



# Northern Ireland Assembly

## COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**Thursday 3 September 2015**  
**Room 29, Parliament Buildings**

- Present: Mr Alex Maskey MLA (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 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: None

The meeting commenced in open session at 10:02 a.m.

#### **1. Apologies**

Apologies were noted as above.

#### **2. Draft Minutes**

*Agreed:* The draft minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2015 were agreed.

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

The Committee noted that the Strategic Planning Session for 2015/2016 and the consideration of the Committee's Forward Work Programme – September- December 2016, would be held in closed session today.

The Chairperson reminded members that, in the interests of cost savings, Committee offices will no longer be producing hard copy meeting packs.

Members noted that the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People had invited Committee Chairs to attend a meeting with United Nations Task Force Members scheduled for 4 September 2015. This meeting has however been cancelled.

10:05 am Gregory Campbell and Paula Bradley joined the meeting.

#### **4. Matters Arising**

The Committee noted correspondence from the Minister for Social Development in which he advised that it is his intention that the Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Bill be introduced in the Assembly w/c 7 September 2015. The Committee also noted an electronic copy of the Bill and Explanatory and Financial Memorandum

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to publish a call for evidence to stakeholders as soon as the Bill is introduced.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department for Social Development advising it of a delay with its consultation on the development of a social housing rent policy and further noted that the Department will keep it up to date with developments as appropriate.

#### **5. SL1 The State Pension Credit (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to seek further information on this SL1 and to consider it again once this was received.

#### **6. SR 308/2015 The Pensions Act (Northern Ireland) 2015 (Consequential Amendments) (Units of Additional Pension) 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 SR308/2015 The Pensions Act (Northern Ireland) 2015 (Consequential Amendments) (Units of Additional Pension) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 and subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules report, agrees that it should be confirmed by the Assembly.”*

#### **7. SR 309/2015 The Occupational Pension Schemes (Charges and Governance) Regulations (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 SR309/2015 The Occupational Pension Schemes (Charges and Governance) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules report, agrees that it should be confirmed by the Assembly.”*

**8. SR 310/2015 The Occupational and Personal Pension Schemes (Automatic Enrolment) (Amendment) Regulations (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 310/2015 The Occupational and Personal Pension Schemes (Automatic Enrolment) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules report, has no objections to the Rule.”*

**9. SR 311/2015 The Social Security (Units of Additional Pension) Regulations (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 311/2015 The Social Security (Units of Additional Pension) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules report, has no objections to the Rule.”*

**10. SR 315/2015 The State Pension Regulations (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 SR315/2015 The State Pension Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules report, agrees that it should be confirmed by the Assembly.”*

**11. Correspondence**

The Committee noted correspondence received in a summer correspondence pack.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Justice in relation to its consultation on the Justice No. 2 Bill and further noted a copy of the Bill and accompanying Explanatory and Financial Memorandum.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to consider the Bill and bring their views to the Committee meeting of 10 September 2015, with a view to providing a response by the end of September.

The Committee noted a request to meet informally with the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors in October regarding the regulation of the private rented sector.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to schedule this meeting.

The Committee noted an invitation from NIFHA to attend its event on Thursday 10 September 2015.

*Agreed:* Members wishing to attend the event will contact the Committee Office.

The Committee noted a correspondence memo.

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

## **12. AOB**

No items were raised.

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

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

The meeting moved to closed session at 10:13 am

## **14. Strategic Planning Session 2015/2016**

The Clerk briefed the Committee in relation to the objectives and anticipated outcomes of the session.

*Agreed:* The Committee endorsed the Committee Review Group's Guiding Principles for Assembly Committees and a protocol on conduct and operation of Committee meetings.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to seek an early briefing on the Houses in Multiple Occupation Bill and to request information in relation to proposed expert advice.

*10:24 am* Sammy Douglas joined the meeting

The following departmental officials joined the meeting at 10:24am

- Jim Wilkinson, Housing Director for Strategy Policy and Reform, DSD; and
- Ian Snowden, Deputy Secretary of Resources and Social Policy Group
- Billy Crawford, Departmental Liaison Officer

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

*10:51am* Alex Maskey left the meeting.

As the Chairperson was absent and the Committee does not currently have a Deputy Chairperson, the Committee Clerk took the chair.

Paula Bradley moved that Stewart Dickson do take the chair of the Committee.

Fra McCann seconded the motion.

There were no further nominations and Mr Dickson took the chair at 10:53a.m.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to seek further information from the Department on measures of mitigation that could help to minimise the impact of Welfare Reform in respect of housing.

*11:26 am* Jim Allister left the meeting.

The officials left the meeting at 11.35 am

The Clerk continued to brief the Committee on strategic planning issues.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the Clerk progress proposals in relation to the Committee's work programme including proposals for effective stakeholder engagement.

*Agreed:* The Committee noted the ideas presented on enhancing the effectiveness of committee scrutiny and agreed that these should be implemented as and when required.

#### **15. Consideration of Forward Work Programme**

The Committee noted a draft Forward Work Programme.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 11.56 p.m.

**Alex Maskey**

**Chairperson, Committee for Social Development**

**10 September 2015**