



Northern Ireland
Assembly
Committee for Education
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
WEDNESDAY 26 JUNE 2013
The SENATE CHAMBER

Present:

Mervyn Storey MLA (Chairperson)
Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Jo-Anne Dobson MLA
Brenda Hale MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Michelle McIlveen MLA
Seán Rogers MLA
Pat Sheehan MLA

In Attendance:

Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Christopher McNickle (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Sharon McGurk (Clerical Supervisor)
Sharon Young (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: None

The meeting commenced in public session at 10.05 am.

1. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

2. Chairperson's Business

2.1 The Chair noted with disappointment that, at the previous Committee meeting, the current Chief Executive of the Belfast Education and Library Board had repeatedly declined to answer questions covering the recent history of the BELB albeit that the events in question occurred during the tenure of her predecessor.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Belfast Education and Library Board to seek an explanation of the relevant decisions by the Board pre-

February 2013 in respect of Orangefield High School and Area Planning in East and South Belfast.

2.2 The Committee considered an Assembly Written Question 23845/11-15 regarding cross-border school transport and relevant guidance from the Minister of Environment on the cabotage issue.

Agreed: the Committee agreed to write to the Minister of Environment to seek sight of the relevant guidance when it is published.

2.3 The Committee noted a Departmental press release relating to 2012-13 Teacher Workforce statistics.

Danny Kinahan joined the meeting at 10.12am

2.4 The Committee considered a report entitled: Taking Boys Seriously, which deals with the educational experience of adolescent boys.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite the author of the report – Dr Ken Harland - to brief the Committee after summer recess.

Jo-Anne Dobson joined the meeting at 10.13am

2.5 The Chairperson updated the Committee on the progress of the electronic committee pack system.

3. Draft Minutes of 19 June 2013

Agreed: The draft minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2013 were agreed by the Committee.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 The Committee considered a draft Press Release regarding its Inquiry into the Education and Training Inspectorate and the School Improvement Process.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for the Press Release to be published.

4.2 Members discussed recent press reports relating to academic selection; the establishment of ESA; and other educational matters.

Chris Hazzard joined the meeting at 10.20am

5. Briefing from the Department on the consultation on the revised Common Funding Scheme.

The Committee noted that the Department has not provided a briefing paper. The briefing was therefore rescheduled.

6. Briefing from the College of Occupational Therapists

Witnesses joined the meeting at 10.21am

Kate Lesslar, Policy Officer, Northern Ireland, College of Occupational Therapists; Sandra Allen, Service Lead for Children's Occupational Therapy; Margaret McConville, Occupational Therapist: Advanced Practitioner in Autism and Chair of the College of Occupational Therapists Specialist Section; and Lorraine Ringland, Service Lead for Children's Occupational Therapy briefed the Committee.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

Trevor Lunn left the meeting at 10.41am

Jonathan Craig joined the meeting at 10.59am

Brenda Hale joined the meeting at 11.23am

Members recorded their thanks and appreciation to all involved in the recent development of post-16 SEN provision at Beechlawn School in Lisburn.

Jo-Anne Dobson left the meeting at 11.26am

Pat Sheehan left the meeting at 11.34am

Witnesses left the meeting at 11.37am

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the College of Occupational Therapists to seek information on a 2007 pilot project which promoted collaboration between occupational therapists and teachers within the classroom.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the COT briefing paper to the Department and to the Committee for Health, Social Services and Public Safety for comment.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Public Health Agency to seek an update on the review of multidisciplinary teams and educational interfaces.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to seek information on how its Children and Young People Strategy co-ordinates with the services provided by the College of Occupational Therapists.

Jo-Anne Dobson returned to the meeting at 11.42am

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Clerk should update the cross-cutting issues paper for Employment and Learning and produce an additional paper on possible areas of joint working with the Committee for Health, Social Services and Public Safety.

7. Briefing from the Irish Rugby Football Union Ulster Branch on Sport in Schools

Witnesses joined the meeting at 11.43am

Shane Logan, Chief Executive, Ulster Branch, IRFU; and David Boyd, Domestic Rugby Manager, Ulster Branch, IRFU briefed the Committee on Sport in Schools

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

Brenda Hale left the meeting at 12.11pm

Seán Rogers left the meeting at 12.11pm

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward Departmental correspondence to the IRFU for information.

Seán Rogers returned to the meeting at 12.26pm

Officials left the meeting at 12.30pm.

Jo-Anne Dobson left the meeting at 12.30pm

Jonathan Craig left the meeting at 12.30pm

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to indicate its unanimous support for the refocusing of the Curriculum Sports Programme (CSP) to include in the first instance Rugby and to also suggest consideration of the inclusion of other school sports in the CSP.

Jo-Anne Dobson returned to the meeting at 12.32pm

Jonathan Craig returned to the meeting at 12.33pm

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to also seek information on the extent of its input into the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure's Sport Matters strategy – in particular the contribution to providing 700 newly training coaches.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek an update on its community access guidance covering the use of the schools' estate.

8. Correspondence

8.1 The Committee noted correspondence from the Western Education and Library Board regarding the progress of a new build at Foyle College.

8.2 The Committee considered correspondence from a concerned parent regarding delays in the provision of a mobile classroom for St Patrick's Primary School Burrenreagh.

Members expressed concerns that Area Planning delays were having an adverse impact on Development Proposals for expansion at popular schools.

8.3 The Committee noted correspondence from a concerned pupil regarding the proposed closure of Clintyclay Primary School.

8.4 The Committee considered correspondence from a member of the public regarding the Craigavon Area Plan.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Department for comment

8.5 The Committee considered correspondence from the Belfast Education and Library Board regarding the funding of the Replay Theatre Company's Bliss Project.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Replay Theatre Company.

8.6 The Committee noted correspondence from Attendance Solutions.

8.7 The Committee considered correspondence from the Department regarding its consideration of a briefing paper provided by the National Deaf Children's Society.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the National Deaf Children's Society.

8.8 The Committee considered correspondence from PTA-NI regarding recent NI Gold Star award winners.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write a letter of congratulation to each of the winners.

8.9 The Committee considered correspondence regarding the Delivering Social Change Signature Project.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to respond and enclose previous Departmental correspondence on this matter.

8.10 The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel regarding Financial Forecasting Data.

8.11 The Committee considered correspondence from the North Coast Integrated College regarding a request to meet with the Committee to discuss the proposed Coleraine Education Village.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the North Coast Integrated College to seek further information on the proposed Coleraine Education Village.

8.12 The Committee noted correspondence from Parents and Friends Association of Belmont House School regarding the proposed merger of Foyleview and Belmont Schools.

8.13 The Committee considered correspondence from the Department in response to concerns from parents regarding restrictions on admission to Loughbrickland Primary School.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the concerned parents for information.

8.14 The Committee noted correspondence from the Department regarding Priorities for Youth and development of advisory groups.

8.15 The Committee considered correspondence from the Department of Regional Development regarding the Safer Routes to Schools Initiative.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Committee for Health, Social Services and Public Safety for information.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for Regional Development to seek more information on the training programme for schools and the related capital projects.

8.16 The Committee considered correspondence from pupils from Coleraine High School regarding Area Plan proposals involving their school.

Members recorded their concerns in respect of recent changes to the relevant Area Plan.

8.17 The Committee considered correspondence from Magherafelt Nursery School regarding the Development Proposal to establish a Full-Time, Grant-Aided, Irish-Medium Nursery Unit of Gaelscoil an tSeanchaí.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department and to the North Eastern Education and Library Board to seek further information on the Development Proposal.

8.18 The Committee noted correspondence from SEELB regarding the June Monitoring Round

9. Any Other Business

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to CCEA regarding attendance by Members at Levels of Progression workshops for schools.

The Committee considered opportunities for schools in respect of the Department for Enterprise, Trade and Investment's Renewable Heat Incentive.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek information on what guidance it provides for schools regarding the uptake of the Renewable Heat Incentive.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to seek information on how schools can avail of the Renewable Heat Incentive.

10. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted that at the meeting scheduled for Wednesday 3rd July it would receive a briefing from Angel Eyes; RNIB and Guide Dogs NI.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to extend the invitation to the briefing to Jordanstown School.

11. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 3rd July 2013 at 9:30 am in the Senate Chamber.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12.53pm.

Mervyn Storey
Chairperson, Committee for Education
3 July 2013