



Northern Ireland
Assembly
Committee for Education
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
WEDNESDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2015
SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present:

Michelle McIlveen MLA (Chairperson)
Danny Kinahan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Jonathan Craig MLA
Chris Hazzard MLA
Trevor Lunn MLA
Nelson McCausland MLA
Maeve McLaughlin MLA
Robin Newton MLA
Sandra Overend MLA
Seán Rogers MLA
Pat Sheehan MLA

In Attendance:

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

Apologies:

None

The meeting commenced in public session at 10.08am.

The Chairperson, Michelle McIlveen declared an interest indicating that a member of her immediate family is a member of the Equality Commission.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

10.09am Jonathan Craig joined the meeting.

2. Chairperson's Business

2.1 BELB Annual Report 2013-14

The Chairperson advised Members that the Belfast Education and Library Board (BELB) Annual Report for 2013-14 has been published and laid in the Business Office.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking sight of the Inter-Board CRED Business Plan 2014-15 and details of the school training satisfaction survey.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to BELB seeking an explanation in respect of commentary relating to difficulties issuing Personal Education Plans for Looked After Children and the retention of information by Health and Social Care Trusts.

2.2 Welcome

The Chairperson welcomed Kyle Quinn, a student from Wellington College, to the public gallery.

3. Minutes of previous meeting

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of its meeting held on 28 January 2015.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 Shared and Integrated Education Inquiry

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department in respect of the Delivering Social Change Shared Education Signature Project and an Assembly Research paper on Shared and Integrated Education.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the submissions should be published on the Committee's webpage.

5. SL1: The Teachers' Superannuation (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 – Departmental Briefing

Departmental officials joined the meeting at 10.12am.

Seamus Gallagher, Head of Pensions Policy Team and Brian Quinn, Pensions Policy Team briefed the Committee on the SL1 for The Teachers' Superannuation (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

The Committee noted a response from the Department regarding employer and employee contributions for the Northern Ireland Teachers' Pensions Scheme as compared with similar pension schemes.

Officials left the meeting at 10.18am.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for the proposed statutory rule: The Teachers' Superannuation (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 to be laid.

6. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education - Community Relations Council and Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

Witnesses joined the meeting at 10.20am.

Peter Osborne, Chairperson, Community Relations Council; Dympna McGlade, Policy Director, Community Relations Council; Dr Michael Wardlow, Chief Commissioner, Equality Commission NI; and Darren McKinstry, Director of Policy, Equality Commission NI briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

10.48am Pat Sheehan left the meeting.

11.01am Sandra Overend joined the meeting.

11.21am Danny Kinahan left the meeting

11.27am Maeve McLaughlin joined the meeting.

The witnesses left the meeting at 12.14pm.

7. Inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education- Integrated Education Fund; Professor Hamber and Professor Smith

Witnesses joined the meeting at 12.16pm.

Tina Merron, Chief Executive, Integrated Education Fund; Sam Fitzsimmons, Communications Director, Integrated Education Fund; Professor Brandon Hamber, INCORE, University of Ulster; and Professor Alan Smith, UNESCO Chair, University of Ulster briefed the Committee as part of the inquiry into Shared and Integrated Education.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

12.35pm Maeve McLaughlin left the meeting.

1.02pm Seán Rogers left the meeting.

1.25pm Jonathan Craig left the meeting.

The witnesses left the meeting at 1.25pm.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department seeking clarification on whether the Delivering Social Change Shared Education Signature Project (or any other Shared Education programmes) will provide support or guidance to schools wishing to undertake voluntary cross-sectoral amalgamations.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Equality Commission seeking sight of the research commissioned with Queen's University Belfast on Educational Inequalities and further information on the Equality Commission's position in respect of religious instruction in schools and the shared campus proposal for Moy Regional Primary School and St John's Primary School, Moy.

Agreed: The Committee also agreed to write to the Community Relations Council seeking its views on the shared campus proposal for Moy Regional Primary School and St John's Primary School, Moy.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to seek further information on the BBC Spotlight programme regarding the shared campus proposal for Moy Regional Primary School and St John's Primary School, Moy.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Integrated Education Fund seeking further information on the 'Delving Deeper Programme'.

8. Correspondence

8.1 The Committee noted an index of incoming correspondence.

8.2 The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment in respect of its inquiry into the potential for economic growth and job creation following a reduction in corporation tax in Northern Ireland.

8.3 The Committee noted correspondence from Investment Strategy Northern Ireland enclosing the January update of the Department of Education's Capital Programme Activity Report.

8.4 The Committee noted correspondence from the Department informing Members of its consultation on Addressing Bullying in Schools Policy and Bill which closes on 27 February 2015.

8.5 The Committee noted correspondence from the Department in respect of Temporary Variations (TVs) for "Other Maintained" schools, including Seagoe Primary School.

8.6 The Committee noted correspondence to the Chairperson from St. Mary's, Pomeroy requesting the opportunity to present the school's video on internet safety to the Committee.

8.7 The Committee noted an invitation from the Royal Society of Chemistry for Members to attend the NI Science Festival, Body Works Event on Thursday 19 February in W5, Odyssey from 5pm-7pm.

8.8 The Committee noted an invitation from the Policy Forum for Northern Ireland to the Chairperson in respect of a seminar entitled: 'Next steps for school improvement in Northern Ireland' in September / October 2015.

8.9 The Committee noted correspondence regarding reported delays in the Minister's decision regarding Randalstown Central Primary School's Development Proposal.

8.10 The Committee noted a Departmental response to Committee queries regarding the Education and Training Inspectorate Chief Inspector's Report 2012-14. The Department indicated that a revised baseline for English and maths attainment at Key Stages 2 and 3 will be published next month.

9. Draft Forward Work Programme

The Committee considered its draft Forward Work Programme.

The Committee noted a paper from Tony Gallagher, Special Advisor to the Committee on Area Planning.

Agreed: The Committee agreed its Forward Work Programme

10. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

11. Date, Time, Place of Next Meeting

The Committee will meet again on Wednesday 11 February 2015 at 10.00am in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 1.28pm.

Michelle McIlveen
Chairperson, Committee for Education

11 February 2015