



**190th COMMISSION MEETING
MONDAY 27 March 2017 AT 10:00 am
IN THE OFFICE OF
THE NORTHERN IRELAND HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION,
TEMPLE COURT, 39 NORTH STREET, BELFAST, BT1 1NA**

Present: Les Allamby, Chief Commissioner
John Corey
Milton Kerr
Grainia Long from
Alan McBride
Paul Yam

Apologies: Christine Collins
Marion Reynolds

In Attendance: David Russell, Acting Director
Lorraine Hamill, Finance & Administration Manager
(Agenda items 1-9)
Colin Caughey, Policy Worker
Rebecca Magee, Personal Assistant (Agenda Items
10-15)
Sara Donnelly, Legal Assistant (Agenda Items 10-
12)
Zara Porter, Digital Communications Assistant
(Agenda Item 14)

1.0 Declarations of interest

1.1 There were no conflicts of interest.

2.0 Draft minutes (HRC190.1)

- 2.1 The draft minutes of the closed meeting held on 23 January 2017 were agreed.
- 2.2 The draft minutes of the special Commission meeting held on 6 February 2017 were agreed subject to amendment.
- 2.3 The draft minutes of the 189th Commission meeting held on 27 February 2017 were agreed subject to amendments.

Action: Minutes of the 189th Commission meeting to be uploaded to Commission website.

- 2.4 The draft minutes of the closed meeting held on 27 February 2017 were agreed.

3.0 Matters arising

- 3.1 The Chief Commissioner reported that there had been no further progress with the joint Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) and NIHRC interview with the Irish Times. The Commission was still keen to be involved and would wait to hear from the IHREC (paragraph 3.1 of the minutes of the previous meeting refers).
- 3.2 Commissioner Corey updated Commissioners on progress with the Governance Review.
- 3.3 It was agreed that Commissioners should meet to discuss an induction process for new Commissioners. The Chief Commissioner will progress this and come back to Commissioners with suggested dates (paragraph 6.1 of the minutes of the previous meeting refers).

Action: Chief Commissioner to suggest dates for meeting with Commissioners to discuss induction process for new Commissioners

- 3.4 It was noted that progress with the overview chapter on the investigation into Travellers' Accommodation was on track and would be available for comment and approval at the April 2017 Commission meeting (paragraph 11.4 of the minutes of the previous meeting refers).

Action: Overview chapter of Travellers' Accommodation to be presented at the April 2017 Commission meeting.

4.0 Chief Commissioner's Report (HRC190.2)

4.1 The Chief Commissioner reported on meetings and events he had attended since the last meeting. These included:

- Global Alliance of NHRIs (GANHRI) in Geneva including chairing the Commonwealth Forum, speaking at protecting and preserving NHR independence session during conflict prevention and reestablishment of peaceful societies, reception/launch of Commonwealth Forum UPR Guide and NHR films and meeting with OHCHR and CEDAW Committee Secretariat
- Meeting with Woodlands Director, Education Authority and Department of Justice to discuss new education and training arrangements
- Business and Human Rights Forum

4.2 It was noted that the follow up initiative to the healthcare inquiry 'Shaping the Future Together' with the Northern Health and Social Care Trust did not take place and is being rescheduled for May 2017.

4.3 The Chief Commissioner reported that he and the Acting Director would be attending the Roundtable on Faith, Human Rights and Equality on 3 April 2017. Any Commissioners wishing to attend were to let the Chief Commissioner know as soon as possible. Commissioner Yam confirmed he wishes to attend.

Action: Commissioners to confirm if they wish to attend the Roundtable on Faith, Human Rights and Equality

5.0 *The open meeting closed at 11.00am to discuss the recruitment of the Chief Executive, recruitment of new Commissioners and the Governance Review.*

Colin Caughey, Policy Worker left the meeting. The open meeting resumed at 11.35am. Colin Caughey rejoined the meeting.

6.0 Commissioners' Reports

- 6.1 Commissioner Kerr reported on the recent meeting with the Pat Finucane Centre. It was agreed that the Commission would meet with the Centre once a year.
- 6.2 Commissioner McBride reported on the meeting held at Shankill Women's Centre as part of International Women's Day.
- 6.3 Commissioner McBride confirmed that he had attended the Alliance Party Conference and that the Digital Communications Assistant had represented the Commission.

