

d. General Election 2017

Based on the enquiry that had been made by a prisoner at HMP Northward regarding his concerns about several issues related to prisoners and their right to vote in the 2017 general election, the Commission discussed the progress that had been made on this enquiry. Following the correspondence to the Supervisor of Elections and the Director of Prisons the Commission has received a preliminary positive response that those eligible prisoners would be able to access registration and voting facilities as appropriate. The Supervisor has indicated a formal response is to follow. Additionally, the Commission discussed its initial research on the granting of voting rights only to prisoners serving sentences 12 months or less. Members agreed that further detailed research would be required before an opinion could be given and would endeavour to provide relevant information at the next meeting.

4. New Business

a. The Disabilities (Solomon Webster) Bill, 2016

The Commission discussed the draft Bill, which was forwarded by the Policy Coordination Unit on behalf of the Disability Policy Inter-Ministerial Implementation Task Force, and has now been released for public consultation. Initial feedback was provided with agreement that members would provide any further comments at the next meeting, as it is expected to be brought before the House in September for a first reading.

b. Draft RCIPS Appeals Policy

The Commission expressed their appreciation for a draft version of the appeals policy pursuant to section 101(2) of the Police Law (2014 Revision) provided by the Attorney General's Chambers on behalf of the Deputy Governor. Members discussed their initial feedback and agreed to continue to review and provide further comments at the next meeting.

c. Media questions regarding recent immigration rulings

Questions from a local journalist regarding recent rulings on immigration-related cases were circulated and discussed by the Commission. Members noted that some of these issues may have been addressed in previous correspondence to journalists on related matters, and agreed for the Secretariat to review correspondence archives for the same. The Secretariat was asked to draft a statement for the Commission's review.

5. Human Rights Complaints & Enquiries

a. Update on Human Rights Complaint 014/2013

The Commission was updated on this complaint. Whilst it is noted that this complaint has been closed, the public authority and legal representative involved have responded to the Commission. The Commission discussed their own draft responses to the public authorities which will be finalised prior to the consideration of the release of a report on the matter. It is noted that member Ben Tonner continues to recuse himself from this complaint.

b. Update on Human Rights Complaint 006/2014

This complaint was deferred until the next meeting as it was agreed that the report on this matter requires further points to be explored and clarifications offered.

- c. Update on Human Rights Complaint 014/2014**
This complaint was deferred until the next meeting as it was agreed that the report on this matter requires further points to be explored and clarifications offered.
- d. Update on Human Rights Complaint 002/2015**
The Commission was informed that the complainant has yet to submit the final documents that were requested several months previous. Members agreed to inform the complainant that if it did not receive the documents within thirty days from the date of correspondence the Commission will close the case.
- e. Update on Human Rights Complaint 003/2015**
This complaint was deferred until the next meeting as it was agreed that the report on this matter requires further points to be explored and clarifications offered.
- f. Update on Human Rights Complaint 004/2015**
Members discussed the draft response that had been prepared to send to the complainant. It was noted that the complainant had recently sent correspondence about Member Ben Tonner, who is serving as Acting Chairman in this case as James Austin-Smith continues to recuse himself from this complaint. Members agreed that without any evidence of wrongdoing and due to the late stage in the consideration of the matter it would not be necessary for Ben Tonner to recuse himself in this case. With regards to the draft response to the complainant, several amendments were suggested and it was agreed that responding to the complainant is a priority. The complainant should receive a final decision within two weeks.
- g. Update on Human Rights Complaint 020, 021, 022/2015**
The Chairman continues to consider and conduct research on the additional requests made by the complainant in this matter. It is noted that due to the additional information and questions, a wholesale review of the entire complaint is being undertaken.
- h. Update on Human Rights Complaint 029/2015**
Members discussed the updated report on this case but agreed that due to its complexity it would require a very clear and nuanced final conclusion. Members agreed to review the conclusion and provide their comments at the next meeting.
- i. Update on Human Rights Complaint 004/2016**
This complaint was deferred again as the Commission continues to wait for an update from the public authority. The public authority has acknowledged and is working on preparing such an update.
- j. Update on Human Rights Complaint 005/2016**
The Commission was updated on this complaint and reviewed the response received from the public authority. It was agreed that the claims made in the response would need to be corroborated by one of the individuals involved before the Commission could finalise the complaint. Correspondence would be drafted requesting input from the individual.

k. Update on Human Rights Complaint 021/2016

Whilst this case was noted as closed in the last meeting's minutes, shortly thereafter the complainant submitted new documents for consideration. Upon review the Commission agreed that the newly submitted documents did not affect the prior conclusion and correspondence would be drafted to the complainant informing him as such. The case remains closed.

l. Update on Human Rights Complaint 025/2016

The Commission received the requested information from the public authority in this matter and agreed that no breaches of human rights had occurred. The Commission agreed that the thoroughness and timeliness of the response from the public authority is to be commended, and that the Commission would correspond with them informing them as such. Correspondence would also be drafted to the complainant informing him that the complaint would be closed.

m. Human Rights Enquiry 002/2016

The Commission was updated on a new enquiry received. Members agreed that further information was required, which the Secretariat had previously requested but not yet received. The Commission agreed it needed to await this information from the enquirer in order to properly consider the query.

6. Website Demonstration

A demo link for the new HRC website was made available for the Commission to review and provide feedback on the new content and structure. Members' comments were provided for the Secretariat to revert to the contractor to make amendments. Once these are made the Secretariat will forward the demo link around to Members for further review.

7. Any Other Business

There was no other business to discuss.

8. Action Items

The members were asked to:

- a. Review a further draft of the Prohibited Immigrants Report and provide their final comments;
- b. Review a further draft of the CCTV Report and provide their final comments;
- c. Review research on the issue of restrictions on prisoners' voting rights;
- d. Review the draft Disabilities (Solomon Webster) Bill 2016 to provide feedback for the public consultation;
- e. Review the draft RCIPS Appeals Policy to provide feedback to the public authority;
- f. Review the updated HRC website demo link once circulated; and
- g. Review any outstanding or new complaints or enquiries.

The Secretariat was asked to:

- a. Draft correspondence to the Courts re: accessibility of legal aid for asylum seekers;
- b. Draft a response to the media questions regarding the recent immigration rulings;
- c. Submit feedback on website for changes to be made and circulate updated link once received; and
- d. Draft correspondence in all outstanding and new human rights complaints and enquiries.

9. **Items to be Discussed at the Next Meeting**
- a. Prohibited Immigrants Report
 - b. CCTV Report
 - c. General Elections 2017
 - d. The Disabilities (Solomon Webster) Bill, 2016
 - e. Draft RCIPS Appeals Policy
 - f. New HRC Website
 - g. New and outstanding human rights complaints

10. **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the HRC is has been scheduled for 8 September at 2:30pm at the offices of the Commissions Secretariat.

11. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15pm.



James Austin-Smith
CHAIRMAN
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION