise than to an officer or employee of the recipient authority) except—

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- (a) with the consent of the body to which, or person to whom, the information relates and (if different) of the person who furnishes it to the Commission ; or
 - (b) to the extent that it is information which is at the time of the disclosure, or has previously been, available to the public from other sources ; or
 - (c) in the form of a summary or collection of information so framed as not to enable information relating to any particular body or person to be ascertained from it; or
 - (d) to the extent that it is information which is provided for the purpose, under any provision of this Act, of its being made (in whatever manner) available to the public.
- (2) Nothing in subsection (1) above prohibits the disclosure of information—
- (a) with a view to the institution of, or otherwise for the purposes of, any criminal proceedings, whether under this Act or otherwise;
 - (b) with a view to the institution of, or otherwise for the purposes of, any civil proceedings by or at the relation of or against the Commission or by the Investor Protection Board arising out of the discharge of their respective functions under this Act;
 - (c) in order to enable the Commission to discharge any of its functions under this Act or any Community obligation ;
 - (d) in order to enable the central office to discharge any of its functions under this Act;
 - (e) in order to enable any person appointed investigator under section 55 or inspector under section 56 to discharge his duties under that section;
 - (f) in order to enable the auditors of the society to discharge their duties to the Commission ;
 - (g) with a view to the institution of, or otherwise for the purposes of, any disciplinary proceedings relating to the exercise by a solicitor, auditor, accountant or valuer of his professional duties.
- (3) If, in order to enable the Commission properly to discharge any of its functions under this Act or any such obligation, the Commission considers it necessary to seek advice from any qualified person on any matter of law, accountancy, valuation of property or other matter requiring the exercise of professional skill, nothing in subsection (1) above prohibits the disclosure to that person of such information as may appear to the Commission to be necessary to ensure that he is properly informed with respect to the matters on which his advice is sought.
- (4) Nothing in subsection (1) above prohibits the disclosure of information—
- (a) to the Treasury in circumstances where, in the opinion of the Commission, it is desirable or expedient that the information should be disclosed—
 - (i) in the interests of shareholders or depositors or in the public interest; or
 - (ii) with a view to the exercise by the Treasury of any of its functions under this Act; or
 - (b) to the Investor Protection Board in order to enable the Board to discharge any of its functions under the protective scheme provisions of Part IV.
- (5) Nothing in subsection (1) above prohibits the disclosure of information to the Bank of England in circumstances where, in the opinion of the Commission, it is desirable or expedient that the information should be disclosed with a view to facilitating the discharge—

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- (a) by the Commission, of any of its functions under this Act ; or
- (b) by the Bank, of any of its functions, whether under the Banking Act 1979 or otherwise ;

nor does subsection (1) above prohibit further disclosure of the information by the Bank of England with the consent of the Commission and within the limits permitted by section 19 of that Act other than subsection (4)(a) so far as it relates to disclosure in the public interest

- (6) Nothing in subsection (1) above prohibits the disclosure of information, with the consent of the Treasury, to the Secretary of State or the Department of Economic Development in circumstances where, in the opinion of the Commission, it is desirable or expedient that the information should be disclosed in the interests of shareholders or depositors or, in the case of information for the Secretary of State, in the public interest.

- (7) Nothing in subsection (1) above prohibits the disclosure of information to the Secretary of State or the Department of Economic Development in circumstances where, in the opinion of the Commission, it is desirable or expedient that the information should be disclosed with a view to facilitating the discharge—

- (a) by the Commission, of any of its functions under this Act, or
- (b) by the Secretary of State, of any functions of his under—
 - (i) any provision of the Insurance Companies Act 1982, or
 - (ii) sections 431, 432(2), 442, 444, 446(1) or 447(2) or (3) of the Companies Act 1985 (appointment of inspectors and requirement to produce documents); or
- (c) by the Department, of any of its functions under Articles 424, 425(2), 435, 437, 439(1) or 440(2) or (3) of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 (appointment of investigators and requirement to produce documents);

nor does subsection (1) above prohibit further disclosure of the information by the Secretary of State or the Department with the consent of the Commission.

