



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
WEDNESDAY 9 NOVEMBER 2016
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

- Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Danny Kennedy (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Cathal Boylan
Mr Stewart Dickson
Mr William Irwin
Mr Phillip Logan
Mr Seán Lynch
Mr Christopher Stalford
- Apologies: Mrs Pam Cameron
Mr Richie McPhillips
Mr Philip McGuigan
- In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Committee Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Mrs Andrienne Magee (Clerical Officer)

The meeting began in public session at 2.02pm.

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted as above.

Mr Irwin joined the meeting at 2.03pm.

2. Chairperson's Business

President of Colombia – Invest NI Lunch

The Chairperson advised that he had attended a lunch event organised by Invest NI to mark a visit from the President of Colombia.

European Commission Work Programme

The Committee noted a press release from the European Commission regarding its third annual work programme. Members noted that one of the Committee's responsibilities is to co-ordinate the annual report on the priorities for EU scrutiny that have been identified by Assembly statutory committees.

Agreed: The Committee will produce a Report on behalf of statutory committees on their priorities for EU scrutiny in 2017, which would also include progress against priorities identified for 2016; and to commission information in this regard.

Agreed: The Committee will request input from relevant stakeholders including the Executive Office, Northern Ireland's MEPS, the Committee of the Regions and the European Economic and Social Committee. Draft letters will be available for consideration at the next meeting.

Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities

The Committee considered correspondence from Patrick Yu advising that NICEM had been formally dissolved on 7 November and he could therefore not represent the organisation during the evidence session on the Executive's participation in UN treaty reporting obligations scheduled for 16 November. Mr Yu advised that he was content to appear in a personal capacity as former Executive Director of NICEM.

Agreed: The Committee is content to hear from Mr Yu at the meeting on 16 November on the participation of the NI Executive in UN Treaty reporting obligations on race and other areas of equality.

Agreed: To offer Mr Yu the opportunity to meet with members informally prior to the next Committee meeting to discuss wider issues around the dissolution of NICEM.

Committee invitations

The Committee noted the current list of Committee invitations.

3. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The draft minutes of the proceedings of 26 October 2016 were agreed by the Committee.

4. Matters Arising

UK exit from EU – Executive Office correspondence

The Committee noted the response from the Executive Office to queries made following evidence from senior NICS officials on 5 October on the implications for the NICS of the decision of the UK to withdraw from the EU.

Agreed: To circulate the correspondence to other statutory committees for information.

Agreed: To ask the North South Ministerial Council for sight of the report on border related issues when it has been completed.

UK exit from EU - Committee for the Economy

The Committee noted copy correspondence between the Committee for the Economy and the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland regarding the needs of the local economy in relation to an exit from the EU.

UK exit from EU – Assembly Research

The Committee noted a paper from Assembly Research and Information Service (RaISe) on ‘International Relations outside the EU: Norway and Switzerland’, which examines how those two non-EU member states interact with the EU and other international bodies.

Agreed: To publish the paper on the Committee’s website; and to request an oral briefing from Assembly Research.

Agreed: The Clerk will circulate potential dates for a visit to Brussels early in 2017. The Committee will make a final decision on scheduling the visit at its next meeting.

Draft Budget 2017-18

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance on the draft Budget 2017-18 which included a paper from RaISe.

Agreed: To forward the research paper to the Executive Office for comment in relation to the Department’s proposals for Budget 2017-18. The Committee will also ask the Department to copy its response to the Committee for Finance.

Agreed: To request that TEO officials brief the Committee on the draft Budget 2017-18 on 11 or 18 January 2017.

NI Public Services Ombudsman

The Committee noted the RaISe paper 'Issues relating to public services Ombudsmen and the Police Ombudsman for Northern Ireland'. The paper was commissioned by the Committee following receipt of correspondence from the Northern Ireland Retired Police Association.

Agreed: To request an oral briefing from the Research Officer.

Outstanding Committee Correspondence

The Committee noted the current list of outstanding correspondence.

Agreed: to ask the Department of Health for the reason for the delay in responding to correspondence on the scoping exercises related to the Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry; and to provide a date when a response could be expected.

Agreed: to ask the Executive Office for the reason for the delay in providing comment on the reports of the Expert Panel on Redress; and to provide a date when a response could be expected.

5. Programme for Government 2016-21 – Overview of Programme for Government consultation document

The Committee noted that the Programme for Government (PfG) consultation document was launched on Friday 30 October and that the closing date for responses is Friday 23 December.

The Committee noted that staff are continuing to work with TEO officials to identify a suitable date on which to receive a briefing from the First Minister and deputy First Minister on the PfG consultation document.

Departmental officials joined the meeting at 2.27pm.

Mrs Katrina Godfrey, Director of PfG and NICS of the Future; and Mr Joe Reynolds, Head of PfG, DSC and Strategic Policy, provided a briefing on the draft Programme for Government consultation document.

Mr Stalford joined the meeting at 2.35pm.

A question and answer session followed. The session was recorded by Hansard.

Mr Logan joined the meeting at 2.49pm.

Officials agreed to provide further information on when the NI Executive’s action plan for tackling paramilitary activity will be delivered; and a list of Senior Responsible Officers for the 14 PfG outcomes. Officials also agreed to take on board comments regarding a suggested take note debate on the proposed annual report to the Assembly on progress against key indicators for each outcome.

Departmental officials left the meeting at 3.19pm.

6. Programme for Government 2016-21 – Executive Office commitments

Departmental officials joined the meeting at 3.20pm.

Dr Mark Browne, Director of Strategic Policy, Equality and Good Relations; Mrs Linsey Farrell, Director of Urban Villages, Racial Equality and Interfaces Issues Division; and Mrs Grainne Killen, Acting Head of Good Relations and T:BUC Division, provided a briefing on some of the Executive Office priorities and responsibilities included in the Programme for Government consultation document, primarily relating to Outcome 9: “We are a shared society that respects diversity”.

A question and answer session followed. The session was recorded by Hansard.

Mr Stalford left the meeting at 3.50pm.

Mr Lynch left the meeting at 3.53pm.

Officials agreed to discuss the development of indices relating to respect and reconciliation as part of the Programme for Government data development agenda with the Committee.

Departmental officials left the meeting at 3.59pm.

Agreed: to invite submissions from a number of organisations listed as delivery partners or who have been consulted by TEO in the development of plans, but weren’t included in the original list of stakeholders agreed by the Committee. Members also agreed to request written submissions from the Loyal Orders and the Ancient Order of Hibernians.

Agreed: to request a written briefing from Carnegie UK Trust, given that the work of that organisation has been referenced in the consultation document.

7. Social Investment Fund – Written briefing

The Committee noted a response from the Executive Office on matters raised in correspondence received from Clarawood Community Association. The Committee also noted further correspondence from Clarawood Community Association requesting a meeting with the Committee Chair.

Agreed: to forward the relevant extract of the TEO letter to Clarawood Community Association; and to arrange an informal meeting with the Committee Chairperson and representatives from Clarawood Community Association.

The Committee further noted a written briefing provided by TEO on the Social Investment Fund.

8. Correspondence

Committee for Education – IliAD Report

The Committee noted copy correspondence from the Committee for Education to the Executive Office requesting sight of the Investigating Links in Achievement and Deprivation (ILiAD) Report.

Investing Activity Report

The Committee noted the Investing Activity Report for October 2016

Office of the Northern Ireland Executive in Brussels: Brussels Report August-October 2016

The Committee noted the Office of the NI Executive in Brussels report for August-October 2016.

Agreed: to forward the report to relevant statutory committees.

Committee for Justice – Fresh Start Agreement

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Justice requesting information on the current position regarding applications for funding from the UK Government under the Fresh Start Agreement and the Executive's Action Plan to Tackle Paramilitary Activity, Criminality and Organised Crime; and asking if the Committee is, or will be, examining the provision of Fresh Start funding from Westminster.

Agreed: to ask the Executive Office for an update on the current position regarding applications for funding from the UK Government under the Fresh Start Agreement and the Executive's Action Plan to Tackle Paramilitary Activity, Criminality and Organised Crime.

Agreed: to advise the First Minister and deputy First Minister that matters relating to the Fresh Start Agreement will be raised when they appear before the Committee to discuss the PfG.

8. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted the draft Forward Work Programme until December 2016.

9. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

10. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next Committee meeting will be held at 2pm in Room 30 on Wednesday 16 November 2016.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 4.06pm.

Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA
Chairperson
Committee for the Executive Office