MINUTES

MEETING OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION 22 MARCH 2019 CONFERENCE ROOM ARTEMIS HOUSE

PRESENT: James Austin-Smith Chairman

Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble Bloomfield Member Joni Kirkconnell Member Dorothy Scott 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 1:39pm. The Chairman welcomed all in attendance.

2. Confirmation of Previous Minutes

The 8 November 2018 minutes are to be circulated for approval via e-mail.

3. Outstanding Business

a. Migrants

i. Blanket Detention Policy of Migrants

The newly created Customs and Border Control (CBC) (previously the Department of Immigration) responded to the Commission's follow-up on this matter and advised that the Commission's feedback was forwarded to the Chief Officer of the Ministry of Human Resources & Immigration (MoHR&I) and the Director of CBC for review. The Commission will follow up with CBC for any updates.

ii. Refugee Protection Appeals Tribunal (RPAT)

The Commission received a response from the Chief Officer of the MoHR&I regarding prioritising RPAT. Members were informed that the establishment of RPAT was progressing. The MoHR&I subsequently invited the Commission to meet on 20 February 2019 with facilitators Judge Michael Clements (President, First-tier Tribunal) and Judge Julian Phillips (head of training) from the UK providing specialist training to the CBC, RPAT and its secretariat on immigration and asylum seekers. The Commission Chairman and Secretariat Manager attended and noted in particular the high caliber of training these persons provided. Members noted reports of migrants no longer being able to attend tribunal hearings and agree to look

into whether the change is a matter of policy or is a prohibition in the new Customs and Border Control Law.

iii. IDC Update

The Commission was made aware the internet services have been installed and made available to IDC detainees as of early March in correspondence from the Director of Prisons. The Comission will make further inquiries about the particulars of how the service functions. Members were also informed that visiting hours had changed but had no concerns about the new hours at this time.

b. Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) (formerly Prisons Inspection Board (PIB))

The Commission noted the response from the Deputy Governor regarding the establishment of the new IMB and agreed to follow up to clarify parts of the correspondence received.

c. Prohibited Immigrant Report Letter

The Commission sent a letter to the Chief Officer of MoHR&I regarding its concerns on the issue of how prohibited immigrants are handled by the law. As a response has not yet been received the Commission agreed to follow up on this correspondence.

4. New Business

a. Draft 2018 Annual Report

The Draft Annual Report is with the Chairman for review; once completed it will be circulated to Members for comments prior to finalisation and submission for tabling in the LA.

b. 10th Anniversary of the Bill of Rights (joint book initiative with CC)

The Commission was informed that a children's book explaining the constitution in simple terms is currently in progress. This is a joint initiative between the Constitutional Commission and the Human Rights Commission for the purpose of celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the implementation of the 2009 Constitution this year. The book was embarked upon after going through a procurement process to find a partner to design and produce the book. The Commission agreed it would be valuable to gain an understanding of the practical ways in which the 2009 Constitution has improved peoples' lives since its implementation for this project.

c. 2019 Initiatives

The Comission agreed that it would be most useful to keep the focus on raising awareness about the Bill of Rights and the 10th Anniversary for its initiatives for 2019.

5. Human Rights Complaints & Enquiries

a. Update on Human Rights Complaint 026/2018

The Commission was updated that correspondence was sent to the public authority involved on 12 December 2018. The response was received on 19 March 2019 and was reviewed by members. It was felt that the response was insufficient and so members agreed to revert requesting a more robust response.

b. Human Rights Complaint 001/2019

The Commission discussed this complaint and agreed to confirm the date on which the policy which was the subject of the complaint was publicized. Further, members agreed to raise this issue in correspondence to the public authority involved.

c. Human Rights Complaint 003/2019

The Commission discussed this complaint and agreed that the majority of the issues in this complaint have already been addressed. In the one matter that remains outstanding the Commission will write to the public authority involved and request a response to the allegation.

d. Human Rights Complaint 004/2019

The Commission discussed this complaint and agreed that the majority of the issues in this complaint have already been addressed. In the one matter that remains outstanding the Commission will write to the public authority involved and request a response to the allegation.

e. Human Rights Complaint 005/2019

The Commission discussed this complaint and agreed that the majority of the issues in this complaint have already been addressed. In the one matter that remains outstanding the Commission will write to the public authority involved and request a response to the allegation.

f. Human Rights Complaint 006/2019

The Commission discussed this complaint and agreed that the majority of the issues in this complaint have already been addressed. In the one matter that remains outstanding the Commission will write to the public authority involved and request a response to the allegation.

6. Any Other Business

a. House of Commons Report

Members were informed that a submission was made on behalf of the Commission to the UK House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee report titled *Global Britain and the British Overseas Territories: Resetting the Relationship*. The report was published on 13 February 2019, and whilst it was noted that the Commission's submission was not included in the final

House of Commons Report, it can be found on the Commission's website here: http://www.humanrightscommission.ky/upimages/publicationdoc/WrittenEvidencetotheH ouseofCommonsForeignAffairsCommittee 290119 1549549515 1549549515.pdf.

b. Extension of Chairman's Term

The Commission was informed that the Chairman's term was extended until 31 March 2019.

7. Action Items

The Chairman is to:

a. Review the Draft 2018 Annual Report.

8. The members are to:

a. Review minutes from the 8 November 2018 meeting for approval.

9. The Secretariat was asked to:

- **a.** Follow-up with the CBC on the continued detention policy correspondence;
- **b.** Investigate whether oral hearings for migrants are prohibited under the Customs and Border Control Law;
- **c.** Confirm particulars of internet service available to IDC detainees with Director of Prisons;
- d. Check the Gazette to see if IMB members have yet been appointed/publicised;
- **e.** Follow up with the Office of the DG to make clarifications on the latest correspondence received regarding the IMB;
- **f.** Follow up with the MoHR&I for their response to the Commission's latest correspondence on prohibited immigrants;
- **g.** Research what improvements have been made to peoples' lives since the implementation of the 2009 Constitution; and
- **h.** Draft correspondence or conduct research in all human rights complaints and enquiries as detailed above.

10. Items to be Discussed at the Next Meeting

- a. Continued Detention Policy
- **b.** Refugee Protection Appeals Tribunal (RPAT)
- c. IDC Update
- **d.** Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) (formerly Prisons Inspection Board (PIB))
- e. Draft 2018 Annual Report
- **f.** 10th Anniversary of the Bill of Rights

11. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the HRC has been scheduled for 14 May at 2:30pm at the offices of the Commissions Secretariat.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:16pm.

James Austin-Smith

CHAIRMAN

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION