

**155th COMMISSION MEETING ON MONDAY 16 DECEMBER 2013 at 10:00 IN THE OFFICE OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION, TEMPLE COURT, 39 NORTH STREET, BELFAST, BT11NA**

**In attendance:** John Corey (Interim Chair)

Alan McBride

Marion Reynolds

Christine Collins

Paul Yam

Grainia Long

**Present:** Virginia McVea, Director

David Russell, Deputy Director

Rebecca Magee, Executive Assistant

Alice Neeson, Communications Assistant (Item 11)

**Apologies:** Milton Kerr

**1. Minutes of the 154th Commission meeting**

1.1 The minutes of the 154th Commission meeting were agreed following minor amendments including the following additional paragraph:-

4.2 Commissioner McBride introduced discussion on ongoing intimidation.

*Rebecca Magee, Executive Assistant left the meeting at 10:40*

1.2 Commissioners agreed the Closed Minute from the 154th Commission meeting and discussed the matters arising.

*Rebecca Magee, Executive Assistant re-joined the meeting at 11:00*

**2. Matters arising**

2.1 The Director gave an update on the subject of a National Inquiry into A&E Services, reporting that she has been in contact with the Asia Pacific Forum and that training for staff will be taking place in early January. (Item 14 of the 154th Commission meeting refers)

2.2 The Director gave an update on the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI) which included a proposal at the event to have a mentoring programme and a monthly email blog to highlight the Institutions involved. (Item 5.3 of the 154th Commission meeting refers)

2.3 Training has taken place in early December on the Convention of Rights for Persons with a Disability (CRPD). The training was delivered by Human Rights Disability Expert Consultant Marianne Schulze. The training included an event with the Equality Commission for NI and staff. The event received high praise and a request to repeat the training again in the future. (Item 7 of the 154th Commission meeting refers)

2.4 The Commission’s advice on Termination of Pregnancy in Northern Ireland will be discussed at a meeting with the Minister of Justice on 18 December 2013. A consultation has been announced by the Department of Justice for April 2014. (Item 8 of the 154th Commission meeting refers)

**3. Interim Chair Report**

3.1 Interim Chair John Corey reported on his meetings since the last meeting. These included:

* QUB Law workshop on Enhancing Human Rights and Equality
* Les Allamby, Law Centre NI
* Kevin Hanratty and Patrick Corrigan, Human Rights Consortium
* Westminster meetings – Joint Committee on Human Rights, Andrea Coomber from Justice, Lord Dubs, Lord Eames, Lady Hermon MP, Shami Chakrabarti from Liberty
* Christmas Reception at the British-Irish Intergovernmental Secretariat

**4. Commissioner Report**

4.1 Commissioner Paul Yam attended the Christmas Reception at the British-Irish Intergovernmental Secretariat.

4.2 Commissioner Alan McBride reported on an event that he spoke at for CAJ. He also met with the Commissioner for Victims and Survivors Kathryn Stone OBE to discuss intimidation.

**5. Statutory Functions Report**

5.1 The Director presented the Statutory Functions Report.

5.2 The Director provided an update on the NIHRC financial position since the last meeting.

5.3 The Director provided an update on the Legal Services function which included an update and discussion on the open cases and watching briefs.

5.4 The Director provided an update on the Adoption case and the Commission reviewed the correspondence with the Minister relating to the failure of the Department of Health to revise the information on its website to reflect accurately the court ruling. Commissioners discussed options for further action on this and agreed to seek to clarify information published within the relevant services.

**Action: To clarify position on information published and consider writing to Minister with copy of letter to Sec of State.**

5.5 The Deputy Director provided an update on the follow-up to Investigation on Racist Hate Crime which included a series of meetings and training opportunities.

5.6 The Deputy Director provided an update on consultation submissions.

**6. Quarterly Report against the Business Plan**

6.1 Commissioners noted the Quarterly Report against the Business Plan.

6.2 The Director gave an update on each pillar of the Quarterly Report against the Business Plan.

**7. Research into Children in Residential Care**

7.1 Commissioners noted this draft of the Research into Children in Residential Care.

7.2 Commissioners discussed re-draft options for the paper.

**Action: Commissioner Marion Reynolds is to work with the Deputy Director on aspects of the 2nd draft.**

**Action: Second draft of Research into Children in Residential Care is to be available at February Commission meeting.**

**8. Research into Carers**

8.1 Commissioners noted this draft of the research into Carers.

8.2 Commissioners discussed re-draft options for the paper.

**Action: Second draft of Research into Carers is to be available at February Commission meeting.**

**9. Update on Investigation into Racist Hate Crime**

This item was dealt with under the Statutory Functions Report (item 5 above)

**10. Monitoring & Capacity building programme: Places of Detention (ref: HRC155.7)**

10.1 Commissioners discussed the Monitoring & Capacity building programme: Places of Detention document.

10.2 Commissioners adopted the document.

**11. Update on Website**

*Alice Neeson, Communications Assistant joined the meeting at 2.55.*

11.1 Commissioners noted the presentation on the website that included details on website hits, most popular pages.

11.2 The Communications Assistant discussed with Commissioners making the website home page more efficient and improving the navigation tool.

11.3 Commissioners noted the update on social media.

*Alice Neeson, Communications Assistant left the meeting at 3:05.*

**12. Any other Business**

12.1 Commissioners noted the new appointments to the Parades Commission and agreed to seek a meeting in due course.