

25 April 2022

245th COMMISSION MEETING

Held in the Commission's Offices, Alfred House, 19-21 Alfred Street, Belfast, BT2 8ED and via Teams

Present: Alyson Kilpatrick, Chief Commissioner
Helen Henderson
Jonathan Kearney
David A Lavery CB
Eddie Rooney
Stephen White

In attendance: David Russell, Chief Executive
Rebecca Magee, Executive Assistant (to Chief
Commissioner and Chief Executive)
Lorraine Hamill, Director (Finance, Personnel and
Corporate Affairs)
Rhyannon Blythe, Director (Legal, Research and
Investigations, and Advice to Government)
Éilis Haughey, Director (Human Rights after EU
Withdrawal)
Claire Martin, Director (Engagement and
Communications)
Laura Banks, Solicitor (agenda item 9)

1. Apologies and Declarations of Interest

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Margie McKay, Boardroom Apprentice. The Commission would like to congratulate Margie on the birth of her new baby.
- 1.2 There were no declarations of interests.

2. Minutes of the 244th Commission meeting and Minutes of the Special Commission meeting of 11 April

2.1 The minutes of the 244th Commission meeting held on 28 March 2022 were agreed as an accurate record following a minor amendment.

Action: Minutes of the 244th Commission meeting to be uploaded to the website.

2.2 The minutes of the Special Commission meeting of 11 April were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

Action: Minutes of the Special Commission meeting to be uploaded to the website.

3. Chief Commissioner's report

3.1 The Chief Commissioner's report was noted.

4. Commissioners' Reports

4.1 Commissioner White reported on the IMNI Committee meeting that he attended with Commissioner Henderson. Commissioners White and Henderson expressed their thanks to staff for their support.

5. Chief Executive's Report

5.1 The Chief Executive provided an update on recruitment with two Policy & Research posts currently being recruited for with a closing date of Friday 1 April.

5.2 The Chief Executive reported on his meetings with the NIO in regard to an Independent Review of the Commission. Further discussions will take place with the NIO on 11 May and any updates will be provided.

Action: Any update regarding Independent Review to be shared with Commissioners.

6. Finance Report including Cash Flow Report

- 6.1 The Director (Finance, Personnel and Corporate Affairs) presented the finance reports for core and the dedicated mechanism expenditure for February 2022.
- 6.2 Commissioners noted that there was an underspend in core. Commissioners acknowledge the reason for this underspend at 6% which is higher the NIO underspend allowance of 2%.
- 6.3 Commissioners noted that there was an underspend in the dedicated mechanism funding and acknowledge the reason for this underspend.
- 6.4 The Cash Flow Report for February 2022 was noted.

7. Final Quarterly Report Against the Business Plan 2021-2022 and Draft template for Quarterly Report Against the Business Plan 2022-2023

- 7.1 Commissioners signed off the final quarterly report against the business plan for 2021-2022 and noted that three targets had not been met and accepted the reason for these.
- 7.2 Commissioners approved the template for the quarterly report against the business plan for 2022-2023.

8. Legal update

- 8.1 The Director (Legal, Research and Investigations, and Advice to Government) provided an update on:
 - NM (Access to MOD pension): the second part of the hearing was part heard on 11 April.
 - JR123 (Rehabilitation of Offenders): still ongoing with hearing pushed back to 28 May.
 - RSE: pre-action letters have been sent, we are awaiting responses.

- SPUC (Challenge on Abortion Regulations 2021): hearing set for 27+28 October.
- RSE investigation: Love for Life have challenged the investigation again. The papers are being reviewed and Senior Counsel has been instructed.
- MMcD (NIHE Intimidation points): Litigant in Person who is seeking the Commissions support. We are awaiting Counsel opinion.

9. Legal Application

9.1 This item was not needed.

10. Dedicated Mechanism update

10.1 The Director (Human Rights after EU Withdrawal) provided an oral update to Commissioners on the work of the Dedicated Mechanism since the last meeting.

11. Engagement and Communications update

11.1 The Director (Engagement and Communications) provided an oral update on the work of the Engagement and Communications team since the last meeting.

12. Any Other Business

12.1 There was no other business.

13. Induction refresher session on Legal work

13.1 Commissioners agreed that this session would take place at the May Commission meeting.

Action: Induction refresher session on legal work to take place at May Commission meeting.

The meeting closed at 11:45am.