



# Northern Ireland Assembly

## COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**Thursday 10 September 2015**  
**Room 29, Parliament Buildings**

Present: Mr Fra McCann MLA (Deputy Chairperson)  
Mr Jim Allister MLA  
Mr Roy Beggs MLA  
Ms Paula Bradley MLA  
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA  
Mr Sammy Douglas MLA  
Mr Gordon Lyons MLA  
Mr Fra McCann 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 Alex Maskey MLA (Chairperson)

The meeting commenced in open session at 10.04 a.m. with Fra McCann in the Chair.

#### **1. Apologies**

Apologies were noted as above.

Fra McCann confirmed that he has been appointed as Committee Deputy Chairperson.

The Deputy Chairperson welcomed Gordon Lyons to the Committee.

The Deputy Chairperson advised members that, subject to Assembly approval, Phil Flanagan will be joining the Committee next week.

## **2. Draft Minutes**

*Agreed:* The draft minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2015 were agreed.

## **3. Chairperson's Business**

The Committee noted that the Chairperson will be meeting with the newly appointed Chief Executive of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive on Thursday 17 September 2015.

## **4. Matters Arising**

The Committee noted a Clerk's memo summarising views on how best to take forward the recommendations contained in the Phase 3 Inquiry Report, including the views set out by the Minister for Social Development.

*10.07 a.m. Stewart Dickson joined the meeting*

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Minister for Social Development to establish when he expects to brief the Committee on his Department's work plan and priorities.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to OFMdFM regarding its outstanding response to the Committee on its views on how best to take the recommendations forward.

The Committee noted a Clerk's memo regarding appointment of experts by Politics Plus and committee refreshments.

The question was put that the Committee reinstate tea and coffee at Committee meetings.

The Committee divided.

Ayes	Noes	Abstained	Not voting
Paula Bradley Stewart Dickson Fra McCann Roy Beggs	Jim Allister		Gordon Lyons

The motion was passed.

The Deputy Chairperson advised the Committee that an official from Belfast City Council has requested a copy of the Department's briefing paper on the Affordable Warmth Scheme that was presented at the Committee meeting of 2 July 2015.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to issue the briefing.

## **5. Departmental Briefing - The State Pension Credit (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015**

The following departmental officials joined the meeting at 10.12 a.m.:

- Ms Anne McCleary, Director, Social Security, Policy and Legislation
- Ms Barbara Tweed, Social Security Policy and Legislation Division

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

The officials left the meeting at 10.27 a.m.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that it was content for the rule to be made.

## **6. Department for Communities – update**

The following departmental officials joined the meeting at 10.28 a.m.

- Ms Tracy Meharg, Project Senior Responsible Owner (SRO)
- Ms Maeve Walls, HR Director, DSD
- Mr Gary Boyd, Project Manager, DSD
- Ms Deborah Brown, Finance Director, DSD

*10:37 a.m. Sammy Douglas joined the meeting*

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

The officials left the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

## **7. Committee consideration of Justice No.2 Bill**

The Committee noted a Clerk's memo, the Justice No.2 Bill and the accompanying Explanatory and Financial memorandum.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing with the Social Security Agency on the Bill on 17 September 2015.

## **8. Correspondence**

The Committee noted a correspondence memo and tabled correspondence.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to send submissions received in relation to its call for evidence on the Housing (Amendment) Bill to the Department for Social Development.

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

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the Clerk issue a nil response to the Committee for the Environment in relation to events being held during Environmental Week.

## **9. Forward Work Programme**

The Committee noted a draft Forward Work Programme.

The Committee noted that the Second Stages of the Housing (Amendment) Bill and the Houses in Multiple Occupation Bill are scheduled for 21 September 2015.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to schedule briefings on the two Bills with the Department on 24 September 2015 and 1 October 2015 respectively.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to add an update briefing on the Affordable Warmth Scheme to its 'to be scheduled' list.

*Agreed:* As part of the members' development programme the Committee agreed that its session with a legislation drafting expert would be held in closed session on 17 September 2015.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to consider its first draft End of Session Report for 2014/2015 in closed session on 17 September 2015.

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

## **10. AOB**

No items were raised.

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

The next meeting of the Committee for Social Development will take place on 17 September 2015 at 11:00a.m.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 11.10 a.m.

**Alex Maskey**

**Chairperson, Committee for Social Development**

**17 September 2015**