

**Meeting of An Coimisiún Toghcháin (ACT), The Electoral Commission.**

**Held in the Richmond Event Centre, 8.00am – 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

*In attendance:*

Justice Marie Baker (Chairperson), Maura Quinn\* (MQ), Alex Attwood (AA), John Curran (JC), Ger Deering (GD), Peter Finnegan (PF), and Prof. Caroline Fennell (CF).

*An Coimisiún Executive:* Art O’Leary (AOL), Tim Carey (TC), Mary Clare O’Sullivan (MCOS), Karen Kehily (KK) Brian Dawson (BD, agenda item 3), Ian Stuart Mills (ISM, agenda item 4) and Andrea Jones (secretariat)

*\*Maura Quinn attended the meeting remotely*

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**1. Welcome**

The Chairperson welcomed members.

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

**2. Conflict of Interest**

No conflict of interest was declared.

**3. Gender Equality Referendum**

The Commission was provided with an update on the proposed Gender Equality Referendum announced by the Government in March 2023. The desired 14-16 week timeline to carry out the statutory functions (to promote public awareness of the referendum, preparing a general explanation of the subject matter of the proposal for the referendum concerned, and encourage the public to vote) was noted by the Commission members.

**4. European Parliament Constituency Review**

The decision of the European Council to allocate an additional seat in the European Parliament to Ireland was ratified by MEP’s on the 24<sup>th</sup> September. On the 27<sup>th</sup> of September, the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage wrote to the Chairperson of ACT to direct the Commission to conduct a further review of Ireland’s European Parliament constituencies.

ACT invited public submissions by the 29<sup>th</sup> of October in relation to matters which should be considered in reporting on European Parliament constituencies. The matter will be further discussed at the next Commission meeting.

## **5. Draft Research Programme**

The ACT draft research programme was discussed by the Commission members and will be finalised in the coming weeks before submission of the programme to the Houses of the Oireachtas and for wider public consultation.

## **6. AOB**

- Date of next meeting Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023

*Following the meeting, the members met for a half-day facilitated discussion on ACT organisational strategy.*

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Ms. Justice Marie Baker (signed)  
Chairperson