



**Northern Ireland  
Assembly**

**COMMITTEE FOR THE OFFICE OF THE FIRST MINISTER AND DEPUTY  
FIRST MINISTER  
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS  
WEDNESDAY 18 FEBRUARY 2015  
INTERACTION BELFAST, 638 SPRINGFIELD ROAD  
BELFAST BT12 7DY**

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

Apologies: Mr Michael Copeland  
Mr Jimmy Spratt  
Ms Megan Fearon

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)  
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)  
Miss Zuzana Polackova (Clerical Officer)

*The meeting began in public session at 2.30pm with the following Members present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson), Mr Alex Attwood, Mr Alex Maskey and Mr Stephen Moutray. In the absence of a decision-making quorum proceedings commenced in line with Standing Order 49(5), and the Committee moved to the first evidence session.*

**1. Inquiry into Building a United Community – Briefing by Interaction Belfast, Suffolk Community Forum and Forthspring Inter Community Group**

The Chairperson thanked Inter-Action Belfast for hosting the meeting and facilitating the necessary arrangements.

*Witnesses from Inter-Action Belfast, Suffolk Community Forum and Forthspring Inter Community Group joined the meeting at 2.31pm.*

Ms Roisin McGlone, Chief Executive Officer, Inter-Action Belfast; Ms Caroline Murphy Team leader Suffolk Community Forum; Mr Terry Donaghy, Chair, Suffolk Community Forum; and Mr Johnston Price, Project Worker, Forthspring Inter Community Group, appeared before the Committee for discussion and questions on the Inquiry into Building a United Community. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard.

*Ms McGahan joined the meeting at 2.40pm.*

*Mr Lyttle joined the meeting at 3.00pm.*

*Mrs Hale joined the meeting at 3.02pm.*

*The witnesses left the meeting at 3.47pm.*

*Mr Moutray left the meeting at 3.27pm.*

## **2. Apologies**

Apologies were noted as above.

## **3. Chairperson's Business**

### St Patrick's Day Events

The Chairperson advised Members that invitations had been secured for him and the Deputy Chairperson to attend various meetings at the St Patrick's Day events in Washington.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that it was content that the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson attend the events on behalf of the Committee.

### OECD Public Governance Review - Northern Ireland: Improving Public Services

The Chairperson advised that he had been invited, along with a number of other Committee Chairs, to attend a meeting hosted by OECD as part of its Public Governance Review on Monday 23 February.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the Chair would attend the discussion on behalf of the Committee.

*Mrs Hale left the meeting at 3.50pm.*

### Recent Departmental announcements

The Committee noted that the Department had made recent announcements in relation to the Ethnic Minority Crisis Fund and urban villages, but that these had not been relayed to the Committee in advance.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to express its disappointment at not being formally notified about these developments, and request that in future the Committee be alerted about such announcements, before, or at least the same time, as the press.

#### Committee Invitations

The Committee noted the list of current invitations.

#### **4. Draft Minutes of the meetings held on 11 February 2015**

*Agreed:* The draft minutes of the proceedings of 11 February 2015 were agreed by the Committee.

#### **5. Matters Arising**

##### List of Outstanding Correspondence

The Committee noted the list of outstanding correspondence.

##### Victims and Survivors Service

Members noted a response from OFMDFM regarding the issue of individuals under threat from paramilitaries which advised that it is currently reviewing the delivery model which provides services to victims and survivors and that the operational details of this work would be finalised in the coming months.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request sight of the advice received by the Commission for Victims and Survivors on the issue.

##### Children's Services Co-operation Bill

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to arrange an additional evidence session with the Bill sponsor; and agreed that staff would prepare a summary of issues to be agreed by the Committee and provided to the Bill sponsor in advance.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to invite representatives from the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership to give evidence in relation to the Bill.

Members noted that the motion to extend Committee Stage of the Bill until Friday 3 July was provisionally scheduled for plenary business on Monday 2 March.

## **6. Correspondence**

### Childcare Strategy

The Committee noted a response from OFMDFM regarding the Childcare Strategy.

### Childcare Costs

The Committee noted a response from OFMDFM regarding the actions being taken to raise awareness of the support available for childcare costs.

### South Armagh Childcare Consortium

The Committee noted a response on behalf of Danny Kennedy MLA regarding the South Armagh Childcare Consortium application to the Bright Start programme.

### Public Bodies and Public Appointments

The Committee noted the publication of the OFMDFM Annual Report on Public Bodies and Public Appointments for the year ending 31 March 2014.

*Mrs Hale returned to the meeting at 3.54pm.*

## **7. Statutory Rule 2015/36 The Fair Employment (Specification of Public Authorities)(Amendment)Order (NI) 2015**

*Agreed:* That the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister has considered Statutory Rule SR 36/2015 The Fair Employment (Specification of Public Authorities) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 and has no objection to the Rule.

*Mr Maskey left the meeting at 3.56pm.*

## **8. Inquiry into Building a United Community – Briefing by Peace and Reconciliation Group, The Junction and Holywell Trust**

The Committee noted a report of the stakeholder event held on 28 January 2015.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to issue the report to those invited to attend the stakeholder event.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to publish the report on its webpages relating to the Inquiry; and to include the report in the papers for its Inquiry report.

The Committee noted correspondence from a member of the public recommending the ‘Street Games UK’ concept as an appropriate model of engagement with regard to the summer camps proposed under Together: Building a United Community.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Department and ask it to consider Street Games UK in the design of summer camps for 2015.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to include the correspondence in the papers for its Inquiry report.

The Committee noted correspondence from Ballynafeigh Community Development Association requesting a meeting with Members to discuss the organisation’s work.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the Chair would arrange an informal briefing with an invitation open to all Members to attend.

*Witnesses from Peace and Reconciliation Group, The Junction and Holywell Trust joined the meeting at 3.58pm*

Ms Maureen Hetherington, The Junction; Mr Michael Doherty, Director, Peace and Reconciliation Group; and Mr Gerard Deane, Manager, Holywell Trust, appeared before the Committee for discussion and questions on the Inquiry into Building a United Community. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard.

*Mr Maskey returned to the meeting at 4.03pm.*

*Mrs Hale left the meeting at 4.04pm.*

*Ms McGahan left the meeting at 4.48pm. The Committee lost its decision-making quorum. In the absence of a decision-making quorum proceedings continued in line with Standing Order 49(5).*

*Ms McGahan returned to the meeting at 4.52pm*

*The witnesses left the meeting at 4.57pm.*

## **9. European Issues – briefing on the EU Commission Work Programme for 2015**

The Committee noted correspondence from the House of Lords European Scrutiny Committee indicating that they found the RaISe paper on the EU Commission Work Programme 2015 to be of great use.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to forward the letter from the House of Lords European Scrutiny Committee to RaISe and other Statutory Committees for information.

*An officer from the Assembly Research and Information Service joined the meeting at 4.58 pm.*

Mr Michael Potter from the Northern Ireland Assembly Research and Information Service briefed the Committee on priorities for 2014 and the EU Commission Work Programme for 2015

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to include the identified items in its European priorities for 2015; and, as the proposals develop, to seek briefings as appropriate to examine what the initiatives mean for Northern Ireland.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to ask staff to prepare a draft of the Committee's 2015 EU Priorities for consideration at next week's meeting.

*The witness left the meeting at 5.02pm.*

#### **10. Draft Forward Work Programme**

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme up to May 2015.

#### **11. Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

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

The next meeting will be held at 2 pm in Room 30 on Wednesday 25 February 2015. The Chairperson reminded Members that the next meeting of the Committee would be followed by an informal meeting with young people from the Bytes project as part of the Inquiry into Building a Untied Community.

*The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 5.04 pm.*

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