



NORTHERN
I R E L A N D
HUMAN
RIGHTS
COMMISSION

**166th COMMISSION MEETING ON FRIDAY 19 DECEMBER
2014 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 (Chair)
Alan McBride
Marion Reynolds
Christine Collins
Milton Kerr
Grainia Long
Paul Yam

Present: Virginia McVea, Director
David Russell, Deputy Director
Claire Martin, Communications Worker

**Present for part
of meeting:** Rebecca Magee, Personal Assistant
Lorraine Hamill, Finance & Personnel Manager
Rhyannon Blythe, Assistant Caseworker

Apologies: Les Allamby (Chief Commissioner)
In the absence of the Chief Commissioner,
Commissioner Corey acted as Chair for the
meeting.

1. Minutes of the 165th Commission meeting

- 1.1 The minutes of the 165th Commission meeting were agreed subject to the following amendment:
 - 1.1 The minutes of the 164th Commission meeting were agreed following amendments and subject to finalisation of the wording of 8.5 of the minutes of the 163rd Commission meeting.

2. Matters arising

- 2.1 Commissioners discussed the Annual Statement launch and the Carers Report launch. Commissioners passed on their appreciation to staff for the success of both events. (Item refers to 6.1 and 10.1 of the previous minutes)
- 2.2 Commissioners noted the letter from HMRC and the issues and concerns around the budget. (Item refers to 2.2 of previous minutes)
- 2.3 Minutes of the previous meetings:
 - 2.3.1 The minutes of the 164th Commission meeting were agreed.
 - 2.3.2 The minutes of the 163rd Commission meetings were agreed following the inclusion of:
 - 8.5 Following the discussion, Commissioner Marion Reynolds dissented to the adoption of the first chapter expressing concerns on retrospective application.
 - 8.6 Commissioner Collins dissented to the adoption of the first chapter expressing concerns of applicability on UN Standards of DDR and on its retrospective application.

3. Chief Commissioner Report

- 3.1 In the absence of the Chief Commissioner, Commissioners noted the report and discussed the upcoming session with Rosslyn Noonan.

Action: Agenda for sessions with Rosslyn Noonan to

**be emailed to
Commissioners.**

4. Commissioner's Report

4.1 Nothing to report.

5. Quarterly Report against the Business Plan

5.1 Commissioners discussed with the Director the Quarterly Report against the Business Plan with particular focus on the Human Rights Inquiry and any financial implications for the timings of this piece of work after the Human Rights Inquiry. Commissioners also discussed the work around Poverty.

6. Statutory Functions Report

6.1 Commissioners noted the Statutory Functions Report.

6.2 Commissioners were updated on Legal Functions. This included an update on the availability of termination of Pregnancy in Northern Ireland in cases of rape and incest and where there is a serious foetal malformation.

6.3 Commissioners accepted the letter to accompany the joint work entitled 'Policing hate crime: the Kosovo and New South Wales experience: A study note by the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission'.

6.4 Commissioners discussed the community engagements.

6.5 Commissioners were updated on the Finance report.

6.6 Commissioners were updated on the Information Service.

6.7 Commissioners were updated on the Risk Register dashboard.

7. Update on Human Rights Inquiry and Introduction and Quality Chapters

7.1 Commissioners were updated on the progress of the Introduction and Quality Chapters of the Human Rights Inquiry.

- 7.2 Commissioners discussed the timeline for the chapters. Commissioners were to email comments on the draft chapters provided to the Deputy Director.

Action: Comments to be emailed.

8. Update on Mental Capacity Bill

- 8.1 Commissioners were updated on Guardianship within the Mental Capacity Bill.

9. Legal Briefing paper – Assistance for Victims & Survivors and Review of Decision

- 9.1 Commissioners were briefed on the assistance for Victims & Survivors paper.
- 9.2 Commissioners discussed a related request for assistance.
- 9.3 Commissioners agreed not to raise individual cases with the Victims and Survivors Service but raise general concerns.
- 9.4 Commissioners were briefed on the Review of Decision (HRC166.5).
- 9.5 Commissioners agreed to take no action.

10. Business Plan 2015-16

- 10.1 Commissioners were updated on the process for the new Business Plan, this included two meetings so far that had been held with staff.
- 10.2 Commissioners discussed the budget implications in relation to business planning.

11. Update to Committee of Ministers on 'Package of Transitional Justice measure'

11. Commissioners agreed that in the absence of the Chief Commissioner this letter will take account of Stormont House agreement and will be sent to Commissioners for agreement before it is sent.

12. Update in relation to Business Plan Pillar two: Action 1 on producing a research paper analysing human rights standards and issues of public policy related to conflict

12.1 Commissioners were updated on the progress in relation to the second chapter.

Action: Second chapter to come to January/February Commission meeting

13. Bill of Rights

13.1 Commissioner John Corey updated on his recent informal contacts with three political parties and discussions were awaited with two other parties.

14. Any other Business

14.1 A letter from the Equality Can't Wait Group to the Secretary of State regarding the 'Equality Can't Wait' housing campaign was shared with Commissioners.