7.0 Acting Director's Report (HRC190.3)

- 7.1 The Acting Director updated the Commission on the following:
 - Update on the Business Plan for 2017/18
 - Joint Secretariat with IHREC
 - GANHRI, Human Rights Council and Commonwealth Forum of NHRIs
 - Commonwealth Games
 - Staffing
 - Information Security
 - Data Retention

- 7.2 It was agreed that the Acting Director would draft an interim report on staffing for initial discussion at the April Commission meeting

Action: Acting Director to draft interim report on staffing for the April Commission meeting

- 7.3 It was agreed that the Commission would amend its Data Retention Policy in line with the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) from 1 April 2017. The Information Asset Register will be updated to reflect the change.

Action: Data Retention Policy and Information Asset Register to be amended and updated from 1 April 2017.

8.0 Finance Report (HRC190.4)

- 8.1 The Finance and Administration Manager presented the finance report for February 2017 and confirmed that the

final request for Grant-in-Aid had been made and that the Commission had drawn down its full Grant-in-Aid from the Northern Ireland Office (NIO) for the year.

- 8.2 It was noted that the receipt for invoices to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) were still outstanding and that they would be detailed as debtors in the Commission's Annual Report and Accounts for 2016/17. It was also noted that funding from Nuffield was due, and if not received by the end of the financial year, would be detailed as accrued income in the Commission's annual accounts.
- 8.3 In response to a query raised by Commissioner Long at an earlier meeting, the Finance and Administration Manager confirmed that the legal costs in relation to the Termination of Pregnancy would be shown as a provision in the Commission's annual accounts (paragraph 6.2 of the minutes of the previous meeting refers).
- 8.4 The Finance and Administration Manager went through the finance report providing further information on variances.

9.0 Quarterly Report against the Business Plan (HRC190.5)

- 9.1 The Acting Director presented the final Quarterly Report against the Business Plan for 2016/17.
- 9.2 It was noted that Pillar 1 (c) – the partnership project on developing an operational human rights based approach to emergency health care with the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust had been delayed. A watching brief will be maintained but it was hoped that the work would be completed by the end of May 2017.
- 9.3 The Chief Commissioner reported that he and the Acting Director had met with the Ombudsman regarding scoping the potential for a broader educational programme (Pillar 1 (g) (iii)).
- 9.4 The Chief Commissioner had written to political parties with regard to the scoping paper on the referendum (Pillar 1 (h)). It was agreed that a copy of the letter would be circulated to Commissioners.

Action: Letter sent to political parties to be circulated to Commissioners

- 9.5 It was noted that ongoing changes in welfare reform provision had delayed the research paper on the impact of welfare reforms on families with children and young people (Pillar 3 (e)). It was agreed that a watching brief would be maintained.
- 9.6 Staff were congratulated for an excellent year's work in meeting the Business Plan targets.

10.0 Legal Report (HRC190.6)

- 10.1 Commissioners were given an update on the Termination of Pregnancy case.
- 10.2 Commissioners agreed to proceed to instruct Counsel to continue with the matters already proceeding to the Supreme Court and to signal the potential for the entire case to go to the Supreme Court. The Chief Commissioner was to discuss costs going forward.

Action: Commission to write to Counsel.

11.0 Legal Application for Assistance (HRC190.6)

- 11.1 Commissioners discussed the Legal Application for Assistance and agreed that assistance would not be granted based on there being no human rights argument in the application based on the information supplied.

Action: Legal team to write to client confirming the Commissioners decision.

12.0 JR 76 (HRC190.7)

- 12.1 Commissioners were provided with an update on JR 76.
- 12.2 Commissioners discussed the intervention options in detail and agreed to make a third party written intervention.

Action: Intervention papers to be circulated to Commissioners for information after submission.

13.0 Annual Statement Chapter (HRC190.8)

13.1 Commissioners were updated on the Article 2 Right to Life statement chapter.

13.2 Commissioners agreed with the position updates.

Action: two updates to be provided at April meeting.

14.0 Communications Report (HRC190.9)

14.1 Commissioners noted the Communications Report.

14.2 Commissioners were updated on the events listed within the report and on the increasing number of social media interactions.

14.3 Commissioners discussed the Annual Statement launch and were asked to highlight any potential speakers with the Chief Commissioner or Chief Executive.

Action: Speaker suggestions to be shared.

14.4 The Chief Commissioner spoke on two articles he has published in the Writ and the Legal Action Bulletin.

Action: Articles to be circulated to Commissioners.

15.0 Any other Business

15.1 There was no further Business.

The meeting closed at 14:30