

Present:

Ian Duddy (Chair, ID)

Claire Methven O'Brien (CMO, items 1-6 only)

Jim Farish (JF)

In Attendance:

Lauren Bruce (LB) (Project Worker: Policy and International, Minute Secretary)

Andrew Munro (AM) (Interim Chief Operating Officer, Items 3-5 only)

Eilidh Dickson (ELD) (Policy and International Officer, ELD, Item 6 only)

Apologies:

Shelley Gray (SG)

List of Acronyms:

AAB: Audit Advisory Board

ARC: Audit and Risk Committee

FRAC: Finance Risk and Audit Committee

ICESCR: International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

NHRI: National Human Rights Institution

1. Welcome / Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 Nov 2022 were discussed. Amendments were suggested by CMO and subsequently circulated to other Commissioners for comment.

3. Events Calendar

- 3.1. The Forward Look Calendar was reviewed. Key forthcoming commitments were highlighted, including the evidence session with the Equalities, Human Rights and Civil Justice Committee at the Scottish Parliament on 6 December and the Communications and Engagement plan for International Human Rights day.
- 3.2. It was confirmed that planning for the Commissioner/staff away day on 8 Feb 2023 was underway.
- 3.3. A question arose in relation to next steps following on from the Universal Periodic Review. It was agreed that a discussion would be tabled for the Jan 2023 meeting. ELD will provide an oral update at that meeting.

4. Audit and Risk- terms of reference

- 4.1. AM presented a paper on a proposal to create a single **Audit and Risk Committee** (ARC) to replace the existing Finance, Risk and Audit Committee (FRAC) and the Advisory Audit Board (AAB). This follows on from a recommendation from the 2021 external Governance Review. Proposed Terms of Reference for the ARC were presented.
- 4.2. The Commission was in support of this proposal. It was agreed that the group should have two independent members, one of whom would act as Chair of the Committee.

4.3. The Commission agreed that the group should meet quarterly to begin with, but the frequency reviewed after two cycles to assess workload. The first meeting will take place virtually on 16 December 2022.

4.4. The proposed Terms of Reference were discussed and it was agreed that they should be reviewed and formally signed off at the first meeting. It was agreed that the minutes of ARC should be published and this should be reflected in the Terms of Reference.

5. Sitrep on current SHRC Finances

5.1. AM presented a Financial Overview paper for 2022/23. It was noted that contingency funding would be required, a bid for which would be submitted in the new year.

5.2. It was noted that our budget bid for the financial year 2023/24 had already been submitted. The bid seeks to make two fixed term staffing positions permanent. It is anticipated that the Parliament's Finance Committee will review the bid in their January 2023 meeting and report in February.

5.3. It was noted that SHRC is currently undergoing an external Audit Process, which is nearing completion.

6. Draft report to ICESCR Committee

6.1. ELD joined the meeting and introduced a draft report to be submitted to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in advance of the List of Issues session for the UK, taking place in March 2023. The structure of the report and the evidence on which it was based was explained.

6.2. The report will be submitted before Christmas and UK NHRIs will then be invited to give oral evidence to the Committee in March 2023. ELD invited Commissioners to provide written

comments on the draft report by 9 Dec and a final version will be sent to Commissioners for sign off by email on 15 December.

- 6.3. It was agreed that it would be helpful to produce an Executive Summary of the submission, drawing out key themes.

7. AOB

- 7.1. ID said he was planning to issue a statement on Gender Recognition this week, in line with our previously agreed strategic position.
- 7.2. The next Commission meeting is tabled for 9 January 2023 and an agenda will be circulated in advance.