

LOCATION: JAMES HOUSE – QUIGLEY ROOM

DATE: 27 MARCH 2026

TIME: 10:30AM

ATTENDEES: Sarah Havlin (Chairman), Damien Mc Quillan, Geraldine Alexander, Phillip O’Rawe, Robin Bell, Patricia O’Callaghan, Patrick Masterson, Sinéad Sharpe (Members), Barry Leonard (Secretariat)

1. **Introduction and apologies – Nigel Falls, Barbara Martin (absent, apology presumed)**
2. **Minutes of last Meeting** – Reviewed and pending minor spelling and typographical changes, agreed
Declarations - Conflicts of Interest and Register of Interests – No declarations
 AP - send to all members to ensure updated accurately.
 AP from last meeting - Website - follow up regarding form, changes to appearance and website visits.
3. **Case review – No current active cases.** Members updated on the advisory queries received during the quarter
4. **Stakeholder engagement** – Chair attendance at Chamber of Commerce St Patrick’s Day Reception – Overview provided by the Chair. Nigel Falls was in attendance to provide an Industrial Court Information Stand at the NI-ICTU Learning Conference on Thursday of this week. Nigel will update Members at the June meeting.
5. **Vibrant Talent Development Collaboration** – Chair provided an overview and background of the organization for members. Upcoming event of Vibrant Talent Forum – ‘Good Jobs, Better Business’ to be held 28 May 2026. Chair unable to attend on this occasion and Nigel Falls presenting in her absence. His dialogue and presentation in currently under development. It was also presented that the Director of Vibrant Talent Development, Craig Thompson had reached out to Chair to develop a podcast regarding the work of the court to help employers understand more about trade union recognition and collective bargaining. This will likely take place in May also but still to be finalized date.
6. **Documents - Annual Report 24/25** - Annual Report was included in papers and had previously been distributed to members. This was published to the website and distributed to relevant stakeholders on 11 March 2026.
7. **March Newsletter 2026** – This was included in meeting pack with link to published document on website. Published and distributed on 12 March 2026. Overall recognition was credited to Barry for his work on these and all documents and the professionalism therein. The value of this work is recognized by the Chairman and Members and the Chairman remarked that there would be a significant cost to buy in these skills
8. **Finance** – Review of final Quarter was presented and that our closing balance will likely be underspent. Members were reminded that final claims should be completed and returned as soon as possible to allow for accurate end of year accounts.
9. 2026-27 budget not confirmed but forecasting concerns dependent on Business Needs, Cases, staffing and Meetings. To this end we generated evidence surrounding average caseload and any additional work and presented to LRA DCS. Richard Stewart, Interim Director of Corporate Services supporting in presenting to dept. a business case for a minimal baseline for the court to function. A written confirmation from Richard with the likelihood of an opening budget which is likely to meet the Court’s bare minimum requirements, but it must be noted that the demand led nature of the Court’s casework will require close monitoring and in year reporting on emerging pressures. We have also strived to make savings in loaning senior case manager time to the NICO office to support in the temporary absence of the office manager post. This will accumulate to 11K savings on an annual basis.
10. **Good Jobs Bill** – Chair provided an update on what we currently know and the process ahead.
11. **Members One to One meetings and reappointments** – All bar one member 1 to 1 meetings with the Chair have taken place. Overview with Chair comments to be completed for review and retained in our records. Final reach out to remaining member to chase.

12. **Reappointment concerns** – Some queries raised regarding the current reappointment for members that have been with the court prior to 5-year appointments. These appointments were originally set to end dependent on judicial retirement age (70). This age has since changed under legislation to 75. Query as to why longer serving members are reappointed on an annual basis regardless of their age. This is a query for dept and the end of the reporting year 2026/27.
13. **Looking forward** – Dates for next meetings confirmed and shared. Chair attending Athena Nexus employment relations forum next week and the 14th Annual NERI Labour Market Conference in Waterford in May.
14. **Learning links shared for Members.** Next meeting agreed for 26 June 2026.
15. **Meeting ended 12.15**