



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

## Committee for The Executive Office

### Minutes of Proceedings

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2021

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

**Present:**

Ms Sinéad McLaughlin (Chairperson)

Mr Pádraig Delargy MLA

Mr Trevor Lunn MLA

**Present via Video Conferencing:**

Mr John Stewart MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Mr Pat Sheehan MLA

Ms Emma Sheerin MLA

Mr Alex Easton MLA

Ms Diane Dodds MLA

**Apologies:** None

**In Attendance:**

Mr Michael Potter (Assembly Clerk)

Ms Sarah-Anne McKinley (Assistant Clerk)

Ms Alison Belshaw (Clerical Supervisor)

Ms Andrienne Magee (Clerical Officer)



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The meeting commenced at 2:03pm in open session.

### **1. Apologies**

As Above.

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

The Chairperson updated the Committee following a meeting on Monday 22 November 2021 with the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee where a number of constitutional issues were discussed.

The Chairperson referred the Committee to correspondence from the Committee for the Economy in relation to grants for ventilation of high risk settings as a safeguard measure against Covid-19.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request regular updates on the work of the Covid Task Force.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to invite the Chair of the Covid Task Force to brief the Committee in relation to the work of the Task Force.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the First and deputy First Minister to consider establishing a task force to help deal with the rising cost of living in Northern Ireland.

The Chairperson referred the Committee to correspondence from the Commissioner for Survivors of Institutional Childhood Abuse (COSICA), in relation to proposals for the process for an apology.



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*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to invite the Commissioner to present these proposals to the Committee before the Christmas recess.

*Diane Dodds joined the meeting at 2.07pm.*

### **3. Draft Minutes**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

### **4. Matters Arising**

The Chairperson updated the Committee in relation to a Hansard request following an oral briefing with the Truth Recovery Design Panel on 17 November 2021. Hansard have confirmed they are now preparing a report for that session.

### **5. Northern Ireland Assembly EU Affairs Manager – Oral Briefing**

The Northern Ireland Assembly EU Affairs Manager joined the meeting at 2:10pm.

- Ms Shauna Mageean, Northern Ireland Assembly EU Affairs Manager.

The Northern Ireland Assembly EU Affairs Manager briefed the Committee in relation to recent developments surrounding EU Exit.

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

The Chairperson thanked the Northern Ireland Assembly EU Affairs Manager for her attendance.



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### **6. Departmental Officials – Oral Briefing on EU Exit**

Officials joined the meeting at 4:42 pm

- Mr. Tom Reid – Deputy Secretary, International Relations and EU Exit the Executive Office.
- Ms. Gail McKibbin – Director, Operational Readiness the Executive Office.
- Lynsey Moore – Director, European Division the Executive Office.

Officials briefed the Committee in relation to the most recent developments surrounding EU Exit.

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

During their evidence session the officials agreed to provide the Committee with information in relation to state aid, EU funding and areas of agreement between the UK Government and the European Commission.

*Pat Sheehan left the meeting at 3.30pm.*

### **7. Mother and Baby Homes - Oral Briefing**

Victim and survivor groups joined the meeting at 3.39pm.

- Eunan Duffy, Member Truth Recovery NI.
- Paul McClarey, Member Truth Recovery NI.
- Oonagh McAteer, Member Birth Mothers and their Children for Justice NI.
- Adele Johnstone, Member Birth Mothers and their Children for Justice NI.



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The groups briefed the Committee in relation to the recommendations made in the Truth Recovery Design Panel's report into mother and baby homes.

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

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request that a single point of contact is appointed within the Executive Office for victims and survivors of mother and baby homes.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request a breakdown of the recommendations within the Truth Recovery Design Panel report not requiring legislation that can be implemented immediately.

*Pádraig Delargy left the meeting at 5.16pm*

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

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme for December 2021 and January 2022.

### **9. Correspondence**

- i. The Committee noted a communique following the 36<sup>th</sup> British-Irish Council Summit on the 19 November 2021.
- ii. The Committee noted correspondence from the First Minister and deputy First Minister in relation to Historical Institutional Abuse and the recommendations of the Hart Inquiry.
- iii. The Committee noted a ministerial statement from the First Minister and deputy First Minister regarding the Truth Recovery Design Panel report recommendations on the 15 November 2021.



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- iv. The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister of Health to Mark Durkan MLA regarding the NDNA Commitment for additional funding to support Derry/ Londonderry Addiction Centre.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ask for an update on NDNA commitments and an action plan for each commitment.

- v. The Committee noted correspondence from The Executive Office to the Committee for Finance in relation to NDNA Unique Circumstances Funding.
- vi. The Committee noted correspondence from The Executive Office regarding the appointment of new board members to the Victims and Survivors Service Board.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ask for the terms of reference for these appointments.

- vii. The Committee noted correspondence from The Executive Office in relation to Historical Institutional Abuse and the Redress review process.
- viii. The Committee noted correspondence from The Executive Office regarding the High Street Task Force Call for Evidence.
- ix. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for the Economy to the Executive Office in relation to the Customs Declaration Service.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ask for an update on the Customs Declaration Service.

- x. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for the Economy in relation to the Covid Taskforce and ventilation in high risk settings.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ask whether the Covid Task Force is considering providing grants for ventilation in high risk settings.



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- xi. The Committee noted correspondence from the Clerk to the Youth Assembly regarding the establishment of Youth Assembly Committees.
- xii. The Committee noted correspondence from The Commissioner for Survivors of Institutional Childhood Abuse (COSICA) in relation to their view on apology to Victims and Survivors of Historical Institutional Abuse.
- xiii. The Committee noted an invitation from the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission to the launch of the 2021 Annual Human Rights Statement.
- xiv. The Committee noted correspondence from Queens University Belfast regarding their Green Paper highlighting key issues and solutions for poor productivity in Northern Ireland.
- xv. The Committee noted correspondence from Foyle International Language School in relation to support for English language teaching sector in Northern Ireland.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Committee for Economy.

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

None.

Alex Easton left the meeting at 5.24pm

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

The next Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday 1 December 2021 at 2:00pm, in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.



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The meeting was adjourned at 5:25pm.

**Sinéad McLaughlin**

**Chairperson, Committee for the Executive Office**