



Northern Ireland Assembly

COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**Thursday 03 December 2015
Room 29, Parliament Buildings**

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

The meeting commenced in open session at 10.06 a.m.

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted as above.

2. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The draft minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2015 were agreed.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson reminded members that the Committee has been invited to attend the Speak Up regional event on 10 December in Belfast and that anyone wishing to attend should contact the Clerk.

4. Matters Arising

The Committee noted that the Licensing Bill has its Second Stage on Monday 7 December 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to the issue of a Call for Evidence on 8 December, subject to the Bill being referred to the Committee by the Assembly.

Agreed: In order to ensure that the Bill passes through all necessary stages before the end of the mandate, the Committee agreed that the Call for Evidence will close on Thursday 31st December 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed its draft event programme 'Building future homes – providing choice, sustaining supply'. This event is being held in conjunction with CIH and is scheduled to take place at the Stormont Hotel on 21 January 2016.

5. Housing (Amendment) Bill Committee Clause-by-Clause Consideration – Departmental Briefing

The following departmental officials joined the meeting at 10.12 am

- Dr Heloise Brown, Head of Housing Research, Policy and Legislation, DSD
- Ms Avril Hiles, Deputy Principal of Private Rented Branch, DSD
- Ms Maryann Dempsey, Deputy Principal of Private Sector Grants, DSD
- Mr Stephen Baird, Policy and Legislation Manager, DSD

The Committee noted a memo from the Clerk and correspondence in relation to the Minister's final position on outstanding issues on the Bill.

The Committee discussed the outstanding issues with the Departmental officials.

The Committee conducted an informal run-through of the clauses of the Bill.

The Committee noted the Minister's response in respect of clause 1 and voiced no additional concerns about this clause.

The Committee noted the Minister's response in respect of clause 2 and its support for the removal of reference to grounds 1 and 3 in this clause.

No issues were raised in relation to the remaining clauses.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to defer its Clause-by-Clause Consideration to 10 December 2015.

The Departmental officials left the meeting at 10.28 am

6. DSD planning for forthcoming arrival of Refugees - Departmental Briefing

The following Departmental official joined the meeting 10.28 am

- Mr Ian Snowden, Acting Deputy Secretary of Resources and Social Policy Group, DSD

The Chairperson reminded members that there will be a joint Committee/Departmental information session in the Senate on Monday 7 December 2015 for all MLAs on the arrangements in place to receive Syrian refugees.

Mr Snowden briefed the Committee and this was followed by questions from members.

Mr Snowden left the meeting at 10.52 am

Phil Flanagan left the meeting at 10.52 am

7. Houses in Multiple Occupation Bill Committee Consideration - Departmental Briefing

The following departmental officials joined the meeting at 10.53 am

- Mr Stephen Martin, Deputy Director of Housing Policy Delivery, DSD
- David Grimley, Private Rented Sector, DSD
- Ronan Murphy, Private Rented Sector, DSD
- Christine Hayes, Private Rented Sector, DSD

The Committee noted a clause-by-clause table setting out the Department's response to issues raised by stakeholders in relation to the Bill.

The Departmental officials briefed the Committee on the Department's responses to those issues raised under clauses 2 – 13 of the Bill and answered Members questions.

Sammy Douglas left the meeting at 11.09 am and meeting quorum therefore reduced to 4.

Phil Flanagan joined the meeting at 11.15 am and a quorum of 5 was re-established

Dolores Kelly joined the meeting at 11.20 am

The Departmental officials left the meeting at 11.23 am

8. Advising, Supporting, Empowering Strategy and Action Plan– Departmental Briefing

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting 11.23 am

- Mr Michael Donnelly, Head of Voluntary and Community Unit, DSD
- Mr Harry Armstrong, Public Sector Engagement Team, DSD
- Ms Donna Darlington, Public Sector Engagement Team, DSD

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

Sammy Douglas joined the meeting at 11.26 am

The Departmental officials left the meeting at 11.38 am

9. SL1 The Social Security (Crediting and Treatment of Contributions and National Insurance Numbers) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2015

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

10. Correspondence

The Committee noted a correspondence memo.

Agreed: Members agreed to bring any comments on the Public Consultation of Proposals for a Successor to DARD'S Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation Framework 2011/15 to the Committee meeting of 10 December 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to return to correspondence from OFMDFM Committee at its meeting of 7 January 2016. This correspondence related to the European Commission Work Programme 2016 and sought the committee's views on its European priorities for the year ahead.

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

11. Forward Work Programme

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

12. AOB

Agreed: There is a need to understand what the Committee scrutiny role, in regards to community planning, will be in the future. This issue was discussed within the context of the new Department for Communities.

13. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee for Social Development will take place on 10 December 2015 at 10.00am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 11.41 a.m.

Alex Maskey

Chairperson, Committee for Social Development

10 December 2015