



Northern Ireland Assembly

COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNITIES

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Thursday 30 June 2016

Room 29 Parliament Buildings

Present: Colum Eastwood MLA (Chairperson)
Michelle Gildernew MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Steven Agnew MLA
Jonathan Bell MLA
Nichola Mallon MLA
Fra McCann MLA
Adrian McQuillan MLA
Carál Ní Chuilín MLA
Christopher Stalford MLA

In Attendance: Kevin Pelan (Assembly Clerk)
Ashleigh Mitford (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Stewart Kennedy (Clerical Supervisor)
Oliver Bellew (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Andy Allen MLA
Naomi Long MLA

The meeting commenced in open session at 9.55 am

1. Apologies

Apologies are recorded above.

2. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The draft minutes of the meeting of 23 June 2016 were agreed.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson advised members that he will aim to finish the meeting at 12pm so members can attend the Simon Community event on homelessness in room 115.

The Chairperson informed members that it is normal practice for committees to delegate authority to the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson during periods of recess to submit views on the releasing or withholding of information in any non-routine or contentious FoI requests received.

Agreed: Members were content to continue with this practice.

4. Matters Arising

The committee noted the Examiner of Statutory Rules in her report had drawn the committee's attention to difficulties that were experienced in the drafting of The Landlord Registration Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016.

The committee also noted that the Examiner had not identified any other issues with SRs under the remit of the Department for Communities in her report.

Agreed: The committee agreed to deal with secondary legislation and correspondence ahead of the Minister's arrival.

5. SL1 The Employers Duties (Implementation) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016

The committee noted the SL1.

Agreed: The committee agreed that it was content for the Rule to be made.

Agreed: The committee agreed to seek clarification from the Department in relation to its assessment that an Equality Impact Assessment is not necessary.

6. SL1 The Hybrid Schemes Quality Requirements (Amendment) Rules (Northern Ireland) 2016

The committee noted the SL1 which is not subject to Assembly procedure.

7. Correspondence

The committee noted a correspondence memo and a number of items of tabled correspondence.

The Chairperson advised members that the committee can expect a large number of invitations from stakeholder groups.

Agreed: The committee agreed that these invitations will be included in weekly meeting packs under correspondence and that members will indicate to the committee office by noon on the Monday following each meeting if they wish to attend. Should a member *not* notify the committee office then this will be taken as an indication that the member is not going to attend.

The committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance in relation to committee engagement in the budget process.

Agreed: The committee agreed that the Clerk write to the Department to ascertain whether it can accommodate the suggested timetable and update the Forward Work Programme accordingly.

The committee noted a number of written responses from the Department in relation to the recommendations contained in the 2011-16 Committee Legacy Reports.

Carál Ní Chuilín declared an interest as the former Minister for Culture, Arts & Leisure.

Agreed: While the committee agreed to note the updates and return to them at the strategic planning day in September, the committee agreed to follow up with the Department in relation to the Housing Amendment Bill update. Some concern was expressed that progress to date against the Committee for Social Development's recommendations was not as expected.

Agreed: The committee agreed to action all correspondence as outlined on the correspondence memo.

Agreed: The committee agreed that the committee office issue a correspondence pack to members half way through Summer.

8. Ministerial Briefing - Priorities for the Department for Communities

The Minister for Communities joined the meeting at 10.01 am

The Minister briefed the committee and was accompanied by the following departmental officials:

- Tommy O'Reilly – Deputy Secretary, Working Age;
- Ian Maye – Deputy Secretary, Community Cohesion; and
- Bernie Rooney, Director of Housing – Performance & Governance.

Christopher Stalford joined the meeting at 10.06 am

The Minister's briefing was followed by questions from members.

Michelle Gildernew joined the meeting at 10.14am

The Minister and his officials left the meeting at 11.25 am

A number of issues were to be followed up in writing, including how the Minister considers that the Department could engage the committee in the Programme for Government process.

This session was recorded by Hansard

(Ian Maye remained at the table)

9. Community Cohesion – Briefing by the Deputy Secretary

The committee noted a memo from the Clerk.

The following departmental officials joined Ian Maye at the table at 11.26 am:

- Mr Fergus Devitt, Director - Active Communities Division;
- Mr Arthur Scott, Director - Voluntary & Community Division; and
- Ms Denise Stockman, Director - Capital Division.

The officials briefed the committee and this was followed by questions from members.

The officials left the meeting at 12.02 pm

10. Briefing on innovative approaches to stakeholder engagement

The committee noted a briefing paper.

The following witnesses joined the meeting at 12.05pm

- Mr Paul Braithwaite, Programme Leader, Building Change Trust;
- Mr Colm Burns, Chair, Northern Ireland Open Government Network;
- Ms Karin Eyben, Project Coordinator, Corrymeela;
- Ms Louise O'Kane, Planner, Community Places;
- Ms Patricia Donald, Head of ICT, Advice NI; and
- Mr Tim Hughes, Open Government Programme Manager, Involve

The witnesses briefed the committee and this was followed by questions from members.

Fra McCann and Nichola Mallon left the meeting to attend a Simon Community event at 12.10pm

The witnesses left the meeting at 12.42 pm

Agreed: The committee agreed that the clerk work with the witnesses and others to design an engagement framework that will form the basis of the committee strategic engagement plan.

Agreed: The committee agreed to include equality specialists amongst those they partner with in developing the engagement plan.

11. Forward Work Programme

Agreed: The committee agreed the draft Forward Work Programme.

12. AOB

Agreed: The Committee agreed to support the launch the Vital Signs project report.

13. Date, time and location of the next meeting

The Chairperson reminded members that the Committee has agreed to hold its strategic planning day at the Mount in Belfast on Thursday 8 September 2016 at 10am.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that officials should arrange transport from Parliament Buildings to the venue.

The next **formal** meeting of the Committee for Communities will take place on Thursday 15 September 2016 at 10.00 am in room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12.45 pm

Colum Eastwood MLA

Chairperson, Committee for Communities

15 September 2016