- (8) Subject to subsection (9) below, nothing in subsection (1) above prohibits the disclosure of information to a prescribed regulatory authority in circumstances where, in the opinion of the Commission, it is desirable or expedient that the information should be disclosed—

- (a) in the public interest, or
- (b) in the interests of shareholders or depositors, or
- (c) with a view to facilitating the discharge—
 - (i) by the Commission, of any of its functions under this Act, or
 - (ii) by the regulatory authority, of any prescribed functions of the authority;

nor does subsection (1) above prohibit further disclosure of the information by a prescribed regulatory authority in prescribed circumstances, subject to prescribed conditions and with the consent of the Commission.

- (9) The Commission, with the consent of the Treasury, may, by order designate public and other authorities as prescribed regulatory authorities for the purposes of subsection (8) above and an order under this subsection—

- (a) shall specify the functions of prescribed regulatory authorities which are prescribed functions for those purposes ;

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- (b) may restrict the circumstances in which information may, by virtue of that subsection, be disclosed or further disclosed, whether by excluding any of paragraphs (a), (b) or (c) of that subsection or otherwise; and
- (c) may impose conditions subject to which the information may be disclosed or further disclosed ;

and in that subsection " prescribed " means prescribed by an order under this subsection.

- (10) The power to make an order under subsection (9) above is exercisable by statutory instrument which shall be subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of either House of Parliament.
- (11) Nothing in subsection (1) above prohibits the disclosure to an overseas regulatory authority of information which relates to a building society which, or a building society's subsidiary or associated body which.—
 - (a) carries on or proposes to carry on any business in that country or territory, or
 - (b) has or proposes to acquire an interest in a body corporate which carries on or proposes to carry on in that country or territory any business corresponding to any business of a building society, or
 - (c) appears to the Commission to be associated with a body incorporated under the law of that country or territory or whose principal place of business is, or is proposed to be, in that country or territory,

if it appears to the Commission that the disclosure of the information would assist that authority in the discharge of its functions or would assist the Commission in the discharge of any of its functions under this Act.

- (12) Subsection (11) above applies in relation to the disclosure of information which relates to any person who is or has been or has been appointed or, in the case of a director, nominated or proposed as an officer of a building society or other body in the case of which that subsection authorises the disclosure of information which relates to it as it applies to the disclosure of information which relates to the society or other body.
- (13) Any person who discloses information in contravention of subsection (1) above shall be liable—
 - (a) on conviction on indictment, to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years or to a fine or both ; and
 - (b) on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum.

- (14) In this section—

" authority" includes any body (corporate or unincorporate) which is charged with the regulation of the carrying on of any description of financial business or the practice of any profession to which the carrying on of such business is incidental;

" overseas regulatory authority " means any government department or public or other authority in a country or territory outside the United Kingdom which is charged under the law of that country or territory with the regulation of the carrying on there of any business within the powers conferred on building societies or their subsidiaries by or under this Act; and

" regulation ", in relation to any public or other authority, means regulation in the public interest or for the protection of private interests.

