



NORTHERN  
IRELAND  
HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
COMMISSION

**AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF THE 7<sup>th</sup> MEETING  
HELD ON MONDAY 4 JUNE 2007 AT 10.30AM  
AT THE NORTHERN IRELAND HUMAN RIGHTS  
COMMISSION, TEMPLE COURT, 39 NORTH STREET,  
BELFAST, BT1 1NA**

**Present:** Bill Smith, Chairperson  
Christine Eames (by telephone)  
Alan Henry  
Kevin McLaughlin  
Eamonn O'Neill  
Geraldine Rice

**In attendance:** Don Leeson, Head of Corporate Services  
Lorraine Hamill, Administrative Officer (Finance)  
Peter O'Neill, Head of Information, Education and  
Development (for agenda items 1, 2 and 3)  
Paul Kennedy, Helm Corporation (for agenda item 3)

**1. Minutes of the last meeting (27 April 2007)**

1.1 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.

**2. Matters arising**

2.1 The recruitment process for the three new posts has been completed and the new staff will start with the Commission in June 2007 (paragraph 2.1 of the minutes of the last meeting refers).

2.2 A meeting with NIPSA to discuss the revised travel and expenses policy has been arranged for 7 June 2007 (paragraph 2.2 refers). The policy will be updated to include representation at international events (paragraph 6.2 of the minutes of the last meeting refers).

**Action: Head of Corporate Services**

- 2.3 The Head of Corporate Services will speak to the Chief Commissioner about appraisal arrangements for the Chairperson and a Commissioner who have not yet been appraised (paragraph 2.3 of the minutes of the last meeting refers).

**Action: Head of Corporate Services**

- 2.4 It was agreed at the Commission meeting on 14 May 2007 that the Moderating Panel to oversee the operation of the non-consolidated performance bonus scheme should comprise the Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Management Committee and Commissioners Tom Duncan and Geraldine Rice (paragraph 2.7 of the minutes of the last meeting refers). It was noted that there is an imbalance in the membership of the panel in respect of community background and, therefore, the Audit and Risk Management Committee agreed that Kevin McLaughlin should also be a member.

- 2.5 The Corporate Risk Register was approved at the Commission meeting on 14 May 2007 (paragraph 4.1 of the minutes of the last meeting refers). A progress report will be discussed at the next Audit and Risk Management Committee meeting.

**Action: Head of Corporate Services**

- 2.6 The need for two new members to be appointed to the Audit and Risk Management Committee was noted at the Commission meeting on 14 May 2007 (paragraph 4.5 of the minutes of the last meeting refers).

*Paul Kennedy joined the meeting at 10.55 am.*

### **3. Draft Annual Report and Accounts for 2006–07**

- 3.1 The Head of Information, Education and Development gave an overview of the Annual Report for 2006–07 and highlighted some of the major achievements of the year.
- 3.2 Discussion took place on the content of the Annual Report and it was agreed that any suggested changes should be forwarded to the Head of Corporate Services by 6 June 2007.

**Action: Committee Members**

*Peter O'Neill left the meeting.*

- 3.3 Paul Kennedy gave an overview of the Accounts for 2006–07.

- 3.4 The Audit and Risk Management Committee noted that there had been a change to the format of the accounts following Treasury guidelines in respect of grant-in-aid, which is no longer treated as income. This meant that the accounts might appear to the lay reader to show that the Commission's expenditure far exceeded its income. It was agreed that a statement would be included in the narrative to the accounts stating that the Commission was financially sound. This will be forwarded to the Chairperson for approval.

**Action: Head of Corporate Services**

- 3.5 The Annual Report and Accounts for 2006-07 was approved, subject to agreed changes, for submission to the Commission.

**Action: Head of Corporate Services**

- 3.6 The Head of Corporate Services and the Administrative Officer (Finance) were thanked for their work on the accounts.

*Paul Kennedy left the meeting*

#### **4. Expenses of the Chief Commissioner and Chief Executive**

- 4.1 The expenses of the Chief Commissioner and Chief Executive were reviewed and noted.

#### **5. Any other business**

- 5.1 The Audit and Risk Management Committee noted that there have been two requests from staff seeking flexible working patterns, one for a compressed working week and another for term time working. While the Commission seeks to promote good practice in respect of its human resource management, the size of the organisation might find it difficult to sustain such working arrangements. Therefore, the Head of Corporate Services will seek to treat these two requests as trials and evaluate the impact on both the individuals concerned and the Commission.

- 5.2 The Commission's family friendly policy will be updated in due course to reflect new legislation in respect of flexible working patterns.

**Action: Head of Corporate Services**

## **6. Date of next meeting**

6.1 The Administrative Officer (Finance) will contact members to check availability for a meeting during the week commencing 25 June 2007. [Note: it was decided subsequently to hold the meeting on Thursday 28 June at 2.30pm.]

**Action: Administrative Officer (Finance)**

7.1 Agenda items for the meeting will be the risk register, internal audit plan for 2007–08, review of register of interests and the draft management statement and financial memorandum.