

**19 December 2022**

## **252<sup>nd</sup> 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  
Justin Kouame  
Eddie Rooney  
Stephen White  
David Lavery

**In attendance:** David Russell, Chief Executive  
Rebecca Magee, Executive Assistant to the Chief  
Commissioner and Chief Executive  
Rhyannon Blythe, Director (Legal Services)  
Colin Caughey, Director (Advice to Government,  
Research, and Investigations)  
Éilis Haughey, Director (Human Rights after EU  
Withdrawal)  
Claire Martin, Director (Engagement and  
Communications)  
Lorraine Hamill, Director (Finance, Personnel &  
Corporate Affairs)  
Elsie Trainor, Boardroom Apprentice

## **1. Apologies and Declarations of Interest**

1.1 There were no apologies.

1.2 There were no declarations of interests.

## 2. Minutes of the 251<sup>st</sup> Commission meeting

2.1 The minutes of the 251<sup>st</sup> Commission meeting held on 28 November were agreed as an accurate record following a minor amendment.

**Action: Minutes of the 251<sup>st</sup> Commission meeting to be uploaded to the website.**

## 3. Legal update and Application for Assistance

3.1 The Director (Legal Services) provided an update on:

- Safe Access Zones: the Supreme Court has confirmed that the Bill is compatible with Human Rights.
- Housing Challenge: Due to funds, this challenge will be paused until the new financial year. An update will be provided to the March Commission meeting. Commissioners agreed to wait until the new financial year.
- SPUC: Hearing will be in January.
- NM (Access to MOD pension): Hearing will be in January.

3.2 Commissioners considered the RW (liberty under the Mental Capacity Act (NI) 2016) application for assistance. It was noted that the application did not meet all the criteria and therefore the Commission was not able to support the application.

3.3 The Director (Legal Services) briefed Commissioners on an oral application for assistance for funding that had been received from a solicitor in relation to a judicial review challenging the liberty of a Chinese national that has been directed to the Commission from the Legal Services Agency. Commissioners agreed not support the request at this stage but that it can be reconsidered under merit at a later stage.

**Action: The Director (Legal Services) will share the**

**Commissions previous position on being proposed as an alternative route for funding by the Legal Services Agency.**

#### **4. ECNI/NIHRC Draft Policy Recommendations in response to Divergence of Rights research**

4.1 The Director (Human Rights after EU Withdrawal) presented Commissioners with the draft recommendations for the ECNI/NIHRC Divergence of Rights Research.

4.2 Commissioners agreed with the draft recommendations.

#### **5. Chief Executive's Report**

5.1 The Chief Executive provided an update on the bid to the Commonwealth Forum. It is likely that a full update on the position will take place in the New Year.

#### **6. Independent Review of The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission**

6.1 Commissioners discussed the Independent Review of the Commission by received from the Lead Reviewer Simon Routh-Jones CBE. QFSM.

6.2 Commissioners agreed that there was work to be done off the back of the Review and would like to meet to discuss a way forward.

**Action: Executive Assistant to arrange a meeting for Commissioners.**

6.3 Commissioners noted the review, and accepted the recommendations held within.

The meeting closed at 1:15pm.