



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

**COMMITTEE FOR THE OFFICE OF THE FIRST MINISTER AND DEPUTY
FIRST MINISTER
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
WEDNESDAY 23 OCTOBER 2013
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Mr Leslie Cree
Miss Megan Fearon
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr George Robinson

In Attendance: Mrs Shauna Mageean (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Keith McBride (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Mrs Marion Johnson (Clerical Officer)

The meeting began at 2.02 pm in public session

1. Apologies

As detailed above.

2. Chairperson's Business

Community Relations Council

The Committee considered a request from the Community Relation Council to informally meet with the Chairperson to discuss its current activity.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson would meet informally with the Community Relations Council.

Shaping a Generation Seminar

The Committee noted an invitation to attend a seminar on "Shaping a Generation" as part of the contested spaces/interface programme on Wednesday 4 December 2013.

Current Invitations

The Committee noted the list of current invitations.

Mr Maskey joined the meeting at 2.05 p.m.

3. Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2013

Agreed: The draft minutes of the proceedings of the 16 October 2013 were agreed by the Committee.

4. Matters Arising

Integration of the Roma

The Committee considered a response from the Department providing further information in relation to the integration of the Roma and tension monitoring.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request further detail on the timeline for production of the Racial Equality Strategy. The Committee also agreed to forward the response to the Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities for information.

Planning Bill 2013

The Committee noted a response from the Department advising that Ministers have noted the concerns raised by RSPB in relation to the Planning Bill.

Flags Protocol

The Committee noted a response from the Department advising that the Review of the Flags Protocol is now being considered as part of the Haass talks.

Delivering Social Change

The Committee noted a response from the Department providing further information on the funding for the 6 Delivering Social Change Signature Projects.

Miss Fearon joined the meeting at 2.08 p.m.

List of Outstanding Issues

The Committee noted the list of outstanding issues.

5. Correspondence

Joint Ministerial Council (Europe)

The Committee considered an update from the Department on the March 2013 meeting of the Joint Ministerial Council (Europe).

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the update to relevant statutory committees.

Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

The Committee noted copies of correspondence from the Department to the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment in relation to a report of the Barroso Taskforce.

Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission Annual Report 2012/13

The Committee noted a copy of the Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission's Annual report and Accounts for 2012/13.

Mr Lyttle joined the meeting at 2.10 p.m.

Review of the Gender Equality Strategy

The Committee noted a response from the Department providing further information on the timeline for the Review of the Gender Equality Strategy.

Together: Building a United Community

The Committee noted a response from the Department providing further information in relation to the Together: Building a United Community All-Party Group.

Social Investment Fund

The Committee considered a response from the Department providing detail of spend to date in relation to consultants in the Social Investment Fund.

Mr Lyttle declared an interest as a Member of the East Belfast Steering Group

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek its assessment of whether it was satisfied with the work carried out by consultants in each of the steering groups.

Mr Attwood joined the meeting at 2.17 p.m.

October Monitoring Round Statement

The Committee considered the statement by the Minister for Finance and Personnel on the October Monitoring Round.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek clarification on the £3.17m allocated from the Social Investment Fund.

European Centre for Delivering Social Change

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department providing further information on the European Centre for Delivering Social Change.

Committee for Employment and Learning

The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the Committee for Employment and Learning to the First Minister and deputy First Minister in relation to engagement with the Barroso Taskforce Desk Officers. The Committee agreed to raise the issue with the Head of the Office of the Northern Ireland Executive during the next briefing.

Business in the Community

The Committee considered correspondence from Business in the Community in relation to the Social Investment Fund.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite Business in the Community to its stakeholder event on Delivering Social Change Signature Projects.

6. European Issues

Departmental officials joined the meeting at 2.23 p.m.

Mrs Hale left the meeting at 2.45 p.m.

Mr Maskey left the meeting at 3.03 p.m.

Departmental officials, Dr Gerry Mulligan and Dr Paul Geddis briefed the Committee on EU issues and on the Executive Priorities for 2013/14. Questions and discussion followed. Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with further information in relation the drawdown of funding, the Implementation Report for 2012/13 and TEN-T funding.

The officials left the meeting at 3.09 p.m.

7. Victims and Survivors Service

The Victims and Survivors Service joined the meeting at 3.10 p.m.

Mr Moutray left the meeting at 4.02 p.m.

Mrs Anne Dorbie, Chief Executive, Ms Katrina Hinfey, Head of Client Services and Miss Sara Templer, Information Officer briefed the Committee on data that it had collected in relation to the Individual Needs Review process. Questions and discussion followed. The Victims and Survivors Service agreed to provide the Committee with further information in relation to the cost of the Report and the length of time it took to compile the data and Report.

The Victims and Survivors Service left the meeting at 4.13 p.m.

8. Victims and Survivors

Departmental officials joined the meeting at 4.13 p.m.

Mr Moutray left the meeting at 4.02 p.m.

Dr Denis McMahon, Mr Ricky Irwin and Mr Peter Robinson briefed the Committee on issues that arose during the briefing from the Commission for Victims & Survivors and the Victims & Survivors Service on 9 October 2013. Questions and discussion followed. Department Officials agreed to provide further information in relation to the Victims and Survivors Service Annual Accounts and the process for tendering a training contract for the Service.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek further information and its assessment in relation to the provision of support for individuals under threat from paramilitaries.

The Chairperson declared an interest as a former Commissioner for Victims and Survivors and excused himself from the Chair

The Deputy Chairperson took the Chair at 5.13 p.m.

Departmental officials briefed the Committee on the Review of the Commission for Victims and Survivors 2008-2011.

Miss Fearon left the meeting at 5.20 p.m.

Departmental officials left the meeting at 5.33 p.m.

The Chairperson resumed the Chair at 5.33 p.m.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request that it brief the Committee on the progress of the Programme Board in a number of weeks and that a briefing paper be provided in advance of the briefing.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Victims and Survivors Forum to invite the Services Working Group to brief the Committee on experiences with the Victims and Survivors Service.

9. Legislative Consent Motion: Intellectual Property Bill – Freedom of Information Provisions

Agreed: The Committee agreed its Report on the Legislative Consent Motion: Intellectual Property Bill – Freedom of Information Provisions.

10. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme.

11. Any Other Business

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek further information on the Scoping Report being undertaken in relation to the Magdalene Laundries and similar institutions. The Committee also agreed to seek the latest view of the Department in relation to those victims and survivors who fall outside the remit of the Inquiry into Historical Institutional Abuse.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request a copy of the Review of the Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland.

12. Date, Time and Location of next meeting

The next meeting will be held at 2 p.m. on Wednesday 6 November 2013, in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 5.51 p.m.

Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA
Chairperson,
Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister