

20 September 2021

Mr Peter McCallion
Clerk to the Committee for Finance
Northern Ireland Assembly Room 349
Parliament Buildings
Ballymiscaw
Stormont
Belfast
BT4 3XX

Dear Mr McCallion

Re: Proposed Defamation Bill

Thank you for your correspondence received 17th September 2021 seeking any comments the Commission may have on the proposed Defamation Bill.

I note that the Bill's purpose will be to make a number of substantive changes to the law of defamation in Northern Ireland. The aim of the Bill is given as reforming the law of defamation in order to ensure that a fair balance is struck between the right to freedom of expression and the protection of reputation.

While the Commission is aware of the concerns the Bill is seeking to address, we have not to date specifically considered, nor formed a view on, the subject of the proposed Bill.

We would be happy to consider further any equality aspects aligned to our remit as plans for implementation are progressed.
I trust this response is helpful.

Yours sincerely



Geraldine McGahey OBE
Chief Commissioner

