



Northern Ireland Assembly

COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Thursday 07 January 2016
Room 29, Parliament Buildings

- Present: Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Fra McCann MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Roy Beggs MLA
Ms Paula Bradley MLA
Mr Gregory Campbell MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson 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: Mr Jim Allister MLA
Mr Sammy Douglas MLA
Mr Phil Flanagan MLA
Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA
Mr Adrian McQuillan MLA

The meeting commenced in open session at 10.05 a.m.

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted as above.

2. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The draft minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2015 were agreed.

3. Chairperson's Business

Members were reminded of the scheduling of an informal briefing with a group of young people from the Northern Ireland Assembly's Connections programme after the conclusion of Committee business. The group will present their project findings and recommendations on their chosen topic, Mental Health.

4. Matters Arising

Fra McCann left the meeting at 10.07 am

Members noted the Clerk's memo regarding the European Commission Work Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Clerk should draft a response to the Committee for OFMdFM, setting out the Committee's priorities in relation to the European Work Programme, for its consideration at its meeting on 21 January 2015.

The Committee was reminded that it has agreed to consider the Department's Bill and Transfer of Functions Order at the Committee meeting next week.

Fra McCann joined the meeting at 10.08 am

5. Licensing Bill - Briefing by Mrs Judith Cochrane MLA

Mrs Judith Cochrane MLA joined the meeting at 10.09 am.

Mrs Cochrane briefed the Committee and this was followed by questions from members.

Agreed: The Committee agreed its timetable and schedule of witnesses for the Committee Stage of the bill but noted that this may be subject to change.

The Committee noted two further licensing issues relating to Drumbo Park Greyhound Stadium and premises where under 18 discos are held.

Agreed: To seek advice on these issues in the context of the scope of the bill.

Mrs Cochrane left the meeting at 11.44 am

The session was recorded by Hansard.

6. Houses in Multiple Occupation Bill Committee Consideration – Departmental Briefing

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting at 11.45 am

- Mr Stephen Martin, Housing Policy Delivery, DSD
- David Grimley, Private Rented Sector, DSD

- Ronan Murphy, Private Rented Sector , DSD

The Departmental officials briefed the Committee on clauses 62 – 91 and schedules 1-8 of the bill and addressed members' queries.

The Chairperson requested that the officials attend next week's meeting to further assist the Committee in its consideration.

The Departmental officials left the meeting at 11.20 am.

This session was recorded by Hansard.

7. Housing Amendment Bill – Committee Report

The Committee noted its draft Housing (Amendment) Bill (NIA Bill 58/11-16) Report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it is content with the cover page, Powers and Membership, List of Abbreviations and Table of Contents of the Report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it is content with the Introduction of the Report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it is content with Consideration of the Bill section of the Report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it is content with the section on its Clause-by-Clause Scrutiny of the bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it is content with the links to appendices of the Report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it is content with the Executive Summary of the Report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it is content with the Summary of Recommendations of the Report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Report be the fourteenth Report of the Committee for Social Development.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to order the Report to be printed.

Agreed: Having noted the contribution of Housing Rights to its scrutiny of the bill, the Committee agreed to write to Janet Hunter to congratulate her on her inclusion in the New Year's Honours list.

8. The Affordable Warmth Scheme and Boiler Replacement Scheme – Departmental Briefing

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting at 11.27 am

- Deirdre Ward, Assistant Director of Housing Performance, Governance & Accountability, DSD
- Martin Mc Dermott , Head of Fuel Poverty & Private Sector Grants, DSD

- Siobhan Mc Cauley, Director of Regional Services, NIHE
- Terry Waide, Energy Efficiency & Houses of Multiple Occupation Manager, NIHE

The Departmental officials briefed the Committee.

Alex Maskey left the meeting at 10.52am and Fra McCann took the Chair.

Alex Maskey returned to the meeting and took the Chair at 11.59 am.

The Department's briefing was followed by questions from members.

The Departmental officials left the meeting at 12.10 pm

9. Inspection of NIHE on the Implementation of Response Maintenance Recommendations – Briefing on Report

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting at 12.11 pm

- Deirdre Ward, Assistant Director of Housing Performance, Governance & Accountability, DSD
- Donald Heaney, Head of Governance and Inspection, DSD

Gregory Campbell left the meeting at 12.13 pm

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

The Departmental officials left the meeting at 12.29 pm

10. SL1 The Housing Benefit (Executive Determinations) Regulations (NI) 2016 – Departmental Briefing

The following Departmental officials joined the meeting at 12.30 pm

- Anne McCleary Director Social Security Policy & Legislation Division, DSD
- Michael Pollock Deputy Director Social Security Policy & Legislation Division, DSD
- Rosemary Hughes, Social Security Policy and Legislation Division, DSD

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

Agreed: The Committee agreed to defer formal consideration of the SL1 until its meeting of 14 January 2016 in order that it may receive a briefing on a related SL1.

The Departmental officials left the meeting at 12.36 pm

11. SL1 The Housing Benefit (Abolition of Family Premium and Date of Claim) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2016

Agreed: The Committee agreed to seek a briefing on this SL1 from Departmental officials at its meeting on 14 January 2016.

12. SL1 Pension Protection Fund and Occupational Pension Schemes (Levy Ceiling and Compensation Cap) Order (NI) 2016

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

13. SL1 The State Pension (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2016

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

14. SR 411 The Pensions (2015 Act) (Consequential Supplementary and Incidental Amendments) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015

The Committee had no objections to the rule.

The Chairperson read the following motion into the record:

“That the Committee for Social Development has considered the Statutory Rule SR 411/2015 The Pensions (2015 Act) (Consequential, Supplementary and Incidental Amendments) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 and subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules report, has no objections to the Rule.”

15. Correspondence

The Committee noted a correspondence memo.

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

Agreed: The Committee would consider if it requires an oral briefing on the NIAO Report under Matters Arising at its meeting on 14 January 2016.

16. Forward Work Programme

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

17. AOB

No items were raised.

18. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee for Social Development will take place on 14 January 2016 at 10.00am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12.40 p.m.

Alex Maskey

Chairperson, Committee for Social Development

14 January 2016