

Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: 7 July 2025

Time: 10.00 - 16.30

Present:	Angela O'Hagan (Chair) AOH Shelley Gray (Member of the Commission) SG
In Attendance:	Jan Savage (Executive Director) JS David Lees (Head of Secretariat and Business Support) DL Jennifer Cannon (Head of Legal and Policy) JC, items only Rosie McIntosh (Head of Communications and Engagement) RM, items only Oonagh Brown (Policy and Participation Officer) OB, items only Tiia Kontro (Minute Secretary) TK
Apologies:	Claire Methven O'Brien (Member of the Commission) COB
List of Acronyms:	ARC: Audit and Risk Committee

EHRC: Equality and Human Rights Commission

GANHRI: Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions

MoU: Memorandum of Understanding

NHRI: National Human Rights Institution

NPM: National Preventative Mechanism

PCS: Public and Commercial Services Union

SLT: Senior Leadership Team

SPCB: Scottish Parliament Corporate Body

SPSO: Scottish Public Services Ombudsman

UNCRC: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

1. Welcome / Declarations of Interest

- 1.1. JS declared her position as a trustee at the Scottish Commission for Learning Disabilities and noted as a Transparency Statement.

2. Minutes of Previous Meeting

- 2.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 28 April 2025 were approved with no amendments.

3. Matters Arising

- 3.1. The matters arising report was discussed and the following points noted.
- 3.2. The overview of NPM meeting will be rescheduled following recruitment of the new Members of the Commission and re-entered on the actions log.
- 3.3. A meeting with the Minister for Social Care and Mental Wellbeing is being rescheduled.
- 3.4. The Research Strategy discussion was deferred until the September meeting of the Commission.

Action(s): NPM overview meeting to be added back into the action log.

A further request will be sent to the office of the Minister for Social Care and Mental Wellbeing for a rescheduled meeting.

Research Strategy and Terms of Reference for Research Advisory Group be tabled at September meeting

4. Chair Report

- 4.1. The Chair provided a verbal update on recent activities, events, conferences, and meetings attended.
- 4.2. The Chair's report was noted for the record.
- 4.3. The Chair proposed that a member update be included as a standard agenda item for future Commission meetings.

Action: A verbal update from the Members to be included as a standing item for Commission meetings.

5. Executive Director Update

- 5.1. The Executive Director referred to the update report issued with the papers, and the following additional points were noted.
- 5.2. The SLT will be focusing on ways of working with a focus on whole team approach. Weekly SLT meetings are in place to support new process implementation.
- 5.3. SPCB has successfully completed the recruitment activity for two additional Members of the Commission, although details of the appointed individuals are not yet known. An induction programme is being developed that will include existing members.
- 5.4. Recruitment of the Policy and Culture Manager is now a key focus to support process implementation of the requirements from the people and culture programme.
- 5.5. Results from the recent Staff Wellbeing survey and the report of the work carried out with the external consultant will provide an evidence base to inform the people and culture work.
- 5.6. The Head of Legal and Policy and the Policy and Participation Officer will scope out the potential for the involvement of the

Commission in the forthcoming Commonwealth Games to be held in Glasgow.

Action: Update on Commonwealth Games will be tabled at the September Commission meeting.

6. Corporate Services

ARC update

- 6.1. SG provided a brief verbal update from the ARC meeting on 23 June 2025.
- 6.2. The Chair of the ARC, Davd Watt, will attend the next Commission meeting in September, with an annual invitation to be given thereafter.

Action: Annual invitation to chair of ARC to be scheduled.

ARC Minutes

- 6.3. The approved minutes from ARC meeting 31 March 2025 were tabled and noted.

Staff Survey (presentation)

- 6.4. DL provided an initial outline of the Staff Wellbeing Survey which was conducted anonymously via an online survey at the end of 2024 - 2025.
- 6.5. The survey will be repeated annually through the current Strategic Plan period until 2028.
- 6.6. The Commission noted the approach and offered support for any development work as a result of the survey outcomes.

Annual Report and Accounts

- 6.7. RM joined the meeting.
- 6.8. The governance timelines for the drafting and review process for the Annual Report and Accounts were shared and discussed. The Commission noted the approach and approved the timetable.
- 6.9. An additional, single purpose meeting of the Commission will be scheduled for 29 September for the final approval of the Annual Report and Accounts

Action: An additional Commission meeting to approve the Annual Report and Accounts will be scheduled for 29 September.

7. Communications and Engagement

Tone of Voice and Style Guide

- 7.1. A proposal to develop a SHRC Tone of Voice and Style Guide for the Commission was tabled.
- 7.2. The Commission approved the proposed approach and timelines and requested input to the process.

Action: A session to be arranged with Members to allow input to the Tone of Voice and Style Guide

Parliamentary Reception proposal

- 7.3. JC joined the meeting.
- 7.4. Following a discussion at the last Commission meeting, a proposal was tabled to scope out initial plans for a parliamentary reception event in December 2025.
- 7.5. The Commission approved the event proposal, which SLT will now progress.

Action: SLT to progress with the planning the event.

8. Legal and Policy

Children (Withdrawal from Religious Education and Amendment of UNCRC Compatibility Duty) (Scotland) Bill

- 8.1. The Commission expressed their concern over the Human Rights implications of this Bill and approved further analysis work as a priority area of focus.