54 Information disclosed to Commission from other sources

- (1) If and in so far as it appears to the Secretary of State that the disclosure of any information will enable the Commission better to discharge its functions under this Act (but not otherwise),—
 - (a) information obtained by the Secretary of State under section 447 or 448 of the Companies Act 1985 (inspection of companies' books and papers) may be disclosed to the Commission or further disclosed, notwithstanding the provision as to security of information contained in section 449 of that Act; and
 - (b) where the information is contained in a report made by inspectors appointed under section 431, 432, 442 or 446 of the Companies Act 1985 (investigation of affairs or ownership of companies and certain other bodies corporate) the Secretary of State may furnish a copy of the report to the Commission.
- (2) If and in so far as it appears to the Department of Economic Development that the disclosure of any information will enable the Commission better to discharge its functions under this Act (but not otherwise),—
 - (a) information obtained by the Department under Article 440 or 441 of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 (inspection of companies' books and papers) may be disclosed or further disclosed to the Commission, notwithstanding the provision as to security of information contained in Article 442 of that Order; and
 - (b) where the information is contained in a report made by inspectors under Article 424, 425, 435 or 439 of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 (investigation of affairs or ownership of companies and certain other bodies corporate) the Department may furnish a copy of the report to the Commission.
- (3) Subsection (1) of section 53 does not apply to information which has been disclosed to the Commission by virtue of subsection (1) or (2) above, but—
 - (a) except as provided by paragraph (b) below, nothing in this Act authorises any further disclosure of that information in contravention of section 449 of the Companies Act 1985 or, as the case may require, Article 442 of the Companies (Northern Ireland) Order 1986 ; and
 - (b) with respect to that information the references in subsections (3), (4), (5), (6), (8) and (11) of section 53 to subsection (1) of that section shall be construed as including a reference to the said section 449 or, as the case may require, Article 422, but, in the case of subsections (5), (6) and (8), so far only as they relate to the discharge of the Commission's functions or the interests of shareholders and depositors.
- (4) If and in so far as it appears to the Bank of England that the disclosure of any information will enable the Commission better to discharge its functions under this Act (but not otherwise), information obtained by the Bank under or for the purposes of the Banking Act 1979 may be disclosed to the Commission and, with the Bank's consent, further disclosed by the Commission, notwithstanding the provision as to security of information contained in section 19 of that Act.
- (5) Subsection (1) of section 53 does not apply to information which has been disclosed to the Commission by virtue of subsection (4) above, but—

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- (a) except as provided in paragraph (b) below, nothing in this Act authorises any further disclosure of that information in contravention of section 19 of the Banking Act 1979; and
 - (b) with respect to that information the references in subsection (3), (4), (6), (7), (8) and (11) of section 53 to subsection (1) of that section shall be construed as including a reference to the said section 19 but, in the case of subsections (6), (7) and (8), so far only as they relate to the discharge of the Commission's functions or the interests of shareholders and depositors.
- (6) If information is disclosed to the Commission by an overseas regulatory authority—
- (a) subsection (1) of section 53 applies to that information as it applies to information obtained or furnished under or for the purposes of this Act; but
 - (b) the references in subsections (4) to (11) of that section to the disclosure of information do not extend to the disclosure of that information.

Inspections, etc.

55 Investigations on behalf of Commission

- (1) If it appears to the Commission desirable to do so for the purposes of its supervisory functions in relation to a building society, the Commission may appoint one or more competent persons to investigate and report to it on the state and conduct of the business of the society concerned, or any particular aspect of that business.
- (2) If a person appointed under subsection (1) above thinks it necessary for the purposes of his investigation, he may also investigate the business of any body corporate which is or has at any relevant time been—
- (a) a subsidiary of the building society under investigation or,
 - (b) an associated body (other than a subsidiary) of that society.
- (3) It shall be the duty of every officer, employee and agent of a building society or other body which is under investigation—
- (a) to produce to the persons appointed under subsection (1) above all records, books and papers relating to the body concerned which are in his custody or power; and
 - (b) to attend before those persons when required to do so; and
 - (c) otherwise to give to those persons all assistance in connection with the investigation which he is reasonably able to give.
- (4) Any officer, employee or agent of a building society or other body who—
- (a) without reasonable excuse fails to produce any records, books or papers which it is his duty to produce under subsection (3) above, or
 - (b) without reasonable excuse fails to attend before the person appointed under subsection (1) above when required to do so, or
 - (c) without reasonable excuse fails to answer any question which is put to him by persons so appointed with respect to any building society or other body corporate which is under investigation,

shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding level 5 on the standard scale.

- (5) Any officer, employee or agent of a building society or other body who knowingly or recklessly furnishes to any person appointed under subsection (1) above any information which is false or misleading in a material particular, shall be liable—
- (a) on conviction on indictment to imprisonment for a term not exceeding two years or to a fine or both ; and
 - (b) on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum.
- (6) In this section—
- (a) " agent", in relation to a building society or other body whose business is under investigation, includes its bankers, its accountants and solicitors and any persons, where they are not officers of the other body concerned, who are employed as its auditors ;
 - (b) " the purposes of its supervisory functions ", in relation to the Commission, has the same meaning as in section 52; and
 - (c) any reference to an officer, employee or agent of a building society or other body includes a reference to a person who has been but no longer is an officer, employee or agent of that society or other body.

