



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

**COMMITTEE FOR THE OFFICE OF THE FIRST MINISTER AND DEPUTY
FIRST MINISTER
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
WEDNESDAY 25 MARCH 2015
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Alex Attwood
Mr Michael Copeland
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr David McIlveen

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

The meeting began in public session at 2.06 pm.

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted as above.

2. Chairperson's Business

St. Patrick's Day Events: Washington DC

The Chairperson updated Members on his visit to Washington DC to attend events related to St. Patrick's Day.

Include Youth Behind the headlines conference

The Committee noted an invitation from Include Youth to a Behind the Headlines conference focusing on media representation of children and young people scheduled for Friday 24 April 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Chair would participate in a panel discussion as part of the event.

Request for Ministerial briefing on Programme for Government and Budget 2015/16

The Committee noted correspondence from the First Minister and deputy First Minister indicating that they are unavailable to attend the scheduled briefings on the Programme for Government and Budget 2015/16 as requested by the Committee.

Committee Invitations

The Committee noted the list of current invitations.

3. Draft Minutes of the meetings held on 18 March 2015

Agreed: The draft minutes of the proceedings of 18 March 2015 were agreed by the Committee.

4. Matters Arising

List of Outstanding Correspondence

The Committee noted the list of outstanding correspondence.

5. Correspondence

Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure to the First Minister and deputy First Minister regarding the One Plan Regeneration for Derry/Londonderry and the UK city of Culture Legacy.

Naming of Public Facilities/Entities after Ineligible People Private Members Bill

The Committee noted a consultation paper from Mr Tom Elliott MLA on his proposed Naming of Public Facilities/Entities after Ineligible People Private Members Bill.

EU Matters

The Committee noted the latest edition of the EU Matters newsletter, prepared by the Northern Ireland Assembly EU Affairs Manager.

Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development to the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) regarding Shackleton Barracks.

Central Good Relations Funding Programme

The Committee noted correspondence from OFMDFM regarding a call for applications to the Central Good Relations Funding Programme for 2015/16.

Carnegie UK Trust

The Committee noted correspondence from the Carnegie UK Trust regarding their new Report on Improving Wellbeing in Northern Ireland.

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Bill

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Education regarding the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to OFMDFM for comment.

PSNI/NIO Equal Pay

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel regarding the PSNI/NIO Equal Pay issue

Minority Ethnic Development Fund

The Committee noted correspondence from Stronger Together to the OFMDFM Racial Equality United regarding the Minority Ethnic Development Fund applications for 2015/16.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister for comment. The Committee also agreed to advise Stronger Together that it will seek further information and clarification on this matter.

Inter-Action Belfast

The Committee noted correspondence from the First Minister and deputy First Minister following a request for views on the withdrawal of funding from Inter-Action Belfast by the Community Relations Council.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to Inter-Action Belfast for information.

Ministerial Sub-Group on Regional Opportunities

The Committee noted a copy of a response from OFMDFM to the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment regarding the Ministerial Sub-group on Regional Opportunities.

6. Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Committee considered a paper on issues arising from its Inquiry into Building a United Community

Agreed: The Committee agreed to release the issues paper to OFMDFM officials prior to the evidence session scheduled following the Easter recess.

The Committee noted a summary of the discussion held informally with representatives of the Rural Community Network following the adjournment of the meeting on 11 March.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to include the summary discussion with the Inquiry papers.

The Committee noted a response from the Department to its queries regarding the implementation of the recommendations contained within the NISRA evaluation of the District Council Good Relations Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the response to NILGA for information; and to include the response in the Inquiry papers.

The Committee noted an update on the summer camp co-design workshops which were held in December and January; and noted that £1m has been secured to implement the Summer Camp Pilot Programme 2015.

Agreed: The Committee to include this correspondence in the Inquiry papers and agreed to write to the Department to request: a written briefing on the proposed summer camps; and a budget profile for T:BUC initiatives over the lifetime of the strategy.

7. Children's Services Co-operation Bill

The Committee considered a paper on issues arising during the Committee Stage of the Children's Services Co-operation Bill

Agreed: The Committee agreed to take oral evidence on a thematic basis; and agreed to hear from Disability Groups/Healthcare Professionals, NILGA, and an experienced individual who had submitted written evidence. The Committee also agreed to

invite Children in Northern Ireland to co-ordinate a panel of up to four groups from the children's sector/voluntary sector that had responded to the call for written evidence.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to commission Assembly Research to undertake research into integrated working with regard to children's services in other jurisdictions.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write again to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to seek its views on the provisions of the Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to issue the clause-by-clause table to the Bill sponsor and the Department for comment in advance of their scheduled evidence sessions on 29 April, with the caveat that it may be subject to change following the oral evidence sessions.

8. Draft Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted the draft Forward Work programme to May 2015 and that junior Ministers had indicated that they are available to attend Committee on 15 April to discuss proposals for age discrimination legislation.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to reschedule the evidence session with OFMDFM officials regarding the Inquiry into Building a United Community, which had been arranged for 15 April.

Agreed: The Committee agreed not to meet on Wednesday 6 May.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the forward work programme subject to the agreed amendments.

9. OFMDFM: Programme for Government Update Report

Departmental officials joined the meeting at 2.31 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. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard. Questions and discussion followed.

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

Mr Spratt left the meeting at 2.47pm. The Committee lost its decision-making quorum. In the absence of a decision-making quorum proceedings continued in accordance with Standing Order 49(5).

Mr Spratt returned to the meeting at 2.52pm.

Mrs Hale left the meeting at 3.02pm. 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 further information on a number of issues.

Departmental officials left the meeting at 3.33 pm.

10. OFMDFM: Programme for Government Update Report

Departmental officials joined the meeting at 3.34 pm.

Departmental officials Dr Mark Browne, Mr Tony Canavan, Mrs Siobhan Broderick and Dr Paul Geddis briefed the Committee on progress of Programme for Government commitments 15, 16, 17, 26 and 77. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard. Questions and discussion followed.

Mr Maskey joined the meeting at 3.47pm.

Ms McGahan left the meeting at 3.47pm. The Committee lost its decision-making quorum. In the absence of a decision-making quorum proceedings continued in accordance with Standing Order 49(5).

Ms McGahan returned to 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 accordance with Standing Order 49(5).

Mr Lyttle returned to the meeting at 3.53pm.

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

Departmental officials left the meeting at 4.05 pm.

11. OFMDFM Budget 2015-16

Departmental officials joined the meeting at 3.06 pm.

Departmental officials Dr Mark Browne, Mr Stephen Boyd and Sinead McCartan briefed the Committee on the implications of the 2015/16 Budget allocation for the Department and its Arm's-Length Bodies. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard. Questions and discussion followed.

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

Departmental officials left the meeting at 4.47 pm.

12. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

13. Date, Time and Location of next meeting

The next meeting will be held at 2 pm in Room 30 on Wednesday 15 April 2015.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 4.48 pm.

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