



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

# Committee for Communities

## Minutes of Proceedings

Thursday 10 March 2022

**Meeting Location:** Room 29, Parliament Buildings, Belfast

**Present by Video or Teleconference:**

Ms Paula Bradley MLA (Chairperson)

Ms Kellie Armstrong MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Mr Andy Allen MBE MLA

Mr Stephen Dunne MLA

Mr Mark Durkan MLA

Ms Ciara Ferguson MLA

Ms Paul Frew MLA

Ms Áine Murphy MLA

Ms Aisling Reilly MLA

**Apologies:** None

**In Attendance:** Dr Janice Thompson (Assembly Clerk)

Mr Sean McCann (Assistant Clerk)

Ms Rachel Ashe (Clerical Supervisor)



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**In Attendance by Video or Teleconference:** Ms Antoinette Bowen (Clerical Officer)

The Chairperson, Paula Bradley, assumed the Chair. The meeting began at 9.06 am in open session. The following Members were present at the start of the public session: Paula Bradley (Chairperson), Kellie Armstrong (Deputy Chairperson), Aisling Reilly, Stephen Dunne, Ciara Ferguson, Andy Allen, Áine Murphy, and Mark Durkan.

Declaration of Interests

No declarations of interest were made.

*Paul Frew joined the meeting at 9.08 am.*

### **1. Ministerial briefing on the Sub-Regional Stadia Programme**

The Chairperson informed Members that the Minister would brief the Committee on the Sub-Regional Stadia Programme.

The Chairperson welcomed the Minister, Deirdre Hargey, and an Official, Shirley Chambers to the meeting.

The Minister and the Official briefed the Committee and participated in a question and answer session with Members.

The Chairperson thanked the Minister and her Official.

**Agreed:** The Minister agreed to check if she could, after seeking legal advice, send the new proposals for the Sub-Regional Stadia Programme to the Committee.

*Áine Murphy left the meeting at 9.58 am.*

### **2. Apologies**

There were no apologies.



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### 3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson reminded Members that this was the penultimate meeting of the mandate, and as such, time was limited in terms of receiving correspondence that might follow the meeting.

The Chairperson also reminded Members that the focus of the meeting, on women's football and sport and women's community networks, had been chosen to support International Women's Day earlier in the week.

### 4. Draft Minutes

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 3 March 2022.

### 5. Matters Arising

The Chairperson informed Members that they had been provided with the latest report from the Examiner of Statutory Rules (ESR) regarding:

- SR2021/288 – The Jobseeker's Allowance and Employment and Support Allowance (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021; and
- SR 2021/302 – The Universal Credit (Work Allowance and Taper) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021.

In her report, the ESR is content that the Department provided a satisfactory explanation for the breach of the 21-day rule. The Committee was content to note.

The Chairperson informed the Committee that they had been provided with papers from the All Party Group on Homelessness as requested at the meeting on 3 March 2022. The Committee was content to note.

*Mark Durkan left the meeting at 10.12 am.*

*Stephen Dunne left the meeting at 10.20 am.*



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*Aisling Reilly left the meeting at 10.20 am.*

**6. NIFL briefing on the Women's Premiership and work on the ladies' game**

The Chairperson welcomed the following representatives to the meeting:

Gerard Lawlor

Steven Mills

The representatives briefed the Committee and participated in a question and answer session with Members.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their attendance.

*The meeting was adjourned at 10.40 am.*

*The meeting recommenced at 10.51 am in public session.*

**7. IFA briefing on Women's Premiership and grassroots football**

The Chairperson welcomed the following representatives to the meeting:

Patrick Nelson

Conrad Kirkwood

Angela Platt

The representatives briefed the Committee and participated in a question and answer session with Members.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their attendance.

**8. Women in Sport briefings**

The Chairperson welcomed the following representatives to the meeting:



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Ricky Mehaffy - Sported

Niamh O'Neill - Women in Sport and Physical Activity

Elaine Reid - Disability Sport NI

Richard Honeyford - NI Sports Forum and Female Sports Forum

The representatives briefed the Committee and participated in a question and answer session with Members.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their attendance.

*Ciara Ferguson left the meeting at 12.00 pm.*

*Mark Durkan joined the meeting at 12.12 pm.*

### **9. Women's Support Networks briefings**

The Chairperson welcomed the following representatives to the meeting:

Siobhán Harding – Women's Support Network/ Women's Regional Consortium

Rachel Powell – Women's Resource and Development Agency

The representatives briefed the Committee and participated in a question and answer session with Members.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their attendance.

### **10. SL1 – The Coronavirus Act (Alteration of Expiry Date of Provisions Related to Statutory Sick Pay) Order (NI) 2022**

**Agreed:** The Committee was content for the Department to proceed to make the Rule.



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**11. SL1 – The Social Security (Habitual Residence and Past Presence) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022**

**Agreed:** The Committee was content for the Department to proceed to make the Rule.

Although supportive of the proposed regulations, a Member wished to note their dissatisfaction that the Home Office was not doing more to waive visa restrictions and assist Ukrainian refugees to enter the United Kingdom.

**12. SL1 – Energy Support Scheme**

**Agreed:** The Committee was content for the Department to proceed to make the Rule.

**13. SR 2022/62 – Social Security Benefits (Claims and Payments) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2022**

**Agreed:** The Committee for Communities considered SR 2022/62 – Social Security Benefits (Claims and Payments) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2022 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, had no objection to the Rule.

**14. SR 2022/78 – The Licensing (Sample) Regulations (NI) 2022**

**Agreed:** The Committee for Communities considered SR 2022/78 – The Licensing (Sample) Regulations (NI) 2022 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, had no objection to the Rule.



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**15. SR 2022/79 – The Licensing (Notice Relating to Restaurants and Guest-houses) Regulations (NI) 2022**

**Agreed:** The Committee for Communities considered SR 2022/79 – The Licensing (Notice Relating to Restaurants and Guest-houses) Regulations (NI) 2022 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, had no objection to the Rule.

*Mark Durkan left the meeting at 1.14 pm.*

**16. Correspondence**

The Chairperson informed Members that they had received a copy of the Expert Advisory Panel's Recommendation Reports on the Irish Language and Ulster Scots. The Committee was content to note.

The Committee was content to note the following items of correspondence:

- i. A copy of the Commissioner for Older People (COPNI) Annual Report 2021-21 from the Department for Communities;
- ii. A departmental letter regarding the public consultation on Child Maintenance by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP);
- iii. A copy of the Women's Policy Group (WPG) Feminist Recovery Plan from the Committee for the Economy;
- iv. An invitation to Retail NI Future High Streets Summit from Retail NI;
- v. A Departmental response to queries raised by Training for Women Network regarding the WICT Programme; and
- vi. A memo from the Clerk to the Committee for Education requesting that the Committee for Education be copied into any further updates regarding the Betting, Gaming, Lotteries and Amusements (Amendments) Bill.



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### **17. Draft Legacy Report**

The Chairperson informed Members that, as the meeting had lost quorum, the Committee was unable to consider the draft Legacy Report, and that it would be considered at the meeting on 24 March 2022.

### **18. Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

### **19. Forward Work Programme**

The Chairperson reminded Members that there would not be a committee meeting on Thursday 17 March as it was St. Patrick's Day. The next committee meeting will therefore be Thursday 24 March.

### **20. Date, Time and Location of next meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 24 March 2022 at 9.30 am virtually on Starleaf.

*The meeting was adjourned at 1.24 pm.*

**Paula Bradley MLA**  
**Chairperson, Committee for Communities**