



FORUM MEETING

THURSDAY 12TH JUNE 2014 @ 10.30AM, ULSTER MUSEUM BELFAST

MINUTES

In Attendance

Alan Brecknell
Mitch Bresland
Alex Bunting
Violet Craig
Stephen Gault
Eibhlin Glenholmes
Peter Heathwood
Roberta Holmes
Fiona Kelly
Irene Kerrigan
Jennifer McNern
Sandra Peake
Jeff Smith
Ann Travers

Apologies

Liz Clarke
John Loughran
David Scott
Jude Whyte

Present-CVS Staff

Kathryn Stone (Chair)
John Beggs (Deputy Chair)
Adrian McNamee
Tina McCann
Patricia McIntyre- OFMDFM
Linda Mervyn-OFMDFM
Julie Shirlow-OFMDFM
Pat Neeson- Commission for Public
Appointment
Sheila Davidson-Emeritus
Communications

1. Minutes from Last Meeting

The minutes from the meeting held on the 15th May were reviewed and checked for amendments and accuracy. No amendments were made and Jennifer McNern and Peter Heathwood proposed the minutes for adoption.

2. Matters Arising

A review of the Action Points from 15th May was held and Kathryn gave an update. Kathryn also advised that Alex had received an invite to meet with Minister McCausland to discuss the pension and Welfare changes. The members advised that this meeting could be an opportunity to formalise the agreements reached at the meeting with Lord Freud on the 28th November 2012.

AP: Tina to liaise with Minister McCauslands office and arrange to discuss welfare changes and pension.

3. Specification for the post of Commissioner for Victims and Survivors

An additional agenda item was added in order for the Department of the Office of the First and deputy First Ministers and the Commission for Public Appointments to consult and discuss with the Forum members on their views on the criteria for the role of Commissioner for Victims and Survivors. Kathryn absented herself from the Chair and the room at this stage and John took the Chair for the discussion. Confidentiality and Consent letters had been signed by Forum participants who wished to partake in the discussion in order to protect the integrity of the recruitment process.

Pat Neeson advised that it was recommended as good practice by CPANI, that in any public appointment process, those who will be served by an appointee should inform the criteria.

A frank and informative discussion followed. Forum members advised that the appointment of a Commissioner should be expedited as quickly as possible and given that Kathryn submitted her resignation some months previously, they urged the Department and CPANI to ensure that the process was agreed and implemented as a priority. They also asked the Commission to draft a letter to Ministers as a matter of urgency conveying their frustrations and disappointment in relation to the current progress of appointing a new Commissioner.

It was also agreed that a working group would be nominated to meet with Commission staff on June 19th to review the specification in detail and to agree feedback to be submitted to the department.

AP: Commission to write to First and deputy First Ministers conveying Forum concerns.

AP: Working Group to meet on June 19th in the Commission offices and formal response issued to the department.

4. Media and Communications Plan

Kathryn rejoined the meeting and a presentation was given by Sheila Davidson on the Media and Communications plan for the Forum. It was agreed that the current media plan was no longer appropriate and Sheila proposed that specific spokespersons are identified for issues and they will be asked to commit to speaking on these areas on behalf of the Forum (and not as individuals). The Commission will ensure that the appropriate level of support and training will be given. The Forum agreed and it was decided that the Commission and Sheila would meet to identify potential spokespersons and report back to the Forum at their next meeting.

AP: S. Davidson to meet with Tina and John on 13th June and discuss revised media plan and potential spokespersons in advance of next Forum meeting.

5. AOB

Adrian advised that the Department of Justice have requested to meet with the Forum to consult on the Draft Victims Charter which is currently open for consultation. The Forum agreed to meet with DoJ officials. Adrian advised that this would require an additional meeting and Tina advised that Friday 4th July had been identified as a potential date

AP: Tina to confirm date for an exceptional Forum meeting

The meeting was closed as the members were partaking in a tour of the 'Art of the Troubles' Exhibition and receiving a briefing from Dr Jim McGreevey.

6. Date and Time of Next Meeting

Friday 4th July 2014, pending confirmation from Forum Manager