



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

# Committee for The Executive Office

## Minutes of Proceedings

Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> October 2021

**Meeting Location:** Room 30, Parliament Buildings

**Present:**

Mr Colin McGrath MLA (Chairperson)

Mr Trevor Lunn MLA

Mr Pat Sheehan MLA

Ms Emma Sheerin MLA

**Present via Video Conferencing:**

Mr Pádraig Delargy MLA

Ms Diane Dodds MLA

Mr Alex Easton MLA

Mr Christopher Stalford MLA

Mr John Stewart MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

**Apologies:** None.

**In Attendance:**

Mr Michael Potter (Assembly Clerk)

Ms Carla Campbell (Assistant Clerk)

Ms Sarah-Anne McKinley (Assistant Clerk)

Ms Andrienne Magee (Clerical Officer)



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The meeting commenced at 2:04pm in open session

### **1. Apologies**

As Above.

### **2. Chairperson's Business**

The Committee noted a note of the Informal meeting with the Victims Payment Board, 6 October 2021.

The Committee discussed an invitation to attend the Constitution Committee on Wednesday 3 November 2021 to give its views in relation to future governance of the UK.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to reschedule the meeting to an alternative date to enable members to attend.

The Chairperson referred to the expected proposals by the EU to address matters of trade and urged leaders to take time to work together to consider the proposals and find a resolution.

### **3. Draft Minutes**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2021.



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#### **4. Matters Arising**

The Committee noted a revised list of potential stakeholder groups within the travel industry and the proposed outline of the scheduled stakeholder session in November 2021.

#### **5. First Minister and deputy First Minister – Oral Briefing**

The First Minister and deputy First Minister joined the meeting at 2:09pm.

- Mr Paul Givan, First Minister, The Executive Office.
- Mrs Michelle O'Neill, deputy First Minister, The Executive Office.

The First Minister and deputy First Minister briefed Committee Members on the response to Covid-19 and other departmental issues.

*Christopher Stalford joined the meeting at 2:22pm.*

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

*Diane Dodds left the meeting at 3:30pm.*

*Pat Sheehan left the meeting at 3:32pm.*

*Christopher Stalford left the meeting at 4:02pm.*

The Deputy Chairperson thanked the First Minister and deputy First Minister for their attendance.



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**6. Departmental Spending Plans – October Monitoring Round – Oral Briefing**

The officials joined the meeting at 4:04pm.

- Dr Denis McMahon, Permanent Secretary, The Executive Office.
- Mr Gareth Johnston, Director of Strategic Policy, Equality and Good Relations, The Executive Office.
- Ms Neelia Lloyd, Director of Finance and Corporate Services, The Executive Office.
- Ms Tara Kennedy, Head of Finance Branch, The Executive Office.

The officials briefed Committee Members on the Executive Office October Monitoring Round.

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

During their evidence officials agreed to provide the Committee with the terms of reference for the review of the Historical Institutional Abuse Redress Board.

*Emma Sheerin left the meeting at 4:19pm.*

The Deputy Chairperson thanked the officials for their attendance.

**7. Scrutiny of Arms-Length Bodies – Maze Long Kesh Development Corporation – Written Briefing**

The Committee noted a written briefing from the Maze Long Kesh Development Corporation.



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*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Maze Long Kesh Development Corporation to seek clarification on whether the budget for health and safety work on the hanger doors has been suspended.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to accept the invitation to visit the Maze Long Kesh site.

### **8. Forward Work Programme**

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme for October – November 2021.

### **9. Correspondence**

- i. The Committee noted an online speech by Vice President Maroš Šefčovič on the Implementation of the Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol at the Institute of international and European Affairs.
- ii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Chairpersons' Liaison Group to the First Minister and deputy First Minister in relation to engagement with Committees regarding proposals for new or amended EU laws.
- iii. The Committee noted a response from the Special EU Programmes Body in relation to the Peace Plus Programme.
- iv. The Committee noted correspondence from Baroness Ritchie of Downpatrick asking for information on Common Frameworks.
- v. The Committee noted an oral statement from the deputy First Minister to the Assembly on 11 October in relation to the North South Ministerial Council Plenary Meeting held on 30 July 2021.



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- vi. The Committee noted correspondence from the Executive Office providing details of a meeting of the Ireland/Northern Ireland Specialised Committee meeting held on 24 September 2021.
- vii. The Committee noted a speech from Lord Frost – Observations on the present state of the nation, 12 October 2021.
- viii. The Committee considered correspondence from the Community Foundation NI asking if the Executive Office response to the Committee’s request for an update on progress towards the NDNA commitment on Structured Civic Engagement could be shared with them along with a copy of the NI Assembly Research and Information Service briefing paper on the subject.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to share the Executive Office response and the Research and Information Service briefing paper with the Community Foundation NI.

### **10. Any Other Business**

The Committee discussed the First Minister’s evidence given in relation to non-attendance of Ministers at North South Ministerial Council meetings.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to seek clarification on the process for scheduling meetings of the North South Ministerial Council.

The Committee were informed that the Chairperson is stepping down from his role as Chairperson of the Committee for the Executive Office and will be joining the Committee for Health as a Member. Committee Members thanked him for his contribution to the Committee and wished him well.



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**11. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting**

The next Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday 20 October 2021 at 2:00pm, in The Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:31pm.

**Sinéad McLaughlin**

**Chairperson, Committee for the Executive Office**