



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

**COMMITTEE FOR THE OFFICE OF THE FIRST MINISTER AND DEPUTY
FIRST MINISTER
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
WEDNESDAY 11 NOVEMBER 2015
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Ms Megan Fearon
Mr Paul Frew
Mr Gordon Lyons
Mr Stephen Moutray

Apologies: Mr Andy Allen
Mr Alex Maskey
Mr David McIlveen

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Mrs Ashleigh Mitford (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Innis Mennie (Clerical Officer)
Mr Alyn Hicks (Bill Team - Item 1 only)

The meeting began in closed session at 2.22 pm.

1. NIPSO Bill

Special Reports to the Assembly

Mr Alyn Hicks, Bill Team, joined the meeting at 2.23 pm.

The Committee considered the power of the NIPSO to make a special report to the Assembly. The Ad Hoc Committee on the Public Services Ombudsperson Bill had recommended that the Committee for OFMDFM “satisfies itself that there are proper safeguards and procedural fairness before any such power is exercised.” The Chairperson reminded Members that the Committee had previously received legal advice on this issue.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it is content with the Bill as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft letters to the First Minister and deputy First Minister and the Assembly Commission on the decisions that were made at last week's meeting.

Members noted that it is proposed that Further Consideration Stage of the Bill will be on 30 November 2015 with Final Stage before Christmas recess.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to ask the Business Committee to include Further Consideration Stage of the NIPSO Bill on the Provisional Order paper for 30 November 2015.

Mr Hicks left the meeting at 2.29 pm.

2. Work Planning

The Committee considered its priorities for the final months of the 2011-16 Assembly Mandate. Members noted that it will be necessary to allow time for consideration of legislation in respect of the reduction of the number of government departments and the related Transfer of Functions Order.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the suggested actions set out in the Clerk's paper.

Agreed: Members agreed to ask OFMDFM when the Committee will be provided with a copy of the draft Gender Equality Strategy.

Agreed: The Committee will consider holding a stakeholder event when the analysis of the Departmental consultation on proposals on Age Discrimination Legislation is available.

The Committee discussed how it might engage with stakeholders on the matter of EU reform.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider this issue further at the meeting of 18 November 2015.

The meeting moved into public session at 2.46 pm.

3. Apologies

Apologies were as recorded above.

4. Chair's Business

Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Select Committee

The Committee noted an invitation to the Committee Chairperson from the Chair of the Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Select Committee regarding its Inquiry into the future of the United Kingdom.

2.49 pm: *Gordon Lyons joined the meeting*

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Chairperson attend a meeting with relevant Committee Chairs from the other legislatures.

The Chair advised Members that some concerns had been raised in relation to the comments made at last week's meeting regarding the Northern Ireland Assembly and Business Trust and the Office of the Northern Ireland Executive in Brussels. Members noted that the Committee may return to this matter at a future meeting.

The Committee noted the list of current invitations.

5. Draft Minutes

Agreed: Amended draft minutes of the proceedings of 4 November 2015 were agreed by the Committee.

6. Matters Arising

Historical Institutional Abuse

Agreed: The Committee agreed to issue a letter to the First Minister and deputy First Minister asking that the relevant documents on the scoping exercises regarding those individuals that fall outside the remit of the Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry are provided and that officials provide an oral briefing on this matter. The Committee may consider exercising its section 44 powers if the information is not provided by noon on Friday 20 November.

Outstanding Correspondence

The Committee noted the list of outstanding correspondence.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to allow flexibility in relation to outstanding issues in view of the ongoing talks process. However, the Committee remains concerned at the level of engagement with the Department and it will therefore return to this matter on an on-going basis.

7. Correspondence

Northern Ireland Community Relations Council

The Committee noted that the Northern Ireland Community Relations Council Annual Report for the year ending 31 March 2015 has been laid in the Business Office.

Carnegie UK Trust Report on Measuring Wellbeing in Northern Ireland

The Committee noted responses from the Committee for Finance and Personnel and the Committee for Social Development on the Carnegie Trust UK 'Towards a Wellbeing Framework' Report.

Committee for Finance and Personnel

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel regarding the Legislative Consent Motion on a proposed cap on Public Sector exit payments.

Committee for Education

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Education regarding the Committee Stage of the Shared Education Bill.

Delivering Social Change

The Committee noted the Delivering Social Change Signature Programmes update for October 2015.

Committee for Employment and Learning

The Committee noted a copy letter to OFMDFM from the Committee for Employment and Learning regarding its Inquiry into Post Special Need Provision in Education, Employment and Training for those with Learning Disabilities.

8. Draft Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted The Council of the European Union proposal for a directive implementing the principle of equal treatment between persons irrespective of religion or belief, age or sexual orientation in the provisions of services and the exercise of public functions.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request briefings on the proposal from Departmental officials and from the Equality Commission.

The Committee agreed the draft Forward Work Programme up to December 2015 as amended.

9. Good Relations - Briefing on the Good Relations Indicators First Report

Departmental officials joined the meeting at 2.59 pm.

Stephen Moutray left the meeting at 3.00 pm.

Mrs Grainne Killen, Miss Donna Blaney and Mrs Pauline Donnan briefed the Committee on the First Report on the Good Relations Indicators.

A question and answer session followed.

The officials agreed to provide a gender breakdown of the data for the indicators.

Departmental officials left the meeting at 3.46 pm.

10. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

11. Date, Time and Location of next meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Committee is at 2pm in Room 30 on Wednesday 18 November 2015.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 3.50 pm.

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