



Northern Ireland
Assembly
Committee for Education
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
WEDNESDAY 14 JANUARY 2015
RYANDALE INN, MOY

Present:

Michelle McIlveen MLA (Chairperson)
Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Trevor Lunn MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Nelson McCausland MLA
Sandra Overend MLA
Sean Rogers MLA

In Attendance:

Peter McCallion (Assembly Clerk)
Paula Best (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Kevin Marks (Clerical Supervisor)
Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies:

Jonathan Craig MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA

The meeting commenced in private session at 10.28am

1. Forward Work Programme

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Clerk should prepare a list of all ongoing Departmental consultations.

The Committee considered its draft Forward Work Programme.

The Committee noted that it would receive a Departmental briefing on CRED/Shared Education policy and the draft Shared Education Bill at next week's meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing on the Review of the Careers Strategy from the report author - Brian Ambrose - on 28 January 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule an additional meeting on Tuesday 3 February 2015 to hear evidence on the Independent Review of Home to School Transport and agreed to meet the travel costs for the report author - Sian Thornthwaite.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing on School Starting Age Flexibility on 25 March 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed its Forward Work Programme as drafted.

Agreed: Subject to the agreement of the Committee for Health, Social Services and Public Safety, the Committee agreed a format and invitation letter for the joint Committee stakeholder event on 18 March 2015 to discuss the provision of health services to support access to the curriculum for school children.

Agreed: Subject to the agreement of the Committee for Health, Social Services and Public Safety, the Committee also agreed to amend its invitee list for the joint Committee stakeholder event in order to include all Special Schools; the Fostering Network; the Middletown Centre for Autism; relevant unions and a number of primary schools.

The meeting entered public session at 10.39am.

2. Apologies

Apologies were as indicated above.

3. Chairperson's Business

3.1 The Chairperson noted the very successful visit to the BT Young Scientist Exhibition and Members' informal meetings with: Educate Together and Members of the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Education and Social Protection.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to all those involved in the visit to thank them for their time and hospitality.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to congratulate all schools in Northern Ireland who participated in the BT Young Scientist Exhibition.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking information on the support provided to schools in order to encourage participation in the BT Young Scientist Exhibition.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to commission a paper from Assembly Research detailing STEM events/exhibitions/festivals for schools in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee also agreed to give further consideration at a later date to the promotion of participation in STEM events/festivals by schools in Northern Ireland.

3.2 The Chairperson noted that the Annual Reports and Accounts for 2013-14 for the North Eastern Education and Library Board; the South Eastern Education and Library Board and the Southern Education and Library Board have been laid in the Business Office.

4. Minutes of previous meetings

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of its meetings held on 9 December 2014 and 10 December 2014.

5. Matters Arising

Agreed: The Committee noted further submissions to its inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education and agreed that they should be published on the Committee's webpage and included in the inquiry report.

6. Departmental Briefing - Together: Building a United Community – Shared Campuses Programme

Departmental officials joined the meeting at 10.49am.

Jacqui Durkin, Director of Area Planning and Roisin Lilley, Shared Education Campuses Manager briefed the Committee on the Department's Shared Campuses Programme – Together: Building a United Community (TBUC).

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

Nelson McCausland joined the meeting at 11.34am.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek the revised scoring criteria for the second call for Shared Campus projects as well as a timeline and further information on the successful projects in the first call.

Officials left the meeting at 11.43am.

7. SR 2014/310 – The Teachers' Pension Scheme Regulations (NI) 2014

The Committee deferred consideration of SR 2014/310 – The Teachers' Pension Scheme Regulations (NI) 2014.

8. SL1 - The Teachers' Pensions (Transitional and Consequential Provisions) Regulations (NI) 2015

The Committee deferred consideration of The Teachers' Pensions (Transitional and Consequential Provisions) Regulations (NI) 2015.

9. Correspondence

9.1 The Committee noted an index of incoming correspondence.

9.2 The Committee noted responses from the Department of Education and Kilcoan Primary School relating to Temporary Variations (TVs) for some "Other Maintained" schools.

9.3 The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister for Education regarding the appointment of the Interim Chief Executive of the Education Authority and the timeline for the appointment of the membership of the Education Authority Board.

9.4 The Committee noted 2 responses from the Department of Education to Committee queries relating to the Child Sexual Exploitation in Northern Ireland Inquiry Report – the Marshall Report. The Committee also noted a response from the Department to Committee queries in regards to Pupil Health and Wellbeing Policy relating to Autism.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department of Education to ask that it be kept informed of any further Departmental action relating to the Marshall Report findings.

9.5 The Committee noted a response from the Department of Education offering to brief the Committee on the advancement of post-primary Irish Medium Education.

9.6 The Committee noted a response from the Department and the Minister for Education regarding the publication of the Independent Review of Home to School Transport – a consultation is to be launched in the New Year.

9.7 The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Education and the Committee for Regional Development regarding a briefing on the Active Travel Programme in Schools on 14 January 2015.

9.8 The Committee noted correspondence from St Mary's High School, Downpatrick, enclosing a copy of correspondence to the Minister for Education regarding an industrial relations issue.

9.9 The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Education providing a summary of DE proposals for the January 2014-15 Monitoring Round.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department of Education to seek clarity in respect of the absence of resource bids and the reduction in capital allocations for the Lisanelly project.

9.10 The Committee noted a copy of the DE December Capital Programme Report.

9.11 The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel regarding the completion of Post Project Evaluations by Departments.

9.12 The Committee noted correspondence from the Southern Education and Library Board providing information on its Complaints Procedures.

9.13 The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Education regarding the publication of the report of the Review of the Careers Strategy.

9.14 The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Education to Committee queries regarding funding to enhance access to the curriculum for disabled pupils who attend mainstream schools.

9.15 The Committee noted an invitation from the Science & Technology Facilities Council for Members to attend a preview of The Incredible Power of Light event on Thursday 19 February 2015 in the Ulster Museum, Botanic Gardens, Belfast from 7.00pm - 9.00pm.

9.16 The Committee noted invitations from the Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education for Members to attend:

- the Annual Service of Prayers for Christian Unity on Sunday 25th January 2015 at 3.00pm in Slemish Integrated College, Larne Road, Ballymena; and
- the Holocaust Memorial Day event on Tuesday 27 January 2015 at the Belfast Synagogue at 11.00am.

9.17 The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development providing a copy of the Annual Progress Report 2014 – Rural White Paper Action Plan.

9.18 The Committee considered a request from Voice of Young People in Care (VOYPIC) to brief the Committee on the most recent version of the report entitled 'Our Life in Care'.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule an informal briefing with VOYPIC on relevant aspects of its report.

9.19 The Committee noted an invitation from Assembly Community Connect to the Chairperson and deputy Chairperson to attend the Assembly Community Connect speed-dating dinner event on 3 March 2015 with CO3 (Chief Officers of the Third Sector) in the Members' Dining Room at 6.00pm.

9.20 The Committee considered correspondence from the Chairperson of the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister enclosing a copy of correspondence to the Minister for Education regarding the draft Northern

Ireland Public Services Ombudsperson Bill (NIPSO Bill) which seeks to bring schools within the remit of NIPSO.

9.21 The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Education in respect of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2015 – in February 2015, a sample of 116 post primary schools will be invited to take part in the study.

9.22 The Committee noted a response from the Department of Education on the use of the Centre for Effective Services - Prevention and Early Intervention in Children & Young People's Services 10 Year Report - in policy development.

9.23 The Committee noted correspondence from the Clerk of the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Education and Social Protection regarding the recent informal meeting.

10. Draft Budget 2015-16 Responses

The Committee noted a large number of responses relating to the Department of Education's Draft Budget 2015-16:

835 responses from the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO); a detailed submission from INTO and a petition with around 5000 signatures

6 responses from concerned parents of St Aloysius Primary School

166 responses from concerned parents of John Paul II Primary School, Belfast

1 response from St Colman's College, Armagh

3 responses from concerned parents

1 response from St Kieran's Primary School

1 response from the Board of Governors of Jonesborough and Dromintee Primary School

6 responses from concerned parents of Dromintee Primary School

1 response from the Governor of a Parish Primary School and Grammar School

11 responses from concerned parents of Jonesboro' Primary School

1 response from St. Joseph's Primary School, Ballymartin

1 response from St. Michael's College, Drumclay

1 response from St. Mary's Limavady

1 response from Roe Valley Learning Community

1 response from St. Joseph's Boys High School, Newry

1 response from the Speedwell Trust

1 response from Colleges Northern Ireland

1 response from Naíscoil Dhoire

1 response from the Governing Bodies Association

1 response from the Chairperson of the Board of Governors for St Patricks P.S, Aughadarragh; St Brigids P.S, Augher; and St Macartans P.S, Clogher

1 response from Sion Mills Primary School

1 response from St Brigid's Primary School

1 response from the Principal of St. Benedict's College

22 responses from concerned parents of St Mary's Primary School, Cargan

1 response from Youth Action Northern Ireland

35 responses from teachers and 203 from parents at St Mary's High School

51 responses from concerned parents of Sacred Heart Boys' Primary School

59 responses from St. Laurence O'Toole's Primary School

27 responses from St. Mary's Primary School, Draperstown

174 responses from Parents, Staff and Governors of Carrick Primary School

53 children's responses from St. James' Primary School, Whiteabbey

27 children's responses from St. Teresa's Primary School, Armagh

1 response from Booktrust Northern Ireland

1 response from Youthnet

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward a copy of the responses to the Minister for Education for comment.

11. Any Other Business

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking further information on the £1m transfer from DE to DCAL relating to City of Culture legacy projects.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking sight of the business case relating to expenditure of around £140k for Irish Medium Youth Work.

12. Date, Time, Place of Next Meeting

The Committee will meet again on Wednesday 21 January 2015 at 10.00am in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 12.04pm.

Michelle McIlveen
Chairperson, Committee for Education
21 January 2015