



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

**COMMITTEE FOR THE OFFICE OF THE FIRST MINISTER AND DEPUTY
FIRST MINISTER
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
WEDNESDAY 25 JUNE 2014
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Leslie Cree
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr George Robinson

Apologies: Mr Alex Attwood
Miss Megan Fearon
Mr Jimmy Spratt

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 2.01pm.

1. Apologies

As above.

**2. First Minister and deputy First Minister – Progress of Programme for
Government**

The First Minister, deputy First Minister and junior Ministers joined the meeting at 2.03pm.

The First Minister, the deputy First Minister, junior Minister Bell and junior Minister McCann briefed the Committee on the work of the Department and progress of the Programme for Government. Questions and discussion followed and the briefing was recorded by Hansard.

Ministers agreed to provide further information on a number of issues.

The First Minister, deputy First Minister and junior Ministers left the meeting at 3.39pm.

Mrs Hale left the meeting at 3.40pm.

3. Chairperson's Business

Strategic Planning

Agreed: The Committee agreed to hold its strategic planning day for 2014/15 on Wednesday 3 September in Ranfurly House, Dungannon.

Black and Minority Ethnic Parliament

The Chairperson thanked Members for taking part in the Black and Minority Ethnic Parliament Event which took place on Tuesday 24 June.

Joseph Rowntree Foundation

The Committee considered a request from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to brief the Committee on findings from its recently published report examining the economic mobility of ethnic minority communities in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing on this issue from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation early in the next session.

Committee Invitations

The Committee considered an invitation from the Irish Refugee Council and the Law Centre to attend a roundtable event on "Seeking Asylum on the Island of Ireland" on Friday 27 June 2014. Members agreed to notify the Committee office of their availability to attend.

The Committee noted the list of current invitations.

4. Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2014

Agreed: The draft minutes of the proceedings of 18 June 2014 were agreed by the Committee.

5. Matters Arising

Racial Equality Strategy Consultation

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department which provided a copy of the consultation document for the Racial Equality Strategy, which was launched on 19 June 2014.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to express its disappointment that it was not afforded the courtesy of an advance copy of the consultation document in line with agreed protocols.

Agreed: The Committee also agreed to write to the Department to request further information on the proposed consultation events to be held throughout Northern Ireland.

List of Outstanding Correspondence

The Committee noted the list of outstanding correspondence.

6. Correspondence

Departmental Provisional Outturn

The Committee considered correspondence from the Department which provided information on its provisional outturn for 2013/14.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek clarification in relation to its Annually Managed Expenditure, including the write-down the Financial Transactions Capital loan from the Strategic Investment Board to the University of Ulster, and the potential impact for the certification of the 2013/14 Departmental accounts.

Financial Transactions Capital

The Committee considered a response from the Department which provided information in relation to Financial Transactions Capital following issues raised by the Assembly's Research and Information Service.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward a copy of the response to the Assembly's Research and Information Service for information.

June Monitoring Round

The Committee considered a response from the Department which provided clarification in relation to queries arising from the June Monitoring Round Briefing.

The Chairperson advised Members that it was unlikely that the Department would lay its Annual Report and Accounts for 2013/14 in advance of next week's meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson to meet with the Department's Accounting Officer to discuss the Annual Report and Accounts for 2013/14, and that an oral briefing would be scheduled early in the next session.

Committee for Finance and Personnel

The Committee considered correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel which provided a copy of correspondence from Employers for Childcare on the Childcare Payments Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a short briefing from Employers for Childcare on the Childcare Payments Bill at its meeting on 2 July.

Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment to the Department in relation to a Report produced by the Competitiveness and Employment Desk Officer entitled "Opportunities and Key Policies for Social Enterprises in Northern Ireland 2014-2020".

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment to the Department in relation to the Green Investment Bank.

Historical Institutional Abuse

The Committee noted correspondence from SAVIA in relation to the Inquiry into Historical Institutional Abuse.

7. Victims and Survivors

Departmental officials joined the meeting at 3.51pm.

Departmental officials Mr Ricky Irwin, Ms Patricia McIntyre and Ms Linda Mervyn briefed the Committee on progress towards the implementation of the recommendations contained within the Independent Assessment Reports on the Victims and Survivors Service. Questions and discussion followed and the briefing was recorded by Hansard.

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

Departmental officials left the meeting at 4.21 pm.

8. Sexual Orientation Strategy – Written Briefing

The Committee noted a written briefing from the Department detailing progress regarding the consultation on the Sexual Orientation Strategy.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing on this issue early in the next session.

9. Active Ageing Strategy – Written Briefing

The Committee noted a written briefing from the Department detailing progress regarding the consultation on the draft Active Ageing Strategy.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing on this issue early in the next session.

10. Forward Work Programme

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

11. Any Other Business

None.

12. Date, Time and Location of next meeting

The Chairperson advised Members that he would be unavailable to Chair the meeting on Wednesday 2 July, and that the Deputy Chair would Chair the meeting that day.

The next meeting will be held at 2pm. on Wednesday 2 July 2014, in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 4.25pm.

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