

COMMITTEE FOR HEALTH

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Thursday 15 September 2016
Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Ms Paula Bradley MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Gary Middleton MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Ms Paula Bradshaw MLA
Mr Robbie Butler MLA
Mr Gerry Carroll MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Mrs Jo-Anne Dobson MLA
Mr Mark H Durkan MLA
Mr Ian Milne MLA
Ms Catherine Seeley MLA
Mr Pat Sheehan MLA

Apologies: None

In Attendance: Ms Éilís Haughey (Clerk)
Ms Roisin Donnelly (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Ms Deirdre Farry (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Jonathan Lamont (Clerical Supervisor)

The meeting commenced at 10.35 am in public session.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

2. Draft minutes of the meeting on 30 June 2016

The minutes of the Committee meeting on 30 June 2016 were agreed.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Committee agreed that the Chair would attend events hosted by the following:

- i. College of Occupational Therapists, 11 November 2016
- ii. Royal College of Speech & Language Therapists, 19 November 2016
- iii. British Dental Association, 25 November 2016
- iv. UK Home Care Association, 8 December 2016
- v. Royal College of Paediatrics & Child Health, 26 January 2017

4. Overview briefing by the Patient and Client Council

10.45am Mr Trevor Clarke joined the meeting.

The Committee heard evidence from:

Mrs Maeve Hully	Chief Executive, Patient and Client Council
Mrs Louise Skelly	Head of Operations, Patient and Client Council

A question and answer session ensued.

The Chair thanked the witnesses for attending.

11.59 am Mr Pat Sheehan left the meeting.

5. SL1: Food Hygiene Rating Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016

The Committee considered a proposal for a statutory rule to set out details regarding implementation of the Food Hygiene Rating Act 2016, including the form of stickers; where and how they should be displayed; exemptions and details for the payment of fixed penalty notices.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content that the Department make the statutory rule.

6. SL1: Food Hygiene Rating (Transitional Provisions) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016

The Committee considered a proposal for a statutory rule to allow district councils a one-year transitional period during which they can treat an existing rating as the Food Hygiene Rating for the purposes of the new Food Hygiene Rating Act 2016.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content that the Department make the statutory rule.

7. SL1: Food Hygiene Rating (Fee and Fixed Penalty Amount) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016

The Committee considered a proposal for a statutory rule to specify the fee associated with a request for re-rating inspections, and to set the fixed penalty amount.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content that the Department make the statutory rule.

8. SL1: Remuneration of the Chairman of Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016

The Committee considered a proposal for a statutory rule to address a legal anomaly and put beyond doubt the authority of the Department to remunerate the chairman of the Northern Ireland Medical and Dental Training Agency.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content that the Department make the statutory rule.

9. SL1: The General Dental Services (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016

The Committee considered a proposal for a statutory rule, in conjunction with the Department of Finance and Personnel, to amend The General Dental Services Regulations 1993, by making two minor consequential amendments to the principal Regulations.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content that the Department make the statutory rule.

10. SL1: Optical Charges and Payments (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016

The Committee considered a proposal for a statutory rule to increase, by 1%, the value of optical vouchers issued to certain patients, depending on their financial circumstances, to help towards the cost of glasses or contact lenses under the Health Service.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content that the Department make the statutory rule.

11. Forward Work Programme

The matter of the report of the Expert Panel on the reconfiguration of health and social care, chaired by Professor Bengoa, was raised.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Minister to request an indicative timeframe for the publication of the report and to request a briefing from the Minister on her vision for the reconfiguration of health and social care.

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme.

12. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

13. Correspondence

- i. The Committee noted a RaISe briefing paper on Outcomes –based Government from the Committee for the Executive Office.
- ii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Health regarding the draft Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Criminal Justice and Support for Victims) (Independent Guardian) Regulations (NI) 2016.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek information on the anticipated timeframe for the proposed statutory rule.

- iii. The Committee noted the HSC Pension Scheme statement for the year ended 31 March 2016.
- iv. The Committee noted a Department of Health response regarding gender imbalance in general practice.
- v. The Committee noted a Ministerial statement on the All-island Congenital Heart Disease Network.
- vi. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Health regarding outline consultation proposals relating to reform of the regulation of healthcare professions.
- vii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Public Health Agency providing updated information on potentially avoidable premature deaths in Northern Ireland.
- viii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister for Health regarding the Fatal Fetal Abnormality Working Group.

Agreed: The Committee agree to write to Department to enquire when the Working Group's proposals on the way forward will be published.

- ix. The Committee noted correspondence from the Health and Social Care Board regarding waiting times for elective care.
- x. The Committee noted a copy of a complaint to the RQIA regarding the care of an elderly patient in the Western Health and Social Care Trust.
- xi. The Committee noted issue 03/2016 of the EU Matters newsletter.
- xii. The Committee noted a Department of Health response regarding the Committee's input to the development of the Programme for Government and the Budget for 2017-20.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request an update on the development of the Programme for Government and Budget and a briefing on the outcome of the consultation on the Framework Programme for Government.

- xiii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Health regarding an increase to fees and allowances for the provision of General Ophthalmic Services.
- xiv. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Health regarding proposals for primary legislation during 2016-21.
- xv. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Health regarding a consultation on proposed changes to the Pharmaceutical Services Regulations (NI) 1997.

- xvi. The Committee noted the Brussels Report for April – July 2016 from the Northern Ireland Executive Brussels Office.
- xvii. The Committee noted a Department of Health response regarding planned spending levels for 2016/17.
- xviii. The Committee noted a Department of Health response regarding an update on the Sexual Health Promotion Strategy and on changes to the budget for 2016/17.
- xix. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Health regarding remuneration of General Dental Practitioners.
- xx. The Committee noted correspondence from Outdoor Recreation NI regarding a Walking Strategy for Northern Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite Outdoor Recreation NI to a stakeholder event.

- xxi. The Committee noted the March 2016 Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Workforce Census.
- xxii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Health regarding the launch of the consultation for the new suicide prevention strategy, ‘Protect Life 2’.
- xxiii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Doc John Hinds HEMS Committee regarding delivery models for the Northern Ireland Helicopter Emergency Medical Service.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite representatives of Doc John Hinds HEMS Committee to a stakeholder event.

- xxiv. The Committee noted correspondence from the NSPCC regarding its research report ‘Exploring the learning improvement processes of Local Safeguarding Children Boards’.
- xxv. The Committee considered a response from NICE regarding Orkambi for the treatment of cystic fibrosis.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the response to the original correspondent.

- xxvi. The Committee considered correspondence from Hope 4 ME and Fibro Northern Ireland regarding myalgic encephalomyelitis care in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite Hope 4 ME and Fibro Northern Ireland to a stakeholder event.

- xxvii. The Committee considered a report from AWARE, “Northern Ireland Perinatal Mental Health is Everyone’s Business” and the “Everyone’s Business” campaign evaluation briefing paper.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed to invite AWARE to a stakeholder event.
- xxviii. The Committee considered a request from Asthma UK to sponsor an event in Parliament Buildings on 3 November 2016.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed to sponsor the event.
- xxix. The Committee noted a Department of Health response advising of a delay in the publication of the Paediatric Palliative and End of Life Care Strategy and the Paediatric Hospital and Community Care Strategy, for budgetary reasons.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed to forward the Department’s response to NI Paediatric Palliative Care Special Interest Group.
- xxx. The Committee considered correspondence from NICCY regarding advice to the NI Executive on its draft Framework Programme for Government.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed to invite NICCY to a stakeholder event.
- xxxi. The Committee considered correspondence from the Department of Health regarding the second progress report on the implementation of the HSC recommendations from the Marshall Report into child sexual exploitation.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request an oral briefing on the report.
- xxxii. The Committee considered correspondence from the Department of Health regarding the report on the Review of the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request an oral briefing on the report.
- xxxiii. The Committee considered a complaint from an individual concerning the Western Health and Social Care Trust.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the individual to advise that the Committee does not comment on individual cases and to contact his constituency MLAs for support.
- xxxiv. The Committee considered correspondence from an MLA seeking the Committee’s assistance in accessing treatment for rheumatoid arthritis on behalf of a constituent.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the MLA to advise that the Committee does not comment on individual cases.

- xxxv. The Committee considered correspondence from the NSPCC regarding the publication of the NSPCC and Barnardo's Children's Charter.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed to invite the NSPCC and Barnardo's to a stakeholder event.
- xxxvi. The Committee considered correspondence from the Northern Ireland Impact Forum on Adult Learning regarding its submission on the draft Programme for Government.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed to invite the Northern Ireland Impact Forum on Adult Learning to a stakeholder event.
- xxxvii. The Committee noted the Investing Activity Report for August 2016.
- xxxviii. The Committee considered an invitation from Queen's University of Belfast to host a meeting of the Committee in the Centre for Cancer Research and Cell Biology.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed to hold a meeting at the Centre for Cancer Research and Cell Biology.
- xxxix. The Committee considered an invitation from the British Heart Foundation Northern Ireland to attend the event 'Join the Fight against Heart Disease: Our Single Biggest Killer' on 19 September 2016.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed that Members should reply directly to the British Heart Foundation Northern Ireland if able to attend.
- xl. The Committee considered an invitation from the Health and Social Care Board to attend the Social Work Awards on 18 November 2016.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed that Members should reply directly to the Health and Social Care Board if able to attend.
- xli. The Committee considered an invitation from the Attorney General's Office to a colloquium on 'Getting legislation right – improving the process'.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed that Members should reply directly to the Attorney General's Office if able to attend.
- xlii. The Committee considered correspondence from Belfast Healthy Cities regarding the 'Child-Friendly Places' Action Plan.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed to invite the Belfast Healthy Cities to a stakeholder event.
- xliii. The Committee considered correspondence from Cancer Research UK regarding its report 'Where next for cancer services in Northern Ireland?'
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed to invite the Cancer Research UK to a stakeholder event.

- xliv. The Committee considered a request from Macmillan Cancer Support to participate in its 'World's Biggest Coffee Morning' event.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to participate in the event.

- xlv. The Committee considered an invitation from Mental Health Rights Campaign to attend the 'Unfair Share' event on 15 September 2016 to highlight funding for mental health services.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to attend the event.

- xlvi. The Committee considered an invitation from the Southern Health and Social Care Trust and the All Ireland Institute of Hospice and Palliative Care to attend the 'Palliative Care: New Approaches' conference on 5 October 2016.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that Members should reply directly to the Southern Trust if able to attend.

14. Any Other Business

- i. The matter of the budget was raised.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to enquire about the impact of a one year budget.

- ii. The matter of the Zika virus was raised.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request an update on action taken post-diagnosis, including monitoring and public information.

- iii. The Committee discussed the Health Minister's recent announcement regarding the establishment of a Strategic Health Partnership Forum.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request further information about the Forum and in particular the terms of reference for this group.

15. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting.

The next Committee meeting will be on Thursday 22 September 2016, at 10.30 am in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12.17 pm