



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR JUSTICE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY 4 JUNE 2020

Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, Belfast

Present: Mr Paul Givan MLA (Chairperson)
Ms Linda Dillon MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Doug Beattie MLA
Ms Sinéad Bradley MLA*
Mr Gordon Dunne MLA
Mr Paul Frew MLA*
Ms Rachel Woods MLA

* These Members attended the meeting via telephone conferencing

Apologies: Ms Jemma Dolan MLA
Ms Emma Rogan MLA

In Attendance: Mrs Christine Darrah (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Peter Madine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Miss Leanne Johnston (Clerical Supervisor)

The meeting commenced at 10:37a.m. in open session.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the oral evidence sessions should be reported by Hansard.

1. Apologies

As above.

The Clerk informed the Committee that, under Standing Order 115(6), Ms Dolan and Ms Rogan had delegated authority to the Deputy Chairperson, Ms Dillon, to vote on their behalf.

2. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 28 May 2020.

3. Matters Arising

The Committee noted that the debate on the Legislative Consent Motion on the Birmingham Commonwealth Games Bill was scheduled to take place on Tuesday 9 June 2020.

4. Department of Justice Finance and Budget Update

The following officials joined the meeting at 10:39 a.m.:

Mr Peter May, Permanent Secretary, Department of Justice
Ms Deborah Brown, Director, Justice Delivery Directorate, Department of Justice
Ms Louise Blair, Financial Planning, Strategy and Support Team, Financial Services Division, Department of Justice

The officials provided the Committee with an update on the Department's budget and financial position.

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

The Permanent Secretary agreed to provide further information on a range of issues.

The oral evidence session was reported by Hansard.

The Chairperson thanked the Permanent Secretary and officials for their attendance.

Mr May and Ms Blair left the meeting. Ms Brown remained for the next agenda item.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to send the questions on the budget and financial position that were not covered in the oral evidence session to the Department of Justice for a written response.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider the information to be provided by the Department of Justice on the June Monitoring Round 2020 and the written response to the questions on the budget before deciding whether a further oral evidence session was necessary.

The Committee noted the response from the Minister of Justice to the Committee's letter on the issues she had raised following the 2020-21 budget debate.

5. Department of Justice Covid-19 Response and Recovery Planning

The following officials joined Ms Brown in the meeting at 11:57 a.m.:

Mr Glyn Capper, Acting Director of Access to Justice, Department of Justice
Mr Stephen Martin, Deputy Director of the Departmental Covid-19 Operations Centre, Department of Justice

The officials provided an update on the Department of Justice's Covid-19 response and recovery planning.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

The oral evidence session was reported by Hansard

The Chairperson thanked the officials for their attendance.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a copy of the Department of Justice Recovery Plan when available and further information on the recovery plans for the NI Courts and Tribunals Service and other justice bodies/agencies.

6. Legislative Consent Motion – Air Traffic Management and Unmanned Aircraft Bill – Draft Committee Report

The Committee considered a draft report on the Legislative Consent Memorandum on the provisions in the Air Traffic Management and Unmanned Aircraft Bill to be extended to Northern Ireland and the Legislative Consent Motion to be brought forward by the Minister of Justice.

Title Page, Contents Page and Committee Membership and Powers Page

The Committee considered the Title Page, Contents Page and Committee Membership and Powers Page as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Title Page, Contents Page and Committee Membership and Powers Page.

Background

The Committee considered the Background section of the report (paragraphs 1 to 4) as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Background section of the report.

Purpose of the Legislative Consent Motion

The Committee considered the Purpose of the Legislative Consent Motion section of the report (paragraphs 5 to 7) as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Purpose of the Legislative Consent Motion section of the report.

Committee Consideration of the Legislative Consent Motion

The Committee considered the Committee Consideration of the Legislative Consent Motion section of the report (paragraphs 8 to 11) as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Committee Consideration of the Legislative Consent Motion section of the report.

Conclusion

The Committee considered the Conclusion Section of the report as drafted (paragraph 12).

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Conclusion Section of the report.

Appendices

The Committee considered the Appendices section of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content that the Appendices be included in the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for the Chairman to approve the Minutes of Proceedings of this meeting for inclusion in the report. They would then be replaced by the final version of the Minutes of Proceedings once agreed by the Committee at the next meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for the Report on the Air Traffic and Unmanned Aircraft Bill Legislative Consent Motion to be published and issued to all MLAs.

7. Legislative Consent Motion – Domestic Abuse Bill

The Committee considered information provided by the Department of Justice on a proposal for a Legislative Consent Motion to extend provisions of the Domestic Abuse Bill relating to extending the power of the courts in Northern Ireland to try in the home jurisdiction certain sexual and violent offences which have been committed abroad by way of a Legislative Consent Motion.

The Committee noted that the Department of Justice had confirmed that the LCM would have no impact on the Domestic Abuse and Family Proceedings Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Department of Justice's proposal to extend the provisions of the Domestic Abuse Bill relating to extending the power of the courts in Northern Ireland to try in the home jurisdiction certain sexual and violent offences which have been committed abroad by way of a Legislative Consent Motion.

8. The Northern Ireland Criminal Injuries Compensation (Amendment 2020) Scheme (2009)

The Committee considered The Northern Ireland Criminal Injuries Compensation (Amendment 2020) Scheme (2009) which would allow victims of a crime between 1 March 1969 and 30 June 1988 living as a member of the same household as their assailant to apply for Criminal Injuries Compensation.

Agreed: The Committee considered the draft Northern Ireland Criminal Injuries Compensation (Amendment 2020) Scheme (2009) and recommended that it be approved by the Assembly.

9. Committee Forward Work Programme

The Committee considered a draft Forward Work Programme for June 2020 and noted that arrangements had been finalised for the oral evidence sessions with Women's Aid Federation and the Men's Advisory Project on the Domestic Abuse and Family Proceedings Bill for the meeting on 11 June 2020.

The Committee considered further information provided by the Minister of Justice on a range of work items that the Department wished to progress before summer recess and the rationale for considering them urgent or essential.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule an additional Committee meeting at 1.00 p.m. on Tuesday 9 June 2020 to consider a range of written papers.

Agreed: Further consideration will be given on a weekly basis to the need for additional meetings.

Agreed: Committee meetings on Thursdays during June would commence at 10.30 a.m.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider a written briefing paper from the Department on the Outcome of the Consultation on the Live Links Provision in the Justice (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill and Proposed Next Steps. An oral evidence session would then be scheduled if considered necessary.

10. Correspondence

The Committee noted the following:

- i. A response from the Department of Justice providing further information on the Programme for Government (PfG) Outcome 7 Respect Index indicator and the current position regarding the 2020-21 PfG.
- ii. A response from the Department of Justice outlining the revised timescale for the provision of the Five Year Problem Solving Justice Strategic Plan.
- iii. The Investment Strategy Northern Ireland – Department of Justice's Procurement Activity Report for May 2020.

11. Chairperson's Business

None.

12. Any Other Business

None.

13. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 9 June 2020 at 1.00 p.m. in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 12.53 p.m.

Mr Paul Givan MLA
Chairperson, Committee for Justice