

**160th COMMISSION MEETING ON MONDAY 19 MAY AT 10:00 IN THE OFFICE OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION, TEMPLE COURT, 39 NORTH STREET, BELFAST, BT1 1NA**

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

Alan McBride

Marion Reynolds

Paul Yam

Milton Kerr (left meeting at 2:45)

**Present:** Virginia McVea, Director

David Russell, Deputy Director

Rebecca Magee, Personal Assistant

Alice Neeson, Communications Assistant (Item 7)

Angela Stevens, Caseworker (Item 8)

Colin Caughey, Policy Worker (Item 11)

Kyra Hild, Researcher (Item 12)

**Apologies:** Grainia Long

Christine Collins

**1. Minutes of the 159th Commission meeting**

1.1 The minutes of the 159th Commission meeting were agreed following minor amendments.

**2. Matters arising**

2.1 An update on the recruitment of the Chief Commissioner and the reappointment of Commissioners was given. (Item 2.1 of previous minutes refers).

2.2 Recruitment for the General Administrator has taken place and the post offered. (Item 2.2 of previous minutes refers).

2.3 An update was given on the upcoming Community engagement in Armagh. (Item 6.3 of previous minutes refers).

**3. Interim Chair report**

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

* Keynote speaker at the launch of Anti-Homophobic/Transphobia Week
* Meetings with Sinn Fein and Ulster Unionist parties
* Meetings in Westminster - Joint Committee on Human Rights, Baroness O’Neill and Mark Hammond from the Equality and Human Rights Commission, Baroness Blood and Lady Hermon MP
* Evidence session with the Assembly Finance and Personnel Committee on Public Procurement and Human Rights
* Joint IHRC/NIHRC conference on a Human Rights Approach to Poverty/Social Inequality

**4. Commissioner Report**

4.1 Commissioner Alan McBride reported on a meeting he attended with the Education Worker with a community project called The Hubb Community Resource Centre.

**5. Director’s Report**

5.1 Commissioners noted the Director’s report.

5.2 Commissioners noted the Finance report.

5.3 Commissioners discussed with the Director the NIO proposals on the Budget for 2015-16 and the meetings that took place in Westminster and locally.

**6. Draft Annual Report and Accounts 2013-14**

6.1 Commissioners noted the Draft Annual Report and Accounts for 2013-14.

6.2 Commissioners formally agreed approval of the report.

**7. Media Report**

*Alice Neeson, Communications Assistant, joined the meeting at 12:05.*

7.1 Commissioners were updated on the recent updates to the NIHRC website and platform.

7.2 Commissioners were updated on the demographic of followers through social media.

*Alice Neeson, Communications Assistant, left the meeting at 12:20.*

**8. Legal – Request to Intervene**

*Angela Stevens, Caseworker, joined the meeting at 12:20.*

*Commissioner Milton Kerr recused himself on a potential conflict of interest on HRC160.6.1.*

8.1 Commissioners were given a historical update on the case.

8.2 Commissioners noted that as Commissioner Kerr had been excused that the meeting was no longer quorate. It was agreed that the Chair would write to the absent Commissioners to seek a conclusion.

*The meeting broke for lunch at 1:10 and resumed at 1:40.*

*Commissioner Alan McBride recused himself on a potential conflict of interest on HRC160.6.2.*

8.3 Commissioners were given a historical update on the case.

8.4 Commissioners noted that as Commissioner McBride had been excused that the meeting was no longer quorate. It was agreed that the Chair would write to the absent Commissioners to seek a conclusion.

**Action: Interim Chair to write to Commissioners on both interventions, the first being a Judicial Review and the second being a strategic letter touching upon issues raised in the inquest mentioned but opening to broader issues – letters proposed to Minister Ford, Chief Constable and the Coroner.**

*Angela Stevens, Caseworker, left the meeting at 2:10.*

**9. Draft Ombudsman Manual**

9.1 Commissioners noted the Draft Ombudsman Manual.

**10. Update on Poverty Event**

10.1 Commissioners were given an update on the joint conference of the IHRC and NIHRC on ‘A Human Rights Approach to Tackling Poverty and Social Inequality, An All Island Perspective’.

10.2 Commissioners noted the work of both Commissions in making this event a success.

**11. NIHRC- Human Rights Analysis of Issues Faced by Carers**

*Colin Caughey, Policy Worker, joined the meeting at 3:20.*

11.1 Commissioners were briefed on the background of the paper.

11.3 Commissioners noted that they were pleased with the content of the report and await the final draft.

*Colin Caughey, Policy Worker, left the meeting at 3:50.*

**12. Consultation Response on the Draft Strategy on Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland 2013-20**

*Kyra Hild, Researcher, joined the meeting at 3:50.*

12.1 Commissioners were updated on the history of this consultation and advised that the Department was pressing for the Commission’s response by 23 May 2014.

12.2 Commissioners discussed the consultation response.

12.3 Commissioners were asked to forward further comments on the draft response to Deputy Director by 22 May 2014.

*Kyra Hild, Researcher, left the meeting at 4:30.*

**13. Any other Business**

13.1 Human Rights Inquiry – An update on the process was provided and the logo of the Inquiry shared.

13.2 Integrated Education – Commissioners received an update on the Judgement in the Application by Drumragh Integrated College for Judicial Review and in the matter of a decision of the Department of Education.

The meeting closed at 4:45.