

Present:

Ian Duddy (Chair, ID)

Claire Methven O'Brien (CMO)

Jim Farish (JF)

Shelley Gray (SG)

In Attendance:

Tiia Kontro (TK, Business Support:
Reception Resources and PA, Minute
Secretary)

David Lees (DL, Head of Secretariat and
Business Support)

Jan Savage (JS, Executive Director)

Andrew Munro (AM, Interim Chief Operating
Officer)

Elizabeth Dawson (ED, Head of
Communications and Engagement, item 4
only)

Eilidh Dickson (ELD, Policy and International
Officer, Item 5 only)

Apologies:

No apologies

List of Acronyms:

ICESCR: International Covenant on
Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

LELG: Lived Experience Leadership Group

NHRI: National Human Rights Institution

SPCB: Scottish Parliament Corporate Body

UPR: Universal Periodic Review

1. Welcome / Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

- 1.1. The Chair welcomed the new Executive Director and Head of Commission Secretariat and Business Support who commenced their roles on 4 and 9 January respectively.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

- 2.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2022 were discussed and approved with minor changes.
- 2.2. The minutes of the meeting held on 7 Nov 2022 were approved with no further amendments.
- 2.3. Approved draft minutes will be circulated to Commissioners no later than 7 days following the Commission meeting and will be formally adopted at the next monthly meeting.

3. Events Calendar

- 3.1. The Forward Look Calendar was reviewed. Key forthcoming commitments were highlighted, including the potential visit of a member of the ICESCR Committee in Scotland and SNAP launch in March 2023.
- 3.2. Initial planning discussions are being held in relation to a potential information sharing and engagement visit for SHRC to the NHRI in the Netherlands, subject to budget availability.
- 3.3. The Commission discussed the formatting of the events calendar and agreed that it would be amended to separate (a) work the Commission is leading and (b) events and work that the Commission is attending as a guest. Further narrative should also include reflection on the outcome, impact and resource commitments for the Commission.

4. Communications Strategy

The ED joined the meeting to present the draft Communications Strategy.

- 4.1. ED introduced the draft Communications Strategy for the upcoming financial year.
- 4.2. It was noted that previously a Communications Strategy would have been drafted for 4 years to run alongside the Commission's Strategic Plan. It was noted that due to substantial changes the Commission has gone through in the past year, an interim 1-year strategy would give the Communications team the opportunity to prioritise activity in key areas.
- 4.3. ED talked to the suggested key thematic pillars of the draft Communications Strategy and noted that the plan has been drafted in close collaboration with the Commission's Media and Communications Officer. The Commission discussed the ways in which Comms work should be embedded in policy development work from the outset.
- 4.4. It was noted that part of the proposed strategy would be to develop a digital strategy in the future and develop the Commission's online presence in a more user friendly and accessible format that supports a broader audience. The Commission discussed how this can be linked to the participation work.
- 4.5. The Commission discussed the need for an evaluation framework in order to not only measure impact effectively, but also to efficiently align forward facing goals with the Commission resources.
- 4.6. The Commission approved the draft Communications Strategy for the upcoming year as a framework from which to devise a 12-month operational plan.

Action: ED will now develop an operational plan.

5. Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and Child Rights Committee Report

The ELD joined the meeting to present an update on the UPR reporting process.

- 5.1. ELD provided an update on the UPR reporting process and the work carried out by the Commission regarding UPR to date, as well as a look ahead to forthcoming engagement opportunities.
- 5.2. Extensive discussion took place on the role and mandate of the Commission within the UK context of devolved and reserved matters between the Scottish and UK governments, and across the UK-wide NHRI network.
- 5.3. The Commission discussed the different ways it can make sure maximum impact is achieved in both Scottish and UK context. It was noted that work has been carried out to build and maintain relationships with stakeholders in both Scotland and international contexts (e.g. representatives from Embassies and consulates).
- 5.4. The Commission agreed that collaborative work with other NHRIs and the UK Ministry of Justice will continue. It was noted that the Commission's resources for international work were more limited than other NHRIs in the UK, so we would need to prioritise.

Action: Summary brief to be completed on the Commission mandate and devolved versus reserved powers, and our relationship with other UK NHRIs.

6. Governance Review

The Commission discussed the proposed Governance Review and the draft Terms of Reference (ToR). The following points were noted.

- 6.1. The Commission agreed that a Governance Review was necessary and should be completed.
- 6.2. It was noted that the Audit and Risk Committee agreed in its previous meeting to include root cause analysis on the large staff and Commissioner turnover as part of the Governance Review. This decision was made based on the recommendation from the external auditors.
- 6.3. A discussion on acknowledging the learnings from the previous Governance Review from 2021. The Commission noted that it did not wish to duplicate that review and agreed it was imperative to make sure the TORs were carefully considered to ensure the Governance Review was as effective as possible.
- 6.4. It was noted that SPCB has acknowledged the value in the Commission completing a new Governance Review and has agreed to support the Commission in the process, including with necessary funds.
- 6.5. It was agreed that further review and input to the draft tender specification document will be required from Commissioners to ensure the necessary and specific skillset and expertise to complete the review is achieved. This should include clear reference to the Paris Principles. A Commissioner commented that other international NHRIs have sent provided suggestions for suitable candidates who might help. The Chair suggested that the SPCB might also be able to suggest candidates who had carried out reviews of other public bodies in Scotland.
- 6.6. It was noted that any review was unlikely to be completed before the end of the current financial year. This would have budgetary implications. It was agreed that an extended timeline would be acceptable to Commissioners, and we should request additional funds from the SPCB to support a review.

Action: the draft TORs for the Governance Review will be circulated by the Chair to Commission members, with a view to agreeing them at the February Commission meeting.

Action: the Chair will discuss with the SPCB the need for a budget uplift for the review.

7. Audit and Risk Committee (ARC)

The inaugural Audit and Risk Committee meeting took place 16 December 2022. The ARC Committee has now replaced two previous sub committees of the SHRC – (i) the Financial, Risk and Audit Committee and (ii) the Annual Audit Board.

7.1. The Committee appointed David Watt as the Independent Committee Chair.

7.2. The Committee also agreed on the membership of the ARC and approved the Committee TORs.

Action: AM will circulate minutes from the ARC meeting to the Commission. This will become standard process thereafter.

8. AOB

8.1. JF updated the Commission on his recent meeting with the NPM Scottish Subgroup. JF will take over as the Chair of the Scottish subgroup.

8.2. AM raised the subject of Commission Banking Mandate. The Commission agreed to add ID, DL and JS as official signatories for the Commission's Banking Mandate.

Action: ID, DL and JS to be added as official signatories for the Commission's Banking Mandate.

8.3. ID noted that the report from the LELG review will be circulated with the Commission for discussion at the February Commission meeting.

Action: ID to circulate the report form the LELG review with the Commission.

8.4. The next Commission meeting is tabled for 6 February 2023, agenda will be circulated in advance. All papers requested for the meeting should be submitted by close of business on Thursday 26 January to allow time for circulation in advance.

9. Meeting closed.