Care Reform (Scotland) Bill

- 8.2. The Commission approved the development of a report, to be issued and published by SHRC, for the Parliament, policy makers and civil society, which considers options for improving the social care complaints system. It was noted that the Care Reform (Scotland) Act does not include this.

Action: Report to be developed

For Women Scotland Supreme Court ruling: next steps

- 8.3. The Commission agreed to prepare a statement for publication highlighting the relevant Human Rights and International Treaty obligations following the Supreme Court judgement.

Action: Statement to be updated to highlight the relevant Human Rights and International Treaty obligations

Article 8 and Migration

- 8.4. It was agreed that the Commission would commence scoping cross NHRI engagement with the UK Government in relation to Article 8 and Migration.

Action: Scope the cross NHRI engagement

SPCB Supported Bodies Landscape Review - next steps.

- 8.5. The Commission noted the publication of the Committee report and the expectation that Parliament will debate the recommendations in September 2025.

Action: A briefing to be developed for the September Commission meeting for Parliamentary Debate on the SPCB Supported Bodies Landscape review report.

Monitoring Update

- 8.6. An update on the monitoring and spotlight projects was shared and the following points noted.

8.7. Poverty Spotlight

- 8.8. Members directed the Head of L&P to the previous Commission paper.

Action: A progress update to be brought to the September Commission meeting.

8.9. State of the Nation - report methodology

- 8.10. The Commission supported the proposals to develop a sharper and more focused State of the Nation report, and approved the approach articulated in the paper.
- 8.11. It was also agreed that reflections on the impact of the previous report should be placed in the Commission's Annual Report.

Action: State of the Nation Report to be produced as agreed for approval by Commission in October.

8.12. Istanbul Convention

- 8.13. An update was shared with the Commission following publication of the UK Baseline Evaluation under the Council of

Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention).

8.14. Updates were tabled and noted for information.

Action(s): Commission asked for further information on the IRG.

A letter to be issued the Minister to discuss the report findings

8.15. Deinstitutionalisation spotlight

8.16. An update on the potential for scoping use of the SCHR Act 2006 powers will be provided at the September Commission meeting.

Action: Update on potential scope for use of powers on Deinstitutionalisation to be provided in September.

8.17. Progress Update on Cultural Recognition / Gypsy Traveller spotlight

8.18. OB joined the meeting.

8.19. An update was shared with the Commission on Cultural Recognition spotlight project. It was noted that Scottish Government has issued an apology to the Gypsy Travellers on 25 June 2025.

8.20. A Research paper to inform the Commission's Spotlight report was externally commissioned and will be issued to members.

8.21. The update included a proposed structure and timeline for drafting the final report on the spotlight project.

8.22. The Commission agreed to both proposed timelines, with assurance of sufficient time for review, as well as structure of the report.

- 8.23. The project report launch is currently scheduled for November 2025 and plans for the launch event are being drafted.

Action: Timeline to include sufficient scope for Commission review based on approved dates for publication

Research paper to be issued to Members

Legal Update

- 8.24. A brief verbal update on legal matters was provided by the Head of L&P and noted by members of the Commission.

- 8.25. A litigation strategy is currently being developed.

Action(s) Further written update on Commission's legal work to be provided at the September meeting

A litigation strategy to be presented to the Commission at the September Commission meeting.

9. Strategy and Governance

Operational Plan

- 9.1. The Final draft of the Commission's Operational Plan for 2025 - 26 was tabled for approval.
- 9.2. It was noted that the SLT has now had the opportunity to review the Plan, and to assess capacity and resources.
- 9.3. The Commission approved the Operational Plan 2025 - 26 for publication with minor amendments to be shared offline.

Action: Members to share feedback on the Plan via the Chair.

EHRC MoU Revisions

- 9.4. Through review and advice from legal counsel, a revised draft of the MoU was developed for consideration by the Commission.
- 9.5. Following discussion, a further draft will be presented at the September meeting.

Action: Further draft to be developed for September meeting.

National Oversight Mechanism

- 9.6. The Scottish Government has proposed amending the SCHR Act 2006, thereby enabling the Commission to host a National Oversight Mechanism of all deaths in state custody, pursuant to its obligations under Article 2 of the European Convention on Human Rights.
- 9.7. The Commission agreed to proceed with the proposal subject to risk management around resource, legislative basis, accountability, and Paris Principles compliance.
- 9.8. The Commission will receive regular updates on the progression of the legislation. It was noted that this may happen by correspondence over the Summer of 2025.

Action: Regular updates to Members of the Commission

10. Reaccreditation

- 10.1. A short update was shared on the GANHRI reaccreditation work. The Commission noted the current timelines for development and submission.
- 10.2. A Special Commission session on Reaccreditation has been scheduled for 19 August.

Action: Session on Reaccreditation scheduled for 19 August

11. AOB

- 11.1. Agenda item on new member induction programme will be tabled at the next Commission meeting.

Action: New member induction programme to be tabled at September meeting

- 11.2. All 2025 - 26 Commission meetings have now been scheduled.

Action: A list of all the planned Commission meetings, ARC meetings, and other key meetings to be issued

- 11.3. Next meeting will take place on 1 September 2025, Bridgeside House, Edinburgh.