

**156th COMMISSION MEETING ON MONDAY 27 JANUARY 2014 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

Milton Kerr

Marion Reynolds

Christine Collins

Paul Yam

Grainia Long

**Present:** Virginia McVea, Director

David Russell, Deputy Director

Rebecca Magee, Executive Assistant

**Apologies:** Christine Collins

**1. Minutes of the 155th Commission meeting**

1.1 The Minutes of the 155th Commission meeting were agreed.

**2. Matters arising**

2.1 Adoption Guidance – Commissioners were updated on further contacts with the DHSSPS on the need to update the Adoption Guidance that is currently displayed on the Department’s website. Assurance has been given by the Department that the information will be updated within the coming week.

**3. Interim Chair report**

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

* David Ford MLA, Minister of Justice
* Evidence Session at the OFMDFM Assembly Committee to discuss the NIHRC 2013 Annual Statement.
* Paddy Kelly, Children’s Law Centre

**Action: Letter to be sent to Children’s Law Centre in regards to the Commission’s position on the proposed Mental Capacity Bill.**

3.2 The Interim Chair confirmed that a further letter was sent to the Secretary of State pressing for progress on the competition for the appointment of the next Chief Commissioner. Commissioners also agreed that the Interim Chair should proceed to complete the Commissioner Appraisal forms.

**4. Commissioners report**

4.1 Nothing to report.

**5. Directors report**

5.1 Commissioners noted the Director’s report.

5.2 Commissioners discussed with the Director the Financial report and the Absence statistics.

5.3 Commissioners received an update on ongoing industrial relations issues.

5.4 The Director gave an update on the ongoing Service Level Agreements (SLA’s), and potential new SLA’s.

5.5 The Director gave an update on recent meetings and events she has attended since the last meeting.

5.6 It was agreed that references in the Directors report or Statutory Functions report should use the title ‘Dealing with Northern Ireland's Past: Towards a transitional justice approach’ and use the language of that report.

**6. National Inquiry update**

6.1 Commissioners discussed the National Inquiry methodology and implementation in Northern Ireland.

6.2 Commissioners agreed in principle that the NIHRC should undertake a National Inquiry subject to holding a special Commission meeting on 7 February to give further detailed consideration to the Inquiry issue, the factors and implications for the NIHRC Business Plan.

**7. Draft Business Plan**

7.1 Commissioners discussed the Draft Business Plan.

7.2 The Director updated Commissioners on changes and updates to the Draft Business Plan.

7.3 Commissioners agreed that following the meeting on 7 February the Business Plan for 2014-15 will need to be reviewed.

**8. Haass Update**

8.1 Commissioners discussed the summary provided by the Haass team.

8.2 Commissioners welcomed the acknowledgement of the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and Human Rights in general within the draft agreement.

8.3 Commissioners welcomed the continuing work between parties following the close of the Haass talks.

8.4 Commissioners agreed to keep the matter under review.