



NORTHERN
IRELAND
HUMAN
RIGHTS
COMMISSION

**176th COMMISSION MEETING ON MONDAY 30 NOVEMBER
2015 AT 1pm IN THE OFFICE OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION, TEMPLE COURT, 39 NORTH
STREET, BELFAST, BT1 1NA**

In attendance: Les Allamby, Chief Commissioner (chair until
3:15pm)
Marion Reynolds
Grainia Long
Paul Yam
Christine Collins
John Corey (chair from 3:15pm to 4:35pm)
Milton Kerr
Alan McBride

Present: Virginia McVea, Director
David Russell, Deputy Director
Rebecca Magee, Personal Assistant

Apologies: None

1. Minutes of the 175th Commission meeting

1.1 The minutes of the 175th Commission meeting were approved following minor amendments.

2. Matters arising

2.1 Details of the Business and Human Rights festival event were forwarded to Commissioners (item 2.1 of previous minutes refers).

- 2.2 A meeting with DHSSPS regarding the Alternative Care and Children report is being arranged, dates are currently being finalised. Commissioner Reynolds wishes to attend the meeting (item 4.1 of previous minutes refers).
- 2.3 A meeting with the insurance broker re: insurance payment for the Commission is ongoing (item 5.4 of previous minutes refers).
- 2.4 Information Service graphs have been updated to include more detail (item 5.5 of previous minutes refers).
- 2.5 The wording in the Human Resource Management Statistics report has been changed re: baseline and number of staff in post (item 5.7 of previous minutes refers).
- 2.6 A meeting with staff regarding strategic planning is ongoing and will take place at the beginning of December (item 8.3 of previous minutes refers).
- 2.7 Meetings with the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission and the Equality Commission for NI are ongoing (items 11.1 and 11.2 of previous minutes refers).
- 2.8 The Chief Commissioner is to talk to the Chief Commissioner of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission at an upcoming meeting regarding the issue of cross-border fuel laundering. This issue of joint work with the IHREC is to be discussed at strategic planning (item 12.2 of previous minutes refers).

3. Chief Commissioner Report

- 3.1 Commissioner's noted the Chief Commissioners report on meetings and events he has attended since the last meeting. These included:
 - Meeting with European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance
 - Meeting with NSPCC re: Female Genital Mutilation in NI
 - Meeting with David Ford MLA, Minister for Justice

- Speech at civic reception for World Deafness Federation
 - Presentation to Stronger Together Human Trafficking event
 - Evidence to the NI Assembly Justice Committee on Justice No2 Bill
 - Meeting with Pablo de Grieff, UN Special Rapporteur on Transitional Justice
 - Delivered lecture on the role of NHRIs and the work of the Commission to International Human Rights Law LLM students at Edinburgh University
 - Attended DUP annual conference
 - Chaired Commonwealth Forum of NHRIs conference in Malta
 - Meeting with Include Youth and Children's Law Centre
- 3.2 There was an update on the outcome of the termination court case and a brief discussion. A written submission on the issue of what relief can be provided by the court is to be provided by December 9th and a date for an oral hearing on the matter arranged for December 16th.
- 3.3 Commissioners passed on their congratulations to all staff involved in the case.

4. Commissioner Report

- 4.1 Commissioner Paul Yam shared a document on numbers of hate crimes that have been reported (item 5.1 of the 173rd Commission minutes refers).
- 4.2 Commissioner Yam reported on the roundtable he attended at the Commission on Hate crimes, human rights and the criminal justice system.
- 4.3 Commissioner Reynolds reported a meeting she attended at Queens University on Convocation of 19th November. The Attorney General was reflecting on an opinion of the Luxembourg Court and comparing the processes in this court with the Strasbourg Court.
- 4.4 Commissioner Alan McBride reported on his engagement with a group of young people from Sandy Row called 'Bytes Youth' around the importance of human rights. This was in a personal capacity.

- 4.5 Commissioner John Corey reported on his continued engagement with political parties around a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland.

5. Statutory Functions

- 5.1 Commissioners noted the Statutory Functions report.

- 5.2 Commissioners discussed the legal functions report.

Action: References within the legal functions report to be changed to reflect staffing and watching briefs.

- 5.3 Commissioners discussed the policy functions report. This included updates on the ongoing policy responses and updates on upcoming consultations.

- 5.4 Commissioners discussed the information service graphs. Commissioners noted the comparison with last year.

- 5.5 Commissioner discussed the finance report including an update on the budget for 2016-20.

6. Annual Statement

- 6.1 Commissioners were updated on the Annual Statement report. It was agreed that the report would be discussed by section. A number of amendments were agreed.

- 6.2 The Annual Statement was agreed by Commissioners and staff were thanked for the considerable work that had gone in to producing the statement.

Action: Amendments to be made and statement to be published.

7. Strategic Plan update and survey

- 7.1 Commissioners were updated on the current strategic planning process.
- 7.2 Commissioners were briefed on the recent surveys that were shared on social media asking stakeholders five key area questions.
- 7.3 Commissioners were updated on the meetings planned for staff and Commissioners.

Action: Dates to be finalised.

8. Stillbirth Cases

- 8.1 Commissioners were updated on the issue of stillbirths and autopsies. It was agreed that a paper would be brought to the Commission meeting in December.

Action: Paper to be on December agenda.

9. Commonwealth Forum of NHRI update

- 9.1 Commissioners were updated on the recent Commonwealth Forum of NHRIs event that took place in Malta from 23-25 November 2015. Two declarations were made at the conference, the first on climate justice and the second an outcomes declaration.
- 9.2 The chair of the Commonwealth Forum was formally handed over to the Commission.
- 9.3 Commissioners commended the work of the Commission staff on preparing for the Commonwealth chair role.
- 9.4 Commissioners agreed that the Kigali Declaration on child, early and forced marriage should be on the agenda for an upcoming Commission meeting.

Action: Kigali Declaration on December or January agenda.

10. BHSCT Training update

- 10.1 Commissioners were updated on the recent training with the BHSCT which had gone very well.
- 10.2 Commissioners were updated on the upcoming secondment from the BHSCT to work on a human rights based approach to service delivery within an emergency department, one of the outcomes of the recent human rights inquiry.

11. Launch of the Interactive Human Rights Guide

- 11.1 Commissioners considered the note from the Head of NICS regarding the training, its availability on the NICS website and noted the training sessions are continuing.