



Northern Ireland Assembly

COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Thursday 8 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
- 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
Mr Adrian McQuillan MLA

The meeting commenced in open session at 10.04 a.m.

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted as above.

The Chair welcomed Adrian McQuillan to the Committee.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to Gordon Lyons to thank him for his service to the Committee.

2. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The draft minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2015 were agreed.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chair advised members that he met with the Chairperson of the NIHE, Donald Hoodless, on Wednesday 7 October 2015, to discuss key issues including the social housing reform programme, asset management, the Journey to Excellence programme and initiatives including the social enterprise strategy.

4. Matters Arising

The Committee noted an agenda for the Housing Community Network Conference.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that its meeting at the Tullyglass House Hotel, Ballymena on 22 October 2015 will commence at 9.30 am and, in addition to housekeeping business, the Committee will take evidence from local government in relation to the HMO Bill. Members will then be available to join the Housing Community Network conference from around 10.45.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to liaise with committee staff regarding transport arrangements to Ballymena.

The Committee noted that it has received over 20 submissions to its call for evidence on the Houses in Multiple Occupation Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to upload submissions to the Committee Website and to share the submissions with the Department.

5. Update on Ministerial Decisions - Departmental Briefing

The following Departmental Officials joined the meeting at 10.10am:

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

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

Agreed: The Committee agreed to ask the Department to include budgetary issues in next week's briefing session with the Temporary Permanent Secretary.

The Officials left the meeting at 10.36 am

6. Housing (Amendment) Bill Evidence Session – Housing Rights Service

The following representatives from Housing Rights Services joined the meeting at 10.36 am:

- Ms Janet Hunter, Director; and
- Ms Sarah Corrigan, Housing Adviser

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

The representatives left the meeting at 11.29 am

This session was recorded by Hansard.

7. Housing (Amendment) Bill Evidence Session – NI Human Rights Commission

The following representatives from the NI Human Rights Commission joined the meeting at 11.30am :

- Dr David Russell, Deputy Director;
- Ms Leanne Cochrane, Researcher; and
- Ms Claire Martin, Communications.

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

The representatives left the meeting at 12.00 pm .

This session was recorded by Hansard.

8. Housing (Amendment) Bill Evidence Session – Supporting Communities NI

The following representative from Supporting Communities NI joined the meeting at 12.01pm :

- Mr Murray Watt, Liaison Officer

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

Gregory Campbell left the meeting at 12.03pm

The representative left the meeting at 12.18 pm.

This session was recorded by Hansard.

9. Housing (Amendment) Bill Evidence Session – Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations (NIFHA) and Helm Housing.

Jim Allister left the meeting at 12.18 pm.

The following representatives from NIFHA and Helm Housing joined the meeting at 12.19pm :

- Dr Jennifer Donald, Deputy Chief Executive ,NIFHA;
- Mr Kieran Walsh, Director of Housing Management, Helm Housing; and
- Ms Sheila Taylor, Neighbourhood Housing Manager, Helm Housing

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

Phil Flanagan left the meeting at 12.29 pm.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to seek further information from the representatives regarding current information sharing practices that were discussed during the briefing.

The representatives left the meeting at 12.43 pm.

This session was recorded by Hansard.

10. Correspondence

The Committee noted correspondence from Margaret Ritchie MP, on behalf of NI Artisan Drinks Producers Group.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Clerk should respond indicating that the Committee would be content to receive a briefing on the issues set out in the letter while highlighting that it is unlikely that liquor licensing legislation will be introduced before the end of this mandate.

The Committee noted a correspondence memo.

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

11. Forward Work Programme

Agreed: The Committee agreed its Forward Work Programme.

12. AOB

Fra McCann raised concerns over the contents of a report regarding electrical safety in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the report to the Department for urgent consideration and comment.

Stewart Dickson brought Judith Cochrane MLA's proposed Private Members Bill regarding licensing of stadia of national importance to the attention of the Committee.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to receive a briefing from Ms Cochrane, noting that it is the Committee's understanding that it may be unrealistic to expect a Private Member's Bill to complete before dissolution.

13. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee for Social Development will take place on 15 October 2015 at 10:00am.

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

Alex Maskey

Chairperson, Committee for Social Development

15 October 2015