



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY 17 JUNE 2020

Room 30, Parliament Buildings, Belfast

Present: Mr Colin McGrath MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Doug Beattie MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Ms Martina Anderson MLA*
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA*
Mr Trevor Lunn MLA
Mr George Robinson MLA*
Mr Pat Sheehan MLA*
Ms Emma Sheerin MLA

Apologies: Mr Christopher Stalford MLA

In Attendance: Ms Marie Austin (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Craig Mealey (Assistant Clerk)

** Members who attended the meeting via telephone conferencing.*

The meeting commenced at 2.06pm.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 10 June 2020.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. The Functioning of Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill – Oral evidence session with the Bill Sponsor

The Bill Sponsor, Mr Jim Allister MLA, joined the meeting at 2.09pm.

Mr Allister briefed the Committee on all or part of: Clause 1; Clause 2; Clause 3; Clause 4; Clause 5; and, Clause 12 of the Functioning of Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill.

The oral evidence was followed by a question and answer session.

The oral evidence session was reported by Hansard.

There were some technical difficulties during the evidence session that resulted in poor sound quality for those Members who joined the meeting by tele-conferencing. The Bill Sponsor agreed that those Members could send questions directly to him for answer if it was helpful.

The Chairperson thanked Mr Allister for his attendance.

5. June 2020 Monitoring Round – Departmental Written Briefing

The Committee considered the key points made by departmental officials during the oral evidence session on the June 2020 Monitoring Round which took place on 3 June 2020.

The Committee expressed disappointment that a departmental written briefing on the matter had not been received. The Chairperson advised Members that he would raise the issue at an informal meeting with the First Minister and deputy First Minister on 23 June 2020.

Trevor Lunn left the meeting at 3.36pm

6. S.R. 2020/50: The Historical Institutional Abuse Redress Board (Applications and Appeals) Rules (Northern Ireland) 2020

The Committee had considered S.R. 2020/50: The Historical Institutional Abuse Redress Board (Applications and Appeals) Rules (Northern Ireland) 2020 at its meeting on 22 April 2020, and agreed that it had no objection to the Rule subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules' Report.

The Committee noted that the Examiner of Statutory Rules had no issues to raise with the technical elements of the Statutory Rule.

7. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme for June and July 2020.

8. Correspondence

- i. The Committee considered a response from the Community Relations Council on issues raised during the overview briefing at the Committee meeting on 20 May 2020.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing from the Community Relations Council on the information contained in the response.

Trevor Lunn rejoined the meeting at 3.44pm

- ii. The Committee considered a departmental written briefing on the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (Amendment No. 4) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the First Minister and deputy First Minister suggesting that the Ad Hoc Committee on the COVID-19 Response be used as a mechanism to make a Statement on any future amendment Regulations, as soon as the lifting of restrictions is announced and in advance of the debate in Plenary. The Committee was of the view that this approach would allow for timely discussion and provide an opportunity for Members to seek further information or clarification in relation to the Regulations.
- iii. The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the Committee for Education to the Department of Justice on the Special Educational Needs and Disability Tribunal.
- iv. The Committee noted correspondence from the Chair of the House of Lords European Union Committee inviting the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson to a virtual meeting to discuss the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland.
- v. The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the Chair of the Racial Equality Subgroup to the First Minister and deputy First Minister condemning the murder of George Floyd in the USA.
- vi. The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the Chair of the Northern Ireland Dental Practice Committee to the Minister for the Economy on the financial situation facing mixed and private dental practices.
- vii. The Committee noted correspondence from an individual on the reopening of childcare facilities during the current pandemic.
- viii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Executive Office regarding the Attorney General for Northern Ireland.

9. Chairperson's Business

There was no Chairperson's Business.

10. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

11. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 24 June 2020 at 2.00 pm in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting moved into closed session at 3.50pm.

12. Brexit - Update from The Northern Ireland Assembly European Affairs Manager

The Northern Ireland Assembly European Affairs Manager, Ms Shauna Mageean, joined the meeting at 3.50pm.

The European Affairs Manager briefed the Committee on recent developments in relation to Brexit, including the involvement of the Devolved Administrations in the UK-EU future relationship negotiations.

The meeting was adjourned at 4.37pm.

Mr Colin McGrath MLA
Chairperson, Committee for the Executive Office