



Committee for Communities

Minutes of Proceedings

Tuesday 2 December 2025

Meeting Location: Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Colm Gildernew MLA (Chairperson) (via Zoom)
Ms Cathy Mason MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Andy Allen MBE MLA
Mrs Kellie Armstrong MLA
Mr Maurice Bradley MLA
Mrs Pam Cameron MLA
Mr Maolíosa McHugh MLA
Mrs Sian Mulholland MLA

In Attendance: Mrs Emer Boyle (Assembly Clerk)
Mrs Victoria Bourquin (Assistant Clerk)
Mr Chris McAfee (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Patrice Morris (Senior Assistant Clerk)
Ms Kathryn Black (Senior Assistant Clerk)

The meeting commenced in public session at 1.01 p.m.



1. Declarations of Interest

The following interests were declared:

Kellie Armstrong – Member of the Deaf Community.

Pam Cameron – former Junior Minister with sight of Executive and Cross Departmental policy, strategy and legislation.

2. Apologies

There were no apologies.

The Chairperson informed Members that the next agenda item would take place in closed session in order for the Committee to be briefed by the Bill clerk.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to move into closed session to undertake informal deliberations on the Bill.

The meeting moved into closed session at 1.03p.m.

Liz Marsh, Bill Clerk joined the meeting to address any queries during the informal deliberations.

3. Sign Language Bill – Committee deliberations on the clauses of the Bill

The Committee considered the Clause by Clause table which detailed all the comments and evidence received in relation to Clauses 6 to 15 of the Sign Language Bill.

Members discussed Clauses 6 to 15 of the Bill, and the range of stakeholder views and comments received.

Kellie Armstrong joined the meeting at 1.11p.m.

Andy Allen left the meeting at 1.24p.m.

Kellie Armstrong left the meeting at 2.03p.m.



Pam Cameron left the meeting at 2.04p.m.

The meeting resumed in open session at 2.13p.m. with the following Members present: Mr Colm Gildernew, Mr Maurice Bradley, Ms Cathy Mason, Mr Maolíosa McHugh and Mrs Sian Mulholland.

Agreed: That a letter is sent to the Department to request the following:

- Clarification and consideration of a number of amendments to Clauses 6 to 15 of the Bill.
- Clarification in relation to a number of issues arising from the Committee's call for evidence which fall outside of specific Bill clauses but which are relevant to the Committee's considerations such as; any ongoing work in relation to a voucher scheme for interpretation for activities outside of the public sector, funding bids for Bill implementation, alignment with disability strategy and UNCRPD, learnings from research and impact assessment queries.

Agreed: That the Bill Clerk is also asked to draft text of the relevant amendments agreed by the Committee for its consideration, should the Department not provide drafts of the amendments prior to the date when the Committee stage concludes.

4. Date, time and location of the next meeting

The next meeting is at 10.00 a.m. on Thursday 4 December 2025, in The Skainos Centre.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 2.19p.m.

Colm Gildernew MLA

Chairperson, Committee for