



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY 18 NOVEMBER 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*
Mr Christopher Stalford MLA

Apologies: None

In Attendance: Ms Marie Austin (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Carla Campbell (Assistant Clerk)
Ms Sarah-Anne McKinley (Assistant Clerk)
Mr Craig Mealey (Clerical Supervisor)

* Members who attended the meeting via video 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 11 November 2020.

3. Matters Arising

None.

4. Special EU Programmes Body – Oral Evidence Session

The following representatives joined the meeting at 2:07pm:

Gina McIntyre, Chief Executive, Special EU Programmes Body

Declan McGarrigle, Programme Manager, Special EU Programmes Body.

The representatives briefed Members on the role of the Special EU Programmes Body.

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

The oral evidence session was reported by Hansard.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their attendance.

Members noted that the Committee for Finance has agreed to co-ordinate the scrutiny of the PEACE PLUS Programme across Assembly committees.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider the matter further following its departmental briefing on the PEACE PLUS Programme scheduled for the meeting on 9 December 2020.

Meeting suspended at 3:01pm.

Meeting resumed at 3:08pm.

5. Victims' Payment Scheme – Oral Evidence Session with Departmental Officials

The following officials joined the meeting at 3:09pm:

Mark Browne, Director of Strategic Policy, Equality and Good Relations, The Executive Office

Gareth Johnston, Director, Victims and Survivors Division, The Executive Office.

The officials briefed Members on the Victims' Payment Scheme.

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

The oral evidence session was reported by Hansard.

Martina Anderson left the meeting at 3:18pm.

Christopher Stalford left the meeting at 3:45pm.

The Chairperson thanked the officials for their attendance.

6. Research and Information Service Briefing Paper – Information on the North-South Ministerial Council and British Irish Council NIAR 280-2020

The Committee noted a Northern Ireland Assembly Research and Information Service briefing paper on the North-South Ministerial Council and British Irish Council.

7. Carnegie UK Trust – Citizen Engagement and the Programme for Government – Written Briefing.

The Committee considered a briefing paper from Carnegie UK Trust on citizen engagement and the Programme for Government.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule an oral evidence session with Carnegie UK Trust when more information was available on the Programme for Government.

8. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme for November 2020 to February 2021.

9. Correspondence

- i. The Committee noted an Urgent Written Statement to the Assembly from the First Minister and deputy First Minister regarding decisions of the Executive on Covid-19.
- ii. The Committee noted the Executive Office's Revised Monitoring Round return for October 2020.
- iii. The Committee noted the "*Northern Ireland Executive Office: Brussels Report, July – September 2020*".
- iv. The Committee noted the Committee for Finance "*Report on the Functioning of Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill*".
- v. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Health to the First Minister and deputy First Minister regarding statutory rules relating to coronavirus restrictions
- vi. The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the Women's Policy Group NI to the First Minister and deputy First Minister regarding its request for an extension to the six-week public consultation on a Bill of Rights for Northern Ireland. The Committee noted that the request for the extension had since been agreed by the Assembly Ad Hoc Committee on a Bill of Rights.
- vii. The Committee noted an Urgent Oral Statement to the Assembly from the First Minister and deputy First Minister regarding decisions of the Executive on Covid-19.

10. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson informed Members that, during questions following the Ministerial Statement on 17 November 2020, on the meeting of North/South Ministerial Council in special EU programmes sectoral format, the Minister of Finance had indicated that he was content to meet with local councils to try to ease some of their financial concerns around future EU Funding.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Minister of Finance to formally request that he meet with the councils on this issue as soon as possible.

The Chairperson informed Members that he had received a presentation from the Northern Ireland Youth Forum on the results of research it had carried out on the views of young people on Covid-19.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider the Northern Ireland Youth Forum report “*Our Voices: Speaking Truth to Power*” at the meeting on 25 November 2020.

11. Any Other Business

None.

12. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 25 November 2020, at 2:00pm in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting moved into closed session at 4:00pm.

13. Brexit – Northern Ireland Assembly European Affairs Manager Briefing

The Northern Ireland Assembly European Affairs Manager, Ms Shauna Mageean, joined the meeting at 4:01pm.

The European Affairs Manager briefed Members on a range of Brexit issues.

Trevor Clarke left the meeting at 4:19pm.

The Chairperson thanked Ms Mageean for her briefing.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request confirmation on whether the First Minister and deputy First Minister will give evidence to the House of Lords Common Frameworks Scrutiny Committee on its Inquiry into the UK Common Frameworks Programme.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:27pm.

Mr Colin McGrath MLA
Chairperson, Committee for the Executive Office