



Northern Ireland
Assembly
Committee for Education
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
WEDNESDAY 18th June 2014
CORINTHIAN CONFERENCE ROOM, FERMANAGH HOUSE, ENNISKILLEN

Present:

Mervyn Storey MLA (Chairperson)
Jo-Anne Dobson MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Seán Rogers MLA

In Attendance:

Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Sharon McGurk (Clerical Supervisor)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies:

Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Maeve McLaughlin MLA
Stephen Moutray MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Pat Sheehan MLA

The meeting commenced in public session at 10:05am without a decision-making quorum. The Committee proceeded to hear evidence under the provisions of Standing Order 49(5).

The Committee agreed to alter the order of its agenda as indicated below.

1. Sharing in Education Programme – briefing by the International Fund for Ireland; Education and Training Inspectorate; University of Ulster.

The following witnesses joined the meeting at 10:07am:

Dr Adrian Johnston, Chairperson of the Board of the International Fund for Ireland; Professor Colin Knox, University of Ulster; and John Hunter, Education and Training Inspectorate, Department of Education, briefed the Committee on the Sharing in Education Programme.

10:17am Jo-Anne Dobson joined the meeting. The Committee gained a decision-making quorum.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

11:08am Sean Rogers left the meeting. The Committee lost its decision-making quorum but continued to hear evidence under the provisions of Standing Order 49(5).

11:10am Sean Rogers rejoined the meeting. The Committee regained its decision-making quorum

11:37am Jo-Anne Dobson left the meeting. The Committee lost its decision-making quorum but continued to hear evidence under the provisions of Standing Order 49(5).

The witnesses left the meeting at 11:39am.

2. Shared Education – briefing by the Fermanagh Trust

The following witnesses joined the meeting at 11:40am:

Lauri McCusker, Director of the Fermanagh Trust and Catherine Ward, Shared Education Programme Manager, Fermanagh Trust, briefed the Committee on Shared Education.

The Committee noted a briefing paper from the Fermanagh Trust.

11:45am Jo-Anne Dobson rejoined the meeting. The Committee regained its decision-making quorum.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

The witnesses left the meeting at 12:38pm.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Fermanagh Trust seeking written information on the socio-economic and other benefits of Shared Education particularly in rural areas.

3. Assembly Research- written briefings

The Committee considered the following written papers provided by Assembly Research:

- Primary Science: Teaching Time and Enquiry-Based Learning
- Teacher Training

- Services for Children with Visual Impairment
- Visual Impairment and Educational Attainment

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note these papers and seek a further paper setting out ongoing professional development for science teachers in Northern Ireland.

4. Apologies:

Apologies were as indicated above.

5. Chairperson's Business

5.1 Death of 2 pupils

The Committee noted recent reports of 2 separate tragic deaths of school pupils – one from Holy Cross boys' Primary School and another from Ballycastle Integrated Primary School.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the principals of both schools expressing its sympathies

5.2 CCEA – Industrial Action

The Committee noted reports that some CCEA staff are undertaking industrial action relating to the allocation of Time Off In Lieu (TOIL).

Agreed: The Committee agreed write to CCEA seeking clarity on the reported dispute and assurance in respect of the completion of examinations and the timely publication of results.

6. Minutes of previous meeting

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of its meeting of 11 June 2014.

7. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

8. Correspondence

8.1 The Committee noted correspondence from Loughside Concerned Residents expressing opposition to a proposed Shared Sport Campus in North Belfast.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward this correspondence to the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure for its information.

8.2 The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister enclosing an Assembly Research paper entitled 'Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Northern Ireland'.

8.3 The Committee noted a response from the Chairperson of the Home to School Transport Review.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to seek to arrange a briefing with the Chairperson of the review in respect of the interim findings.

8.4 The Committee noted an invitation from Sentinus to attend the Young Innovators Event at the Odyssey Arena on Friday 20 June 2014.

8.5 The Committee noted an informal contact from Altram – an Early Years Irish Medium Education (IME) organisation.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward recent correspondence, from the Department of Education and the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure in respect of the funding of IME organisations, to Altram for its information.

9. Draft Forward Work Programme

The Committee considered its draft Forward Work Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to seek a Departmental briefing on the Savings Delivery Plan at its meeting on 10 September 2014.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with its Forward Work Programme as amended.

10. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

11. Date, Time, Place of Next Meeting

The Committee will meet again on Wednesday 25 June 2014 at 10:00am in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:48pm.

Mervyn Storey
Chairperson, Committee for Education
25 June 2014