MINUTES MEETING OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION 4 DECEMBER 2017 CONFERENCE ROOM ARTEMIS HOUSE

PRESENT: James Austin-Smith Chairman

Lisa-Ann Hurlston McKenzie Member
Ben Tonner Member
Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble Bloomfield Member

Joni Kirkconnell Member

COMMISSIONS SECRETARIAT MEMBERS PRESENT:

Deborah Bodden Manager

Sheila Alvarez Administrator/Analyst Lise Hurlstone Administrator/Analyst

1. Meeting called to order

The meeting was called to order at 3:06pm.

2. Confirmation of Previous Minutes

The 29 September 2017 minutes were approved with changes.

3. Outstanding Business

a. Petition for "Cayman Brackers United"

The Commission discussed the substantive response received from the Deputy Governor's office (dated 6 November 2017) which included the recommended short single-page flow chart to accompany the policy document and assist with comprehension for civil servants. The Commission agreed to share the flowchart with Cayman Brackers United after confirming with the Deputy Governor that it is now publically available.

4. New Business

a. Educational Initiatives

i. Universal Children's Day

Universal Children's Day was observed on 20 November 2017. This year's theme was 'Stop Violence Against Children!' and the Commission published a press release, accompanied by an activity guide for families, in recognition of the event.

ii. International Day of Persons with Disabilities

International Day of Persons with Disabilities was observed on 3 December 2017. This year's theme was 'Transformation towards sustainable and resilient society for all' and the Commission plans to celebrate this with the launch of the audio and braille versions of the Constitution, in conjunction with the Constitutional Commission, on Thursday, 7 December.

iii. International Human Rights Day

International Human Rights Day is on 10 December 2017. This year's theme is '#StandUp4HumanRights' and the Commission plans to celebrate this with the launch of the audio and braille versions of the Constitution, in conjunction with the Constitutional Commission, on Thursday, 7 December.

b. Press Release from "Colours Cayman"

The Commission received a press release from the group "Colours Cayman" dated 8 November 2017 which detailed the declaration of admissibility by the Committee on Petitions of the European Parliament of a petition to, in summary, support the rights of LGBTI Caymanians, especially with respect to the equal application of the law in relation to LGBTI non-Caymanians.

The Commission considers that its views on this topic have been made clear in the past and they remain unchanged: it agrees that Cayman must take steps to amend its laws to remove the discrimination that the press release highlights. The Commission therefore acknowledged receipt of the press release and agreed to continue to monitor the progress of the petition. Furthermore the Commission agreed to post the Colours Cayman press release on its website.

5. Human Rights Complaints & Enquiries

a. Update on Human Rights Complaint 005/2017

The Commission discussed the response received to its enquiries from the second public authority in this complaint. Following discussions, it was agreed correspondence would again be prepared to the first public authority asking them to review the response of the second public authority and provide its comments to the Commission.

b. Update on Human Rights Complaint 012/2017

Following a response to its enquiries, members agreed that they are satisfied that the allegations made by the complainant have been thoroughly investigated by the public authority. Furthermore, the Commission determined that any further investigations into the allegations are beyond its own remit and power. As such the file will be closed.

c. Update on Human Rights Complaint 016/2017

The Commission reviewed the response received from the public authority providing its comments on the complaint. Whilst Members were satisfied with the explanations provided, they agreed that the complainant should file a new request for the information he has requested. As such the file will be closed.

d. Human Rights Complaint 019/2017

The Commission reviewed this complaint and the additional information gathered on the matter by the Secretariat. Members agreed that a remedy may now exist given the recent passage of relevant legislation. As such the file will be closed.

6. Any Other Business

a. Human Rights Complaint 021/2017

The Commission reviewed this complaint and the first steps taken by the Secretariat. Members agreed that it may be helpful to enquire from the complainant's legal representative for further information. During the initial enquiries, it was brought to the Commission's attention that the basis of this complaint is indicative of a larger issue.

7. Action Items

The Secretariat was asked to:

- a. Draft correspondence or conduct research in all matters and human rights complaints and enquiries as detailed above; and
- b. Post the press release from "Colours Cayman" to the HRC website.

8. Items to be Discussed at the Next Meeting

- a. New and outstanding human rights complaints; and
- b. Draft Annual Report for 2017.

9. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the HRC has been scheduled for 12 January 2017 at 3:00pm at the offices of the Commissions Secretariat.

10. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10pm.

James Austin-Smith CHAIRMAN

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

