



**21 March 2018**  
**Crowne Plaza, Belfast**

**Present**

Judith Thompson (JT)  
John Beggs (JB)  
Tina McCann (TMC)  
Patricia Stewart (PS)  
Alana Fisher (AF)  
Karyn Millar (KM)

Jan Crawford (JC)  
Paul Crawford (PC)  
Donal Dunn (DD)  
Sarah McGrillen (SMG)  
Paul McCormac (PMC)

Niall O Murchu (NOM)  
Lesley Veronica (LV)  
Mina Jadeja (MJ)  
Hazel Deeney (HD)  
Kathryn Johnston (KJ)

Sam Wilson (SW)  
Denise Mullen (DM)  
Robert McClenaghan  
(RMC)  
Carmel Rooney (CR)

**Apologies**

Paul Gallagher (PG)  
Mary Moreland (MM)  
Jeremy Adams (JA)

Don Mackay (DMK)  
Minty Thompson (MT)  
Alan Brecknell (AB)

Emmett McConomy  
(EMC)

**Outline of Meeting**

JT welcomed Forum members and noted apologies. She gave reference to the end of the 2017/18 financial year and reflected on the work of the Forum and the political backdrop of Northern Ireland throughout this time making specific reference to relevant issues including funding for legacy inquests, the proposed Legacy Consultation and inclusion of a Statute of Limitations despite lack of appetite for this throughout NI and fruition of policy advice such as a pension for the severely injured.

JT outlined upcoming Westminster engagement in relation to the issue of widows of army personnel pensions' having been withheld should their widow remarry. Despite a reverse in this decision, the policy was not applied retrospectively to any widow who had already had rights their deceased spouse's pension withdrawn.

A discussion followed regarding lack of consistency in the application of policies surrounding pensions, compensation and other means of financial support during the Troubles.

The Forum felt this could be a potential policy issue for review under reparations and outlined interest in dedicating time to the issue as part of their work programme.

**Action Point:** CVS to research work that has already taken place on reparations as a starting point for future discussion.

JT also advised that given the end of the financial year and one year since the replenishment of the full 2016-19 Forum, the Commission would conduct an internal evaluation of the Forum to date.

JT referenced an action point from the Forum meeting on 23 February where a discussion on a pension for the severely injured was to be tabled at the next meeting. Due to time constraints, the Forum and Commissioner agreed to table this discussion at a future meeting.

**Action Point:** Pension discussion to be tabled at future Forum meeting.

The Forum then prepared for their afternoon engagement with Tánaiste Simon Coveney and had a short group discussion and feedback session on the Commission's Corporate Plan (2017-20) and Outcome Delivery Plan (2017-18).

**Action Point:** AF to circulate Note of Meeting for 26 January by email for agreement.

### *Engagement with Tánaiste Simon Coveney*

Engagement opened with JT welcoming the Tánaiste and giving a background to the Victims and Survivors Forum. Members and representatives of the Department of Foreign Affairs in Ireland then gave introductions.

The Forum then engaged in a question and answer session with the Tánaiste. The Tánaiste spoke of his commitment to demonstrating full cooperation with truth recovery mechanisms as outlined in the Stormont House Agreement when these bodies are operational and to working closely with the British Government to progress issues affecting victims and survivors and ensure the best outcomes for Northern Ireland.

Meeting closed with some press coverage with the Tánaiste and the Commissioner taking place.

## **Agreed Actions**

1. CVS to research work that has already taken place on reparations as a starting point for future discussion on Forum work programme.
2. A discussion on the pension for the severely injured to be tabled at a future Forum meeting.
3. AF to circulate Note of Meeting for 26 January by email for agreement.