



# Northern Ireland Assembly

## COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**Thursday 1 October 2015**  
**Room 29, Parliament Buildings**

- Present: Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chairperson)  
Mr Fra McCann MLA (Deputy Chairperson)  
Mr Jim Allister MLA  
Mr Roy Beggs MLA  
Ms Paula Bradley MLA  
Mr Gregory Campbell MLA  
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA  
Mr Sammy Douglas MLA  
Mr Phil Flanagan MLA  
Mr Gordon Lyons MLA
- In Attendance: Dr Kevin Pelan (Assembly Clerk)  
Mrs Ashleigh Mitford (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Stewart Kennedy (Clerical Supervisor)  
Ms Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)
- Apologies: Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA

The meeting commenced in open session at 10:02 a.m.

#### **1. Apologies**

Apologies were noted as above.

## **2. Draft Minutes**

The following motion was read into the record by way of correction to the motion that was read into the record on 24 September 2015.

*“That the Committee for Social Development has considered the Statutory Rule SR 331/2015 The State Pension Credit (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules report, has no objections to the Rule.”*

*Agreed:* The draft minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2015 were agreed as amended.

## **3. Chairperson’s Business**

The Chairperson reminded Members about the informal meeting with RICS that is scheduled for 9.30 on 7 October 2015.

## **4. Matters Arising**

Members considered a memo from the Clerk in relation to proposals for inclusion in its Forward Work Programme.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to incorporate the proposals as set out in the Clerk’s memo with the addition of a briefing on the Repossession Task Force.

Members considered a memo from the Clerk in relation to action taken to reduce bureaucracy in relation to the funding of charities.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to request a briefing on the annual report on the Concordat.

*Paula Bradley joined the meeting at 10:07 a.m.*

## **5. Departmental Briefing – Temporary Permanent Secretary Priorities and Processes**

The following departmental officials joined the meeting at 10:08 am

- Mr Andrew Hamilton, Temporary Permanent Secretary, DSD
- Mr Ian Snowden, Acting Deputy Secretary of Resources and Social Policy Group (RSPG)

*Phil Flanagan joined the meeting at 10:14 a.m.*

The Departmental Officials briefed the Committee and this was followed by questions from members.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to seek weekly updates on the status of Ministerial decisions that have been taken during the periods when there is a Minister in office.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to ask the Department to clarify certain issues surrounding its liaison with the NIO on Welfare Reform. In particular, the Committee wished to know under whose authority this liaison is taking place, what the (former) Minister’s knowledge of this work is and when the work began.

The officials left the meeting at 11:09 a.m.

#### **6. Housing (Amendment) Bill Evidence Session – Landlords’ Association NI**

The following representative joined the meeting at 11:10 am

- Mr Raymond Crooks, Chairman, Landlords’ Association of Northern Ireland

The representative briefed the Committee and this was followed by questions from members.

The representative left the meeting at 11:49 am

This session was recorded by Hansard.

*Alex Maskey left the meeting at 11:50 a.m.*

*Fra McCann took the chair at 11:50 a.m.*

#### **7. Departmental Briefing – Houses in Multiple Occupation Bill**

The following departmental officials joined the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

- Mr Stephen Martin, Housing Policy Delivery, DSD
- Mr David Grimley, Private Rented Branch, DSD
- Mr Ronan Murphy, Private Rented Branch, DSD
- Ms Christine Hayes, Private Rented Branch, DSD

The Departmental Officials briefed the Committee and this was followed by questions from members.

*Gregory Campbell left the meeting at 11:55 a.m.*

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to follow up on a number of issues.

*Jim Allister left the meeting at 12:30 p.m.*

The officials left the meeting at 12.32 p.m.

This session was recorded by Hansard.

#### **8. SL1 The Social Security (Disability Living Allowance) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015**

*Agreed:* The Committee was content for the Rule to be made.

## **9. SR 329 The Pensions (2015 Act) (Commencement No. 2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015**

The Committee noted the Commencement Order.

## **10. Correspondence**

The Committee noted correspondence and a report from a Mr Burke in relation to a statutory investigation and subsequent report by the Charity Commission NI into Lough Neagh Rescue.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to Mr Burke to suggest that he make a complaint to the Ombudsman if he feels he has been treated unfairly by the Charities Commission.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to forward Mr Burke's report to the Department for consideration.

The Committee noted a correspondence memo.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to action all correspondence as outlined on the correspondence memo.

## **11. Forward Work Programme**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed its Forward Work Programme as amended.

## **12. AOB**

No items were raised.

## **13. Date, time and place of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee for Social Development will take place on 8 October 2015 at 10:00am.

The Deputy Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12:40 p.m.

**Alex Maskey**

**Chairperson, Committee for Social Development**

**08 October 2015**