



5 March 2024

## **Women and equality in Northern Ireland International Women's Day**

The First and deputy First Ministers, Northern Ireland's first Lady Chief Justice and women leaders in the law, employment, public life, and the women's sector today addressed more than 200 women at an event to mark the upcoming International Women's Day and 25 years of the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

"The Equality Commission has seen many improvements in equality between women and men over its 25 years, but there is more we can do to break down the remaining barriers," said Geraldine McGahey, Chief Commissioner of the Equality Commission, which has organised the event in partnership with the WRDA and Reclaim the Agenda.

"We are very grateful to our distinguished speakers for coming today to challenge and inspire us, our delegates who bring a huge variety of experience and points of view, and our partners, the WRDA and Reclaim the Agenda. We also heard about some new research into the impact of Brexit on women in Northern Ireland and the answers to some interesting questions from the audience. We are aiming to harness all the talent in the room today to help improve the lives of women and their families.

"Today was an opportunity to take a quick look back at the issues we have faced over the years, and those that were faced by our mothers and grandmothers, but more importantly, let's look at how women and men can ensure that our daughters have equal chances in life. There are things we can do now!

"Specifically, I'm talking about improved early education and childcare provision, a new Gender Equality Strategy, gender pay gap reporting, stronger sex discrimination legislation, and a whole society approach to tackle harmful stereotyping, discrimination and harassment."

"Women in Northern Ireland have made huge strides in the workplace, in public life, in sport and culture – and there's still more for them to achieve. When we look back, we can see how far we've come; when we look forward we see how far there is still to go."