

## Minutes

### 73<sup>rd</sup> Ordinary Commission Meeting

6 June 2024 | 2:00pm – 4:45pm

Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission, 16-22 Green St., Dublin 7 & Online

#### Present:

- Dr Lucy Michael, Chair, (LM)
- Jim Clarken (JC)
- Michael Finucane (MF)
- Adam Harris (AH)
- Prof Colin Harvey (CH)
- Prof Kathleen Lynch (KL)
- Dr Salome Mbugua (SM)
- Dr Rosaleen McDonagh (RMD)
- Sunniva McDonagh, SC, (SMD)
- Prof Ray Murphy (RM)
- Eoin Ronayne (ER)

#### Apologies:

- Noeline Blackwell (NB)
- Dr Andrew Forde (AF)
- Caoilfhionn Gallagher, KC, (CG)

#### In attendance:

- Deirdre Malone, Director (DM)
- Barry Price, Office of the Director (BP) for item 1.2
- Maria Mullan, Policy and Research (MM) for item 3.1
- Connor King, Policy and Research for item 3.1
- Naomi Kennan, Policy and Research for item 4.1
- Roisin Putti, Policy and Research for item 4.1
- Dr Kieran Timmons, Policy and Research for item 5.1
- Jean O'Mahony, Head of Strategic Engagement for item 6.1
- Louise Moloney (minute-taker)

The 73<sup>rd</sup> Ordinary Meeting of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission took place on 6 June 2024 from 2pm – 4:45pm in the IHREC Offices and online. LM was confirmed as chair at the meeting.

### 1.1 Apologies, Quorum and Declaration of Interest

Apologies were noted from NB, AF and CG. The meeting was quorate and there were no declarations of interest.

### 1.2 Reflection on Thought Forum and Strategic Planning update

*Barry Price joined for this item.*

The Commission discussed the second event in the series of Thought Forums, which had taken place earlier in the day on the topic of 'Artificial Intelligence and Digital Transformation'. The Commission agreed that it was an excellent session and noted it's thanks to those who spoke at the event.

The Commission noted that, as the National Human Rights Institution and National Equality Body, it may have a role to play in the new domestic oversight framework for AI to be established further to the EU AI Act and Council of Europe Framework Convention. The Commission will engage further with the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment about its role in this regard.

The Commission agreed it would be useful to have a briefing document on AI for discussion at a future meeting, given the range of themes and issues to be considered in this evolving area. The document should include consideration of any implications that the new EU Standards for Equality Bodies may have in respect of these matters when they come into force.

*Barry Price left the meeting.*

### 1.3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the 72<sup>nd</sup> Ordinary Meeting were circulated in advance and approved, proposed by KL and seconded by ER.

### 1.4 Matters Arising not otherwise dealt with on the agenda

There were no matters arising.

### 2.1 Note for Dealing with Policy Papers / Legislative Observations

A note on Dealing with Policy Papers / Legislative Observations at Commission meetings was circulated to Commission Members in advance.

It was agreed that cover notes will be provided with policy papers and legislative observations to draw the Commission's attention to the key issues or questions to maximise the value of Commission expertise.

The Commission agreed that where heads of bills are mentioned, it would be useful to footnote a live link to that particular head of bill for ease of reference.

### 3.1 Legislative Observations on the Housing (MP) Bill

*Maria Mullan and Connor King joined for this item.*

The draft submission on the General Scheme of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill 2024 was circulated in advance and approved subject to minor amendments.

*Maria Mullan and Connor King left the meeting.*

### 4.1 Submission to ECRI

*Naomi Kennan and Roisin Putti joined for this item.*

The draft Submission to the 6<sup>th</sup> monitoring cycle of the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance ('ECRI') was circulated in advance to Commission Members.

The draft submission was approved subject to minor amendments.

*Naomi Kennan and Roisin Putti left the meeting.*

### 5.1 Roundtable on Decade for People of African Descent

*Kieran Timmons joined for this item.*

The Commission noted that the Roundtable to mark the Decade for People of African Descent will take place in the IHREC offices on 8 October 2024. The Roundtable is being co-designed with the Steering Committee for the International Decade for People of African Descent in Ireland and will be aimed at high-level stakeholders.

The Commission will discuss further the aims and objectives of the Roundtable at the September Plenary meeting.

*Kieran Timmons left the meeting.*

### 6.1 Annual Report 2023

The draft 2023 annual report was circulated to Commission Members for information in advance of the meeting. DM noted that statistics on compliance with the Public Sector Duty will be reported for the first time this year and the memo accompanying was taken as read.

Commission Members should revert with any proposed amendments by 13 June 2024.

### 7.1 Director's Report

The Director's Report was circulated in advance and taken as read.

New brand guidelines will launch at the end of June with the aim of making the work of the Commission more accessible.

DM noted that the recruitment competition for the Chief Commissioner post is live and will close to applications on 13 June 2024.

DM will meet with the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth on 3 July to further discuss the 2024 estimates.

#### 8.1 Commission Engagement Update

LM and DM thanked the Commission for all the recent engagements undertaken in this busy period.

The next meeting of the Joint Committee is scheduled to take place on 12 June.

#### 9.1 Committee Updates

##### *a) Casework Committee*

The note of the Casework Committee meeting of 27 May 2024 was taken as read.

##### *b) Disability Advisory Committee*

The note of the Disability Advisory Committee meeting of 20 May 2024 was taken as read.

##### *c) Policy and Research Committee*

The note of the Policy and Research Committee meeting of 21 May 2024 was taken as read.

#### 10.1 AOB

It was agreed that MF will chair the 74<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Commission meeting on 18 July 2024.

The meeting closed at 4:45pm