



Northern Ireland Assembly

COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY 13 March 2014

Room 29, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Jim Allister MLA
Mr Gregory Campbell MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Mr Michael Copeland MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA
Mr Sammy Wilson MLA

In Attendance: Dr Kevin Pelan (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Claire McCanny (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Todd (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stewart Kennedy (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Allison Ferguson (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Ms Paula Bradley MLA

The meeting opened to the public at 10.07 am.

1. Apologies

Apologies were as noted above.

2. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The draft minutes of the meeting held on 6 March were agreed.

Stewart Dickson MLA joined the meeting at 10.07 am.

Mickey Brady MLA joined the meeting at 10.07 am.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson informed Members that he and the Committee Clerk met with the Minister on Monday to discuss the recruitment process for the new Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive, as the incumbent Dr John McPeake is retiring soon. The Chairperson informed Members that the Strategic Investment Board has conducted research on behalf of NIHE to assist in this forthcoming recruitment exercise.

At this meeting the Minister also noted that he would soon be advising the Executive Committee on the future direction of the Social Housing Reform Programme; the Chairperson stated that the Committee are looking forward to working with the Department and dealing with those issues.

4. Matters Arising

4.1 The Chairperson drew members' attention to a letter received from the BBC, advising what information the BBC is willing and able to share with the Committee, following the Committee's restated request for information relating to the Inquiry.

Sammy Wilson MLA recorded his dis-satisfaction with the conduct of the BBC in relation to the provision of documentation relating to the Committee Inquiry.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to await the materials requested from the BBC.

Michael Copeland MLA joined the meeting at 10.09 am.

4.2 The Chairperson drew members' attention to a letter from the Committee for Standards and Privileges regarding the apparent leak of information from the Campbell-Tickell Report to one of the NIHE contractors involved in the contracts scrutinised in the Report. This letter advises that, in the absence of evidence suggesting that an MLA is the source of this leak, the Assembly Commissioner for Standards cannot accept a complaint or undertake an investigation on his own initiative.

The Committee noted this letter.

4.3 The Chairperson reminded Members that next week's meeting will be held in Bagenal's Castle in Newry. He advised that Newry and Mourne Council officials will brief the Committee on town centre regeneration schemes and Neighbourhood Renewal projects in the city.

4.4 The Chairperson reminded Members that there will be a strategic review of the Committee's workload in the Stormont Hotel on 27th March, instead of the normal Committee meeting.

Trevor Clarke MLA joined the meeting at 10.19 am.

COMMITTEE INQUIRY

5. Evidence Session with Mr Nelson McCausland, Minister for Social Development

The Minister joined the meeting at 10.20 am.

The Minister took questions from officials.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 10.56 am.

This session was recorded by Hansard.

Alex Maskey

Chairperson, Committee for Social Development

20 March 2014