



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

**COMMITTEE FOR THE OFFICE OF THE FIRST MINISTER AND DEPUTY
FIRST MINISTER
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
WEDNESDAY 11 DECEMBER 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
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr George Robinson
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: None

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

None

2. Chairperson's Business

Junior Minister's Briefing

The Committee considered correspondence from the Department advising that the earliest date junior Ministers could brief the Committee was 22 January 2014.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule the briefing for 22 January 2014.

Commission for Victims and Survivors

The Committee noted an invitation from the Commission for Victims and Survivors to attend a round table on the Victims and Survivors Service on Tuesday 17 December 2013.

Christmas Cards

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Chairperson would send e-cards on behalf of the Committee.

Current Invitations

The Committee noted the list of current invitations.

3. Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2013

Agreed: The draft minutes of the proceedings of the 4 December 2013 were agreed by the Committee.

4. Matters Arising

Institutional Abuse

The Committee considered a response from the Department providing further information on the scoping report the Department is undertaking in relation to the Magdalene Laundries and similar institutions and also in regard to those

individuals who fall outside the remit of the Inquiry into Historical Institutional Abuse.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request a briefing on the options being considered by the Department.

Mr Maskey joined the meeting at 2.11 p.m.

List of Outstanding Issues

The Committee noted the list of outstanding issues.

5. Correspondence

Committee for Employment and Learning

The Committee noted a copy of a response from the Department to the Committee for Employment and Learning in relation to engagement with the Barroso Taskforce Desk Officers.

The Committee noted a copy of correspondence from the Committee for Employment and Learning to the Department in relation to further funding for the Kestral Pilot Programme.

Knowledge Exchange Seminar

The Committee considered a request from the Assembly's Research and Information Service for a Member of the Committee to make the opening remarks at a Knowledge Exchange Seminar on Migration on Thursday 9 January 2013.

Agreed: Members agreed to let the Committee Office know if they were available to make the opening remarks.

Social Investment Fund

The Committee noted a response from the Department providing further information on the use of consultants in the Social Investment Fund and the re-profiling of funding.

Correspondence from a Member of the Public

The Committee noted correspondence from a member of the public.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the member of the public to advise that the Committee does not get involved in individual queries.

Mr Lyttle joined the meeting at 2.14 p.m.

Public Services Pensions Bill

The Committee noted a copy of a response from the First Minister and deputy First Minister to the Committee for Finance and Personnel in relation to the Public Services Pension Bill.

Investment Strategy Update – Quarter 2

The Committee noted a copy of the Investment Strategy Implementation Report for Quarter 2 2013/14.

6. Victims and Survivors

Representatives from the Victims and Survivors Forum joined the meeting at 2.16 p.m.

Mr Cree joined the meeting at 2.25 p.m.

Mr Attwood joined the meeting at 2.34 p.m.

Mr Spratt left the meeting at 3.37 p.m.

Representatives of the Victims and Survivors Forum Services Working Group, Mr Mitch Bresland, Ms Eibhlin Glenholmes, Ms Jennifer McNern and Ms Sandra Peake and the Commissioner for Victims and Survivors, Ms Kathryn Stone briefed the Committee on the Victims and Survivors Service. Questions and discussion followed.

Representatives from the Victims and Survivors Forum left the meeting at 3.43 p.m.

7. Victims and Survivors

Departmental officials joined the meeting at 3.43 p.m.

Mr Spratt re-joined the meeting at 3.47 p.m.

Mr Moutray left the meeting at 4.23 p.m.

Departmental officials Mr Ricky Irwin and Mrs Cathy McMullan briefed the Committee on the progress made by the Victims and Survivors Programme Board. Questions and discussion followed. Officials agreed to consider requests to share information in relation to the actions identified and number complete and the Terms of Reference for the Independent Review.

Departmental officials left the meeting at 4.30 p.m.

Mr Attwood left the meeting at 4.30 p.m.

Mr Maskey left the meeting at 4.30 p.m.

8. January Monitoring Round

Departmental officials joined the meeting at 4.31 p.m.

Mr Moutray re-joined the meeting at 4.37 p.m.

Mr Maskey re-joined the meeting at 4.37 p.m.

Mr Lyttle left the meeting at 4.38 p.m.

Departmental officials Mr Mark Browne, Mr Stephen Boyd and Mr Gavin Patrick briefed the Committee on the Department's January Monitoring Round proposals. Questions and discussion followed.

Departmental officials left the meeting at 4.41 p.m.

Mr Lyttle re-joined the meeting at 4.42 p.m.

9. EU Priorities for 2014

The Committee considered a research paper on the European Commission's Work Programme for 2014 highlighting possible European priorities that statutory committees may wish to take forward.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to include a non-legislative initiative on tackling the gender pay gap and a legislative initiative on the accession of the European Union to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in its European Priorities for 2014.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward a copy of the research paper to all statutory committees for their consideration and to request that they provide details on European issues that they will be taking forward in 2014.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department, MEPs, Members of the Committee of the Regions and Members of the European Economic and Social Committee to seek their views on the European Commission's Work Programme and its relevance to Northern Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward a copy of the research paper to the House of Commons and House of Lords EU Committees for information.

10. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme.

11. Any Other Business

None

12. Date, Time and Location of next meeting

The next meeting will be held at 2 p.m. on Wednesday 15 January 2014, in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting moved into closed session at 4.49 p.m.

Ms McGahan left the meeting at 4.49 p.m.

Mrs Hale left the meeting at 4.50 p.m.

13. Report on Delivering Social Change Signature Project Event

The Committee considered a draft Report on the Committee's Delivering Social Change Signature Project Event on the 13 November 2013.

- Agreed:* The Committee read and agreed the Executive Summary and recommendations.
- Agreed:* The Committee read and agreed the Membership and Powers.
- Agreed:* The Committee read and agreed the Introduction and Acknowledgment.
- Agreed:* The Committee read and agreed the Signature Programmes – Current Status.
- Agreed:* The Committee read and agreed the Common Issues and Recommendations.
- Agreed:* The Committee read and agreed the Signature Programmes – Stakeholder Discussions.
- Agreed:* The Committee read and agreed the Conclusions.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed that an extract from the Minutes of Proceedings of today’s meeting should be included in Appendix 1 of the report and that the Chairperson approve that extract for inclusion.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the Report be printed as the Tenth Report of the Committee.
- Agreed:* The Committee agreed to table a motion for a ‘Take Note’ debate on the Report.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 4.52 p.m.

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