



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

**COMMITTEE FOR THE OFFICE OF THE FIRST MINISTER AND DEPUTY
FIRST MINISTER
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
WEDNESDAY 18 JUNE 2014
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

- Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Miss Megan Fearon
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr George Robinson
Mr Jimmy Spratt
- Apologies: Mr Leslie Cree
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Stephen Moutray
- In Attendance: Ms Karen Jardine (Senior Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Keith McBride (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Sabra Wray (Clerical Officer)

The meeting began in public session at 2.18pm.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Chairperson's Business

Tapestry of Colours

The Committee considered a request from Tapestry of Colours to brief the Committee on its Education programme with regard to racial equality.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson would meet informally with Tapestry of Colours.

Black and Minority Ethnic Parliament

The Chairperson reminded Members of the Black and Minority Ethnic Parliament Event taking place on Tuesday 24 June and to advise the Committee Office of their availability to attend.

Committee Invitations

The Committee noted the list of current invitations.

3. Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2014

Agreed: The draft minutes of the proceedings of 11 June 2014 were agreed by the Committee.

4. Matters Arising

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission

The Committee noted correspondence from the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission which advised that, while its Human Rights Inquiry into Emergency Health Care falls within the 2014/15 business year and will not be impacted by the proposed cuts in 2015/16, its ability to undertake similar work in the future may be impeded should the budget cuts be implemented.

Good Relations Indicators

The Committee noted a response from the Department to its request for further information on research relating to perceptions of young people with regard to good relations discussed by officials at the previous meeting.

PEDU Report on Flooding

The Committee considered correspondence from the Department which provided clarification on references made by the First Minister during Question Time on 13 January 2014 to the 2012 PEDU Report on Flooding; and which advised that the Department had obtained Executive approval for a number of measures to enhance civil contingencies arrangements at a local level.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek further information on the Civil Contingencies Group work

stream and its forward work programme; progress towards the development of civil contingencies legislation; and clarification on how Councils will discharge their civil contingencies role. The Committee also agreed to request regular updates with regard to civil contingencies arrangements.

Ms Fearon joined the meeting at 2.27pm.

Attorney General

The Committee noted a response from the Department advising that the terms and conditions and functions of the Office of the Attorney General remain unchanged following the re-appointment of Mr John Larkin to that role.

Post Project Evaluations

The Committee noted a response from the Department providing further information on the Department's outstanding Post Project Evaluations.

Victims and Survivors Service

The Committee noted a response from the Department providing further information on the appointment of members to the Board of the Victims and Survivors Service. Members agreed to include the papers in next week's pack, when the Committee will be briefed by officials on the VSS.

Playboard NI

The Committee noted a written briefing from Playboard NI on its "Let us Play" campaign.

List of Outstanding Correspondence

The Committee noted the list of outstanding correspondence.

5. Correspondence

Racial Equality Strategy Indicators

The Committee considered correspondence from the Department which provided a copy of the consultation document for the proposed Racial Equality Strategy Indicators.

The Committee unreservedly condemned the recent incident that occurred in East Belfast involving a protest against the allocation of Northern Ireland Housing Executive accommodation to a person of Nigerian origin.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek clarification on the publication date of the Racial Equality Strategy; request a timeline for the consultation on the strategy and the draft indicators; and to request a written briefing on the responses to the consultation once it has concluded.

Committee for Finance and Personnel

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel which provided a briefing paper from the Department for Finance and Personnel on PEACE III and INTERREG IVA mid-programme evaluations.

Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department to the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment in relation to the European Liaison Officers.

6. Programme for Government- Update Report

Departmental officials joined the meeting at 2.35pm.

Departmental officials Dr Mark Browne, Mr Tim Losty, Mr Tony Canavan and Dr Paul Geddis briefed the Committee on progress of Programme for Government commitments 15, 16, 17, 26 and 77. Questions and discussion followed and the briefing was recorded by Hansard.

Mr Lyttle joined the meeting at 2.51pm.

The Department agreed to provide further information on a number of issues.

Departmental officials left the meeting at 3.44pm.

7. Historical Institutional Abuse – Support Services

Departmental officials joined the meeting at 3.45pm.

Departmental officials Mr Ricky Irwin, Ms Roberta Dalton and Mr Jim Breen briefed the Committee on the support services available to victims and survivors of historical institutional abuse. Questions and discussion followed.

Departmental officials left the meeting at 4.26pm.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek its views on the implications of the proposed one year extension to the Inquiry for victims of non-institutional abuse that fall outside the remit of the Inquiry.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request feedback on its outreach programme in Belfast when available.

8. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme to the end of the session.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content to receive written briefings on the analysis of consultation responses to the Active Ageing Strategy and a progress update on the consultation on the Sexual Orientation Strategy at its meeting on 25 June, with oral briefings to be scheduled for early in the 2014/15 session.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to meet at 1.45 p.m. on Wednesday 25 June in order to review its Strategic Priorities for 2013/14.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to hold a strategic planning day on Wednesday 3 September. The Committee Office is to consider possible venues.

Miss Fearon left the meeting at 4.38 pm.

The Committee noted draft Terms of Reference for an Inquiry into Uniting Communities and agreed to consider again before the summer recess.

9. Any Other Business

None.

10. Inquiry into Barroso Taskforce

The Committee considered the draft Report of its Inquiry into the Barroso Taskforce.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that Members would forward any comments on the draft Report to the Committee Office by 4pm on Thursday 26 June in order to consider the Report at the meeting of 2 July 2014.

11. Date, Time and Location of next meeting

The next meeting will be held at 1.45pm on Wednesday 25 June 2014, in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 4.41pm.

Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister