



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

**COMMITTEE FOR THE OFFICE OF THE FIRST MINISTER AND DEPUTY
FIRST MINISTER
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
WEDNESDAY 18 MARCH 2015
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Alex Attwood
Ms Megan Fearon
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Mr David McIlveen
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Michael Copeland
Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Ms Bronwyn McGahan

In Attendance: Ms Stella McArdle (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 2.15pm.

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted as above.

2. Chairperson's Business

Northern Ireland Commission for Children and Young People

The Committee noted correspondence from the newly appointed Commissioner for Children and Young People, Ms Koulla Yiasouma, welcoming an introductory meeting with the Committee.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing with the Commissioner for Children and Young People, and to request early notification of the issues the Commissioner wishes to discuss.

Committee Invitations

The Committee noted the list of current invitations.

Mr Attwood joined the meeting at 2.17pm.

3. Draft Minutes of the meetings held on 11 March 2015

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

4. Matters Arising

Children's Services Co-operation Bill

The Committee noted the latest update on written submissions received to date, and Members were reminded to advise Committee staff of any particular organisations they wished to invite to give oral evidence on the Bill.

Consideration of European Priorities for 2015

The Committee considered an amendment to its Report on the Assembly Committee European Priorities for 2015, following receipt of a revised submission from the Committee for the Environment.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to amend its report to reflect the revised priorities from the Environment Committee; and to replace the Committee for Environment submission at Appendix 2 to the Report with the revised submission.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to include the relevant extract of the minutes from this meeting in the Report.

List of Outstanding Correspondence

The Committee noted the list of outstanding correspondence.

5. Correspondence

Together: Building a United Community

The Committee noted a response from OFMDFM regarding Street Games UK.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward a copy of the response to the Manager of Tackling Awareness of Mental Health Issues and to include the papers in the Committee's Report on its Inquiry into Building a United Community.

Big Lottery Fund

The Committee noted correspondence from the Big Lottery Fund regarding the launch of the Empowering Young People programme.

Minority Ethnic Development Fund

The Committee noted a response from OFMDFM providing an update on the Minority Ethnic Development Fund.

6. SR 2015/136 The Planning Fees (Deemed Planning Applications and Appeals) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

Agreed: That the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister has considered Statutory Rule SR 136/2015 The Planning Fees (Deemed Planning Applications and Appeals) Regulations 2015 and, subject to the report from the Examiner of Statutory Rules, has no objection to the Rule.

7. SR 137/2015 - The Planning Appeals Commission (Decision On Appeals and Making of Reports) (Amendment) Rules (NI) 2015

Agreed: That the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister has considered Statutory Rule SR 137/2015 The Planning Appeals Commission (Decision on Appeals and Making of Reports) (Amendment) Rules (NI) 2015 and, subject to the report from the Examiner of Statutory Rules, has no objection to the Rule.

8. SR144/2015 – The Fair Employment and Treatment Order (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2015

Agreed: That the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister has considered Statutory Rule SR 144/2015 The Fair Employment and Treatment Order

(Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2015 and, subject to the report from the Examiner of Statutory Rules, has no objection to the Rule.

9. SR 145/2015 – The Sex Discrimination Order 1976 (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2015

Agreed: That the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister has considered Statutory Rule SR 145/2015 The Sex Discrimination Order 1976 (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2015 and, subject to the report from the Examiner of Statutory Rules, has no objection to the Rule.

10. Draft Forward Work Programme

The Committee agreed to take the draft Forward Work Programme as the next agenda item. Members considered the draft Forward Work Programme up to May 2015 and noted that a briefing from departmental officials on Programme for Government commitments, and the 2015/16 Budget was scheduled for Wednesday 25 March.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite Ministers to brief the Committee on Wednesday 25 March on the Programme for Government commitments and the 2015/16 Budget.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite departmental officials to provide an urgent oral briefing on the scoping exercises with regard to Historical Institutional Abuse.

11. Inquiry into Building a United Community

Witnesses from Northern Ireland Environment Link and the Landscape Institute joined the meeting at 2.28 pm.

Dr Stephen McCabe, Policy and Projects Officer, Northern Ireland Environment Link; and Mr Pete Mullin, Policy Representative, Landscape Institute NI, appeared before the Committee for discussion and questions on the Committee's Inquiry into Building a United Community. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard.

Mr Moutray left the meeting at 2.53pm.

Mr Spratt joined the meeting at 2.56pm.

Mrs Hale left the meeting at 3.09pm.

The witnesses left the meeting at 3.12 pm.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department of the Environment to request information on how the recently

published 'Living Places - An Urban Stewardship and Design Guide for Northern Ireland' connects with Together: Building a United Community.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to seek an update on the design of the urban villages, as proposed in Together: Building a United Community; and seek information on how organisations can engage with the design process.

12. Racial Equality Strategy – briefing by the Common Platform

Witnesses from the Common Platform joined the meeting at 3.14pm.

Mr Patrick Yu, Director, NICEM; Ms Kasia Garbal, Co-Chair, Common Platform; Dr Mazhar Kahn, Trustee, Belfast Islamic Centre; Mr Ashkor Sharma, Indian Community Centre; and Mrs Bernadette McAliskey, Co-ordinator, South Tyrone Empowerment Partnership appeared before the Committee for discussion and questions on matters relating to the consultation on the draft Racial Equality Strategy. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard.

Mrs Hale returned to the meeting at 3.19pm.

The witnesses left the meeting at 4.10pm.

13. Racial Equality Strategy – briefing by Departmental officials

Departmental officials joined the meeting at 4.11pm

Dr Denis McMahon, Director of Equality, Good Relations and Economic Policy Directorate; Mrs Linsey Farrell, Director, Good Relations and Financial Governance Division; and Mr Ken Frazer, Head of Racial Equality Unit appeared before the Committee for discussion and questions on matters relating to the consultation on the draft Racial Equality Strategy. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard.

Mr Spratt left the meeting at 4.25pm.

Mr McIlveen left the meeting at 4.29pm.

Ms Fearon left the meeting at 4.41pm.

Ms Fearon returned to the meeting at 4.47pm.

Mrs Hale left the meeting at 4.51pm. The Committee lost its decision-making quorum. In the absence of a decision-making quorum proceedings continued in accordance with Standing Order 49(5).

Officials agreed to provide the Committee with further information on a number of issues.

Departmental officials left the meeting at 4.58 pm

14. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

15. Date, Time and Location of next meeting

The next meeting will be held at 2 pm in Room 30 on Wednesday 25 March 2015.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 5 pm.

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