



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

# Committee for Health

## Minutes of Proceedings

Tuesday, 1 March 2022

**Meeting Location:** Room 32, Parliament Buildings

**Present:**

Colm Gildernew MLA (Chairperson)

Pam Cameron MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Paula Bradshaw MLA

Alan Chambers MLA

Deborah Erskine MLA

**Present by Video or Teleconference:**

Órlaithí Flynn MLA

Carál Ní Chuilín MLA

**Apologies:**

Gerry Carroll MLA

Colin McGrath MLA

**In Attendance:**

Keith McBride (Clerk)



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Brendan Miskelly (Clerical Supervisor)

Chris McAfee (Clerical Officer)

**In Attendance by Video or Teleconference:**

Roisin Donnelly (Assistant Clerk)

Deirdre Farry (Assistant Clerk)

Ellen Wilson (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced at 12.47 pm in public session.

**1. Apologies**

As above.

The Chairperson advised that that under Standing Order 115 (6), Deborah Erskine had delegated authority to Pam Cameron to vote on her behalf in the event that she needed to leave the meeting early.

**2. Abortion Services (Safe Access Zones) Bill – Consideration of Bill Sponsor Amendments**

The Bill Sponsor, Clare Bailey MLA and Aine Groogan, Green Party Constituency Officer and Researcher joined the meeting at 12.47 pm.

The Bill Sponsor outlined the amendments that she intends to bring forward at Further Consideration Stage of the Abortion Services (Safe Access Zones) Bill.

A question and answer session followed.

The Chairperson thanked Ms Bailey and Ms Groogan for their attendance.



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The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Health on the Bill Sponsor's amendments.

The Committee discussed the Bill Sponsor's proposed amendments.

Pam Cameron and Deborah Erskine confirmed their position that patients, staff and visitors entering health and care premises should be free to do so without harassment or abuse. However, their Party had concerns with the Bill and they would therefore not support the clauses of the Bill or the amendments proposed by the Bill Sponsor.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content to support the Bill Sponsor's amendments.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that the Chairperson would not move the Committee's amendment to Clause 2 as it was no longer required.

*The meeting was suspended at 1.02 pm and resumed at 1.06 pm.*

*Órlaithí Flynn joined the meeting at 1.06 pm.*

### **3. Adoption and Children Bill – Consideration of Department of Health Amendments**

The following officials from the Department of Health joined the meeting by video-conference at 1.06 pm:

Eilis McDaniel, Director of Family and Children's Policy; and

Julie Stephenson, Head of Adoption and Children's Bill Team.

Ms McDaniel outlined the Department of Health amendments that the Minister intends to bring forward at Further Consideration Stage of the Adoption and Children Bill.



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- Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content to support the Department's amendments to Clauses 119 and 158.
- Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was not content to support the Department's amendment to Clauses 122 and agreed to ask the Department to consider revising the amendment to include learning and development alongside achievement and development in education and training.
- Agreed:** The Committee agreed to ask the Bill Office to prepare a draft amendment to reflect its agreed position on Clause 122 which it would consider and agreed, if necessary, by correspondence after the meeting.

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

The next meeting of the Committee for Health would be an informal meeting taking place at 10.00 am on Thursday, 3 March 2022 at the Junction, Dungannon.

The meeting was adjourned at 1.24 pm.

**Colm Gildernew MLA**  
**Chairperson, Committee for Health**