



**Northern Ireland  
Assembly**

**COMMITTEE FOR THE OFFICE OF THE FIRST MINISTER AND DEPUTY  
FIRST MINISTER  
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS  
WEDNESDAY 3 DECEMBER 2014  
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)  
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)  
Ms Megan Fearon  
Mr David McIlveen  
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Michael Copeland  
Mrs Brenda Hale  
Mr Alex Maskey  
Ms Bronwyn McGahan  
Mr Stephen Moutray

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)  
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)  
Miss Zuzana Polackova (Clerical Officer)  
Ms Roisin Kelly (Assembly Clerk) Item 3 only  
Mr Alyn Hicks (Assistant Assembly Clerk) Item 3 only  
Mr Jonathan McMillen (Legal Adviser) Item 3 only

*The meeting began in open session at 2.27 pm. In the absence of a decision-making quorum the proceedings commenced in line with Standing Order 49(5) and moved to agenda item 2.*

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were noted as above. The Committee expressed its best wishes to Mr Michael Copeland in light of his recent illness.

*The Committee moved to agenda item 8.*

## **2. Inquiry into Building a United Community - Briefing from Northern Ireland Community Relations Council**

*Representatives from the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council joined the meeting at 2.28 pm.*

Mr Peter Osborne, Chairperson, Community Relations Council; Ms Jacqueline Irwin, Chief Executive, Community Relations Council; Ms Sylvia Gordon, Director Groundwork NI; and Mr Joe O'Donnell, Director, Belfast Interface Partnership appeared before the Committee for discussion and questions on the Inquiry into Building a United Community. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard.

*Ms Fearon joined the meeting at 2.45pm.*

*Agreed:* Ms Irwin agreed to provide further information on a query relating to funding provided by CRC.

*The witnesses left the meeting at 3.40pm.*

*Agreed:* With regard to the Inquiry the Committee agreed:

- (i) The draft timetable for gathering oral evidence;
- (ii) That the roundtable event scheduled for Wednesday 28 January should include Departments, statutory agencies and community organisations;
- (iii) The draft agenda and invitation letter for the stakeholder event; and
- (iv) To provide the names and details of additional groups to Committee staff by 5 December.

*The Committee moved to agenda item 7.*

## **3. Draft Budget 2015-16**

The Committee noted a copy of the OFMDFM Draft Budget 2015-16 proposals consultation document and a response from the Department regarding underspend in the Financial Transactions Capital Budget.

The Committee considered a draft response to the Committee of Finance and Personnel on the draft Budget 2015/16 which had been tabled.

*Agreed:* Members agreed to provide comments or suggested amendments to the Committee Office by Friday 5 December. In the absence of any comments, the response will be forwarded to the Committee for Finance and Personnel as the Committee's submission to the report on the draft Budget

2015/16; otherwise, the response will be reconsidered at the Committee's meeting on 10 December.

*The Committee moved into closed session at 3.50pm for agenda item 1.*

#### **4. Northern Ireland Public Service Ombudsperson Bill**

*Ms Kelly, Mr Hicks and Mr McMillen joined the meeting at 3.50pm.*

*Mr Lyttle left the meeting at 3.50pm. The Committee lost its decision-making quorum. In the absence of a decision-making quorum proceedings continued in line with Standing Order 49(5).*

The Committee was briefed by the NI Public Service Ombudsperson Bill Project Team on emerging issues that required clarification for the progress of the Bill.

*Mr Lyttle returned to the meeting at 3.55pm.*

*Mr Spratt left the meeting at 4.13pm. The Committee lost its decision-making quorum. In the absence of a decision-making quorum proceedings continued in line with Standing Order 49(5).*

*The Bill team left the meeting at 4.24pm.*

*The Chairperson suspended the meeting at 4.24pm.*

*The Chairperson resumed the meeting at 4.30pm in open session with the following Members present:*

*Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson), Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson), Ms Megan Fearon and Mr David McIlveen.*

*In the absence of a decision-making quorum proceedings continued in line with Standing Order 49(5).*

*The Committee moved to agenda item 3.*

#### **5. Chairperson's Business**

##### Chairperson's Forum

The Chairperson referred Members to an invitation from the Chairperson's Forum to a Breakfast Briefing by the Comptroller & Auditor General on 10 December 2014

### Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission

The Chairperson referred Members to an Invitation from the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission to the launch of the 2014 Annual Statement on 10 December 2014.

### Visit by the Latvian Ambassador

The Chairperson reminded Members that the Latvian Ambassador will visit Parliament Buildings on Wednesday 10 December 2014.

### EC-UK

The Chairperson advised Members that he would be attending the next EC-UK meeting in Scotland on Monday 8 December.

## **6. OFMDFM: Programme for Government Update Report**

*Departmental officials joined the meeting at 4.32 pm.*

Departmental officials Dr Denis McMahon, Henry Johnston and Grainne Killen briefed the Committee on progress of Programme for Government commitments 31, 32, 33, 34, 37 and 67. Questions and discussion followed.

*Mr Lyttle declared an interest as a member of the East Belfast Social Investment Fund Steering Group.*

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

*Departmental officials left the meeting at 5.23 pm.*

## **7. Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

## **8. Date, Time and Location of next meeting**

The next meeting will be held at 1.30pm on Wednesday 10 December 2014, in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

*The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 5.24 pm.*

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