



Northern Ireland Assembly

COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNITIES

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Thursday 6 October 2016

The Nerve Centre – Derry/Londonderry

Present: Colum Eastwood MLA (Chairperson)
Michelle Gildernew MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Steven Agnew MLA
Andy Allen MLA
Jonathan Bell MLA
Naomi Long MLA
Nichola Mallon MLA
Fra McCann MLA
Christopher Stalford MLA

In Attendance: Kevin Pelan (Assembly Clerk)
Ashleigh Mitford (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Stewart Kennedy (Clerical Supervisor)
Ciarán Brannigan (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Adrian McQuillan MLA
Carál Ni Chuilín MLA

The meeting commenced in open session at 1:04 pm

The Chairperson declared an interest the agenda item: the Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Bill. The Chairperson has family interests in licensed premises.

1. Apologies

Apologies are recorded above

2. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The draft minutes of the meeting of 29 September 2016 were agreed.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson reminded the Committee that he had spoken at the NILGA conference that morning.

The Chairperson reminded members that he and the Deputy Chairperson would be meeting with a representative of Comhaltas after the Committee meeting and will report back to the Committee on the matters discussed.

4. Matters Arising

The Chairperson reminded members that at its meeting on 29 September 2016, the Committee noted a tabled written statement from the Minister in relation to the Consultation on the Exemption under Articles 85(8) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 for listed places of worship from the requirement to obtain listed building consent. The Committee had agreed to return to the statement today.

The Committee discussed the Minister's decision that the ecclesiastical exemption will remain in place.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to seek more information in relation to the Minister's decision in the form of a briefing from the Department.

The Chairperson reminded members that at its meeting on 29 September 2016, the Committee agreed to write to HMRC, the Treasury Select Committee and the Minister for Finance in relation to HMRC's decision not to renew its contract with Concentrix in 2017. Draft letters were provided for the Committee's consideration.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the letters as drafted.

The Chairperson reminded members that at its meeting on 29 September 2016, the Committee agreed to follow up on the commitments made by the Deputy Chairperson at a Positive Futures event in Parliament Buildings on 26 September 2016. A draft letter to the Committee for the Economy was provided for the Committee's consideration.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the letter as drafted.

5. Department Briefing - The Welfare Supplementary Payment (Benefit Cap) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016

The Committee noted briefing papers from the Clerk and the Department.

The following official joined the meeting at 1:12 pm

- Bronagh Smyth, Social Welfare Policy

The official briefed the Committee and this was followed by questions from members.

Christopher Stalford left the meeting at 1:28 pm

Naomi Long joined the meeting at 1:29 pm

The official left the meeting at 1:35 pm

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for the Rule to be made.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request further information on a number of issues from the Department.

The session was recorded by Hansard.

6. Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Bill – Evidence Session with Hospitality Ulster

The committee noted a written submission.

The following witnesses joined the meeting at 1:35pm

- Mr Colin Neill, Chief Executive, Hospitality Ulster
- Mr Joel Neill, Operations Director, Hospitality Ulster

Christopher Stalford joined the meeting at 1:37 pm

The witnesses briefed the committee and this was followed by questions from members.

The witnesses left the meeting at 2:36 pm

Agreed: The Committee agreed that committee staff upload all correspondence and written submissions in relation to the Bill to the Committee's Bill page on the Assembly website, as they are received.

The session was recorded by Hansard

Agreed: The Committee agreed to follow up on a number of issues including requesting an update on the status of an entertainment license working group.

Steven Agnew left the meeting at 2:38 pm

7. SR 329/2016 - Local Government Pension Scheme (Nursery Assistants) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016

The Committee noted the Statutory Rule.

The Chairperson advised the Committee that the Examiner of Statutory Rules has not yet reported on the Rule and as such the Committee would be asked to agree it subject to the Examiner's Report.

Question put and agreed:

That the Committee for Communities has considered the Statutory Rule SR 329/2016 Local Government Pension Scheme (Nursery Assistants) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016 and subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules' report, has no objection to the Rule."

8. SR 333/2016 - Domestic Energy Efficiency (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016

The Committee noted the Statutory Rule.

The Chairperson advised the Committee that the Examiner of Statutory Rules has not yet reported on the Rule and as such the Committee would be asked to agree it subject to the Examiner's Report.

Question put and agreed:

"That the Committee for Communities has considered the Statutory Rule SR333/2016 Domestic Energy Efficiency (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016 and subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules' report, has no objection to the Rule.

9. Correspondence

The committee noted a correspondence memo.

The Committee noted the Delegated Powers Memorandum in relation to the Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the memorandum to the Examiner of Statutory Rules for technical scrutiny.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to action all other correspondence as outlined on the correspondence memo*

*discussion returned correspondence in relation to the Budget under AOB

10. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted its draft Forward Work programme.

The Chairperson advised the Committee that Thursday 13 October is likely to be a long meeting as the Committee will be hearing from key industry stakeholders on the Bill as well as receiving a briefing on the possible reclassification of Housing Associations.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to include a short break for lunch and indicative finish time of 3pm.

The Committee noted that the NIHE has finalised the Housing First Evaluation Report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed its Forward Work Programme.

11. AOB

The Committee expressed concerns around the lack of engagement being afforded to Committees in relation to the Budget process.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a summary of the current position in relation to monitoring rounds and the Budget process for its meeting next week.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a copy of the Department's submissions to the Department of Finance in relation to the Budget and the October Monitoring Round.

The Chairperson advised members that an FOI request has been submitted to the committee office by Conradh na Gaeilge concerning: The Irish Language and the St Andrews Agreement. This has been referred to the Assembly's Information Standards Officer.

No other items were raised.

12. Date, time and location of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee for Communities will take place on Thursday 13 October 2016 at 10.00 am in room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 2:59 pm

Colum Eastwood MLA

Chairperson, Committee for Communities

13 October 2016