



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Education

Minutes of Proceedings

20 January 2022

Meeting Location: Teleconference

Present by Video or Teleconference:

Mr Chris Lyttle MLA (Chairperson)

Mr Pat Sheehan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Ms Nicola Brogan MLA

Mr Robbie Butler MLA

Mr Justin McNulty MLA

Mr Robin Newton MBE MLA

Ms Aoibhinn Treanor (Assembly Clerk)

Mr Mark McQuade (Assistant Clerk)

Mr Marcus Matthews (Clerical Supervisor)

Ms Caroline Perry (Bill Clerk), Item 4 only

Ms Rebecca Ellis (Legal Services), Item 4 only

Apologies:

Mr Harry Harvey MLA



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The meeting commenced at 9:38am in public session.

1. Apologies

Apologies as above.

2. Period Products (Free Provision) Bill - Oral Briefing from the Department of Health.

The Committee noted:

- A briefing paper from the Department of Health, and
- In response to the Committee's query about the quantum of paper and plastic waste created by non-sustainable period products, a Women's Environmental Network Environmental Factsheet 2021.

The following witness joined the meeting by video conference at 9:39am:

Dr Tomas Adell, Director of Transformation, Department of Health

The witness briefed the Committee on the Period Products (Free Provision) Bill.

This was followed by a question and answer session.

Mr McNulty joined the meeting at 9:47am.

Mr Newton left the meeting at 9:53am.

Ms Brogan left the meeting at 10:am.



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The Chairperson thanked the witnesses for the briefing.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Executive Office, and Department for Communities seeking information on the lead Department for the Bill.

3. Period Products (Free Provision) Bill - Oral Briefing from the Department of Education.

The Committee noted:

- A Department of Education response to the call for evidence on the Period Products (Free Provision) Bill;
- An Assembly Research and Information Service paper on the Period Products (Free Provision) Bill and an addendum to the original Raise research paper for the bill, containing data requested from the Department of Education in relation to cost and school uptake in the Period Dignity Pilot Scheme (this information was received after the RaISe presentation to the Committee on 16th December. The addendum also contains information sourced in response to some queries during RaISe's presentation to the Committee);

The following witness joined the meeting by video conference at 10:17am:

Mr Dale Heaney, Head of Tackling Educational Disadvantage Team, Department of Education

Ms Ashleigh Mitford, Tackling Educational Disadvantage Team, Department of Education.

The witnesses briefed the Committee on the Period Products (Free Provision) Bill.

This was followed by a question and answer session.

Ms Brogan rejoined the meeting at 10:24am.



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The Chairperson thanked the witnesses for the briefing.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite the Bill sponsor to brief it on the issues raised on the Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to move to closed session.

The Committee moved to closed session at 10:56am.

4. Period Products (Free Provision) Bill – Northern Ireland Assembly Legal Services Briefing

The Committee noted:

- Advice from Legal Services; and
- Advice from the Examiner of Statutory Rules on Delegated Powers in the Bill.

The Committee was briefed by Rebecca Ellis, Legal Adviser, Northern Ireland Assembly Legal Services on the Period Products (Free Provision) Bill.

This was followed by a question and answer session.

The Bill Clerk for the Bill, Caroline Perry, replied to queries on bill procedure and amendment proposals.

Mr Butler left the meeting at 11:10am.

The Chairperson thanked the witnesses for the briefing.

5. Any Other Business

No other business was discussed.



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6. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The next formal Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday 26 January 2022 by video conference at 9:30am.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:53am.

Chris Lyttle MLA

**Chairperson, Committee for Education
26 January 2022**