



27 May 2025

277th COMMISSION MEETING

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

Present: Alyson Kilpatrick
Helen Henderson (online)
Mairead Holder
David Lavery
Stephen White

In attendance: David Russell, Chief Executive
Rhyannon Blythe (Director, Legal Services)
Colin Caughey, Director (Advice to Government,
Research, Investigations, and International Treaties)
Lorraine Hamill, Director (Finance, Personnel and
Corporate Services) (Agenda Items 1-6)
Claire Martin, Director (Engagement and
Communications)
Jhoanna Sto Domingo (Personal Secretary to the Chief
Commissioner)
Darren Veighey (Administrative Officer)
Htaik Win (Solicitor – Legal and Research Officer)
(Agenda Item 7)
Hannah Russell (Senior Policy & Research Officer)
(Agenda Item 8)
Emma Osborne (Policy & Research Officer) (Agenda
Item 8)

Apologies: Jonathan Kearney

1. Apologies and Declarations of Interest

- 1.1 There was one apology from Commissioner Jonathan Kearney.
- 1.2 There were no declarations of interest.

2. Draft minutes of the 276th Commission meeting and matters arising.

- 2.1 The minutes of the 276th Commission meeting were agreed.
Action: Minutes of the 276th Commission meeting to be uploaded to the website.

3. Chief Commissioner's Report

- 3.1 The Chief Commissioner's Report was noted for the record.
- 3.2 The Chief Commissioner report detailed events, meetings and conferences attended since the last meeting.

4. Commissioner's Reports

- 4.1 Commissioner Lavery said that on 13 May the Law Society had held an event at Stormont to publicise the new European Convention on the Protection of the Profession of Lawyer. The event, which was attended by the Lady Chief Justice, the Attorney-General and the Justice Minister, also promoted the Law Society's 'Pledge to Uphold the Rule of Law'.
- 4.2 Commissioner White was congratulated for receiving The Good Samaritan Award (World Police Summit 2025) as Chairman of the Royal Ulster Constabulary GC Foundation.

5. Report from Chief Executive

- 5.1 The Chief Executive reported that along with the Chief Commissioner he had attended a meeting with the Permanent Secretary for the Northern Ireland Office.
- 5.2 This meeting had been arranged with a view to advancing talks in relation to proposed funding for the Commission. More details were expected to be available on 11 June 2025 when the outcome of the UK Government spending review is announced. It was noted that HM Treasury had agreed in

principle to some additional funding to meet the Northern Ireland Civil Service pay award, however, the release of the funds was to be confirmed.

Notwithstanding, the Chief Commissioner noted that the Commission's Business Plan should be signed off at the next Commission meeting without further delay.

Action: Commission's Business Plan 2025-26 to be signed off at the 30 June 2025 Commission meeting.

6. Finance report from Director of Finance, Personnel and Corporate Services.

- 6.1 The Director presented an overview of the finance reports for Core and the Dedicated Mechanism to date for the current financial year.
- 6.2 It was also noted that there had been an underspend in salaries due to two vacant posts in Dedicated Mechanism. The intention is to address this moving forward, following the outcome of the UK Government Spending Review and anticipated response to the two Independent Reviews.
- 6.3 It was reported that the Senior Finance, Personnel and Corporate Affairs Officer was finalising the Annual Report and Accounts for 2024-25, with the audit due to commence this week.

7. Application for Assistance – J123 ECtHR

- 7.1 The Solicitor (Legal and Research Officer) updated the meeting on proceedings at the UK Supreme Court and a potential application to the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR).
- 7.2 Commissioners considered the merits and decided not to pursue the case any further.

8. Online Mis and Disinformation Briefing Paper

- 8.1 The Policy and Research Officer and Senior Policy and Research Officer presented a briefing paper entitled 'Racial and Ethnic Minority Rights and Online Misinformation and Disinformation'.

- 8.2 Commissioners approved the briefing paper and thanked a recent staff intern who worked on the project. It was agreed that the report would be published on the Commission's website including the recommendations. The paper should also be sent for information to the Executive Office.

Action: Online Mis and Disinformation Briefing Paper to be uploaded to the Commission's website and share with the Executive Office.

9. Any other business

- 9.1 Commissioners were advised that Htaik Win would be leaving the Commission in July 2025 to commence work with the NI Assembly. Commissioners thanked Htaik for her high quality work and wished her the very best in her new role.

10. Date of next meeting

- 10.1 The next meeting was arranged for Monday 30 June 2025 at 10am.

End of meeting 12:05pm