56 Inspections and special meetings: general

- (1) In the circumstances mentioned in subsection (2) below, the Commission—
- (a) may appoint one or more competent inspectors to investigate and report on the affairs of a building society, or
 - (b) may call a special meeting of a building society to consider its affairs, or
 - (c) may (either on the same or on different occasions) both appoint an inspector or inspectors and call a special meeting for those purposes;
- and, in the circumstances mentioned in subsection (3) below, the investigation or consideration may extend to the affairs of any body corporate which is or at any relevant time has been a subsidiary of or body associated with the building society.
- (2) The powers conferred by subsection (1) above may be exercised either—
- (a) on the application of the requisite number of members of the society, or
 - (b) where no such application is made but the Commission is of opinion that an investigation should be held into the affairs of the society, or that the affairs of the society call for consideration by a meeting of its members.
- (3) The powers conferred by subsection (1) above may be exercised in relation also to a subsidiary of or body associated with a building society either—
- (a) where the application referred to in subsection (2)(a) above so requests, or
 - (b) where the application contains no such request but the Commission is of the opinion that it is necessary for the purposes of the investigation into or consideration of the affairs of the building society that the affairs of the subsidiary or associated body should also be investigated or considered.
- (4) Where the inspectors are of the opinion mentioned in subsection (3)(b) above in relation to a subsidiary of or body associated with a building society they may, with the consent of the Commission, extend their investigation to the affairs of the subsidiary or associated body and make their report accordingly.
- (5) For the purposes of subsections (1) to (3) above the requisite number of members—
- (a) in the case of a building society having more than 1,000 members, is 100, and

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- (b) in the case of any other building society, is one-tenth of the whole number of members of the society.
- (6) The following provisions shall have effect where an application is made as mentioned in subsection (2)(a) above, that is to say—
- (a) the application shall be supported by such evidence as the Commission may require for the purpose of showing that the applicants have good reason for requiring an investigation by inspectors or consideration by a special meeting, as the case may be, and that the applicants are not actuated by malicious, frivolous, vexatious or scandalous motives in their application ;
 - (b) such notice of the application shall be given to the building society and, in a case where the investigation is to extend to its affairs also, to the society's subsidiary or associated body, as the Commission may direct;
 - (c) the Commission shall require the applicants to give security for payment of the costs of the investigation or meeting before the inspector is appointed or the meeting is called subject, in the case of the costs of an investigation, to an amount not exceeding the corresponding Companies Act limit; and
 - (d) as regards the expenses of or incidental to the investigation or meeting—
 - (i) in the case of an investigation (in whichever way instituted), the expenses shall be defrayed in the first instance by the Commission but without prejudice to its rights to contribution under section 57(10);
 - (ii) in the case of a meeting, the expenses shall be defrayed by the applicants, or out of the funds of the society, or by the members or officers or former members or officers of the society, in such proportions as the Commission may direct.
- (7) Before exercising its powers under subsection (1) above in a case falling within subsection (2)(b) above, the Commission shall inform the building society of the action which it proposes to take and the grounds for that action, and the society shall, within 14 days of receiving the information, be entitled to give the Commission an explanatory statement in writing by way of a reply.
- (8) Where the Commission proposes to exercise its powers under subsection (1) above in a case falling within subsection (3)(b) above, subsection (7) above shall apply in relation to the subsidiary or associated body as it applies in relation to the society.
- (9) Inspectors appointed under this section shall, in addition to having the powers which are necessary for or incidental to the discharge of their functions under this section, have the powers specified in section 57.
- (10) Where a special meeting is called under this section—
- (a) the Commission may direct at what time and place the meeting is to be held, and what matters are to be discussed and determined at the meeting, and may give such other directions as it thinks fit with respect to the calling, holding and conduct of the meeting;
 - (b) the Commission may appoint a person to be chairman at the meeting or, in default of such an appointment, the meeting may appoint its own chairman ;
 - (c) the meeting shall have all the powers of a meeting called according to the rules of the building society ;

and the provisions of this subsection and any direction given under it shall have effect notwithstanding anything in the rules of the building society.

- (11) In this section " the corresponding Companies Act limit", in relation to security for the payment of the costs of an investigation, is £5,000 or such other sum as is specified for the time being in an order under section 431(4) of the Companies Act 1985 for the purposes of that section.

57 Inspections: supplementary provisions

- (1) In this section—

" the body under investigation " means the building society whose affairs or, as the case may be, the building society whose affairs, and each subsidiary of or body associated with the building society whose affairs, are the subject of the investigation ;

" the inspectors" means the persons appointed by the Commission under section 56 to conduct the investigation ;

" the investigation " means the investigation under section 56 which the inspectors have been appointed to hold; and references to officers or to agents include past, as well as present, officers or agents (as the case may be) and " agents ". in relation to a building society or any subsidiary of or body associated with a building society, includes its bankers, its accountants and solicitors and its auditors.

- (2) When the inspectors have been appointed it is the duty of all officers and agents of the body under investigation—
- (a) to produce to the inspectors all documents and material of or relating to the body under investigation which are in their custody or power;
 - (b) to attend before the inspectors when required to do so, and
 - (c) otherwise to give the inspectors all assistance in connection with the investigation which they are reasonably able to give.
- (3) If the inspectors consider that a person other than an officer or agent of the body under investigation is or may be in possession of information concerning its affairs, they may require that person to produce to them any documents or material in his custody or power relating to the body under investigation, to attend before them and otherwise to give them all assistance in connection with the investigation which he is reasonably able to give; and it is that person's duty to comply with the requirement.
- (4) The inspectors may examine on oath the officers and agents of the body under investigation, and any such person as is mentioned in subsection (3) above, in relation to the affairs of the body under investigation, and may administer an oath accordingly.
- (5) An answer given by a person to a question put to him under the foregoing provisions of this section may be used in evidence against him.
- (6) If an officer or agent of the body under investigation or any such person as is mentioned in subsection (3) above—
- (a) refuses to produce any document or material which it is his duty under this section to produce, or
 - (b) refuses to attend before the inspectors when required to do so, or
 - (c) refuses to answer any question put to him by the inspectors with respect to the affairs of the body under investigation,

the inspectors may certify the refusal in writing to the High Court; and the court may thereupon inquire into the case and, after hearing any witnesses who may be produced

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against or on behalf of the alleged offender and after hearing any statement which may be offered in defence, may punish the offender in like manner as if he had been guilty of contempt of the court.

- (7) The inspectors may, and if so directed by the Commission shall, make interim reports to the Commission, but they may at any time in the course of the investigation, without making an interim report, inform the Commission of matters coming to their knowledge as a result of the investigation tending to show that an offence has been committed.
- (8) The Commission may, if it thinks fit—
- (a) send a copy of any report made by the inspectors to the body whose affairs are or were the subject of the investigation;
 - (b) furnish a copy of any such report on request and on payment of the prescribed fee to—
 - (i) any member of the body whose affairs are or were the subject of the investigation;
 - (ii) the auditors of that body ;
 - (iii) any person whose conduct is referred to in the report;
 - (iv) any other person whose financial interests appear to the Commission to be affected by matters dealt with in the report, whether as creditor or otherwise; and
 - (c) cause the report to be printed and published.
- (9) A copy of a report of inspectors appointed under section 56 to hold an investigation under that section, certified by the Commission to be a true copy, is admissible in any legal proceedings as evidence of the opinion of the inspectors in relation to any matter contained in the report; and a document purporting to be such a certificate shall be received in evidence and be deemed to be such a certificate, unless the contrary is proved.
- (10) The Commission shall be entitled to be repaid the expenses of the investigation defrayed by it under section 56(6)(d) as provided in the following paragraphs, that is to say—
- (a) by the applicants for the investigation, to such extent (if any) as the Commission may direct;
 - (b) by any body whose affairs were the subject of the investigation, to such extent (if any) as the Commission may direct;
 - (c) by any person convicted of an offence in proceedings instituted as a result of the investigation, to such extent (if any) as the court by or before which he was convicted may order;
- and a person liable under any one of paragraphs (a) to (c) above is entitled to contribution from any other person liable under the same paragraph, according to the amount of their respective liabilities under it.
- (11) In the application of this section to a building society whose principal office is in Scotland, any reference to the High Court shall be read as a reference to the Court of Session.