



**11 April 2022**

## **SPECIAL 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  
Eddie Rooney  
Stephen White

**In attendance:** David Russell, Chief Executive  
Rebecca Magee, Executive Assistant (to Chief Commissioner and Chief Executive)  
Rhyannon Blythe, Director (Legal, Research and Investigations, and Advice to Government)  
Éilis Haughey, Director (Human Rights after EU Withdrawal)  
Laura Banks, Solicitor (agenda item 9)

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

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Commissioner David A Lavery CB.
- 1.2 There were no declarations of interest.

### **2. Legal discussion on issuing an intervention to the Court of Appeal application brought by SPUC**

## **Pro-life in relation to the Abortion Regulations (NI) 2021 and Direction**

- 2.1 Commissioners were briefed on the background to the case by the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children (SPUC) Pro-life Limited in relation to the Abortion Regulations (NI) 2021. SPUC lost their legal challenge on all grounds in the judgment issued on 8 February 2022 with a notice of appeal was received from SPUC's legal representatives on 16 March 2022. Commissioners were asked to consider a further intervention to the Court of Appeal application brought by SPUC.
- 2.2 Commissioners discussed an intervention to the Court of Appeal and agreed to a further written and oral submission in the case.
- 2.3 Commissioners agreed that Junior Counsel would be retained with an oversight role from Senior Counsel at a cost of £11k (+VAT).
- 2.3 Commissioner Jonathan Kearney recorded his abstention from the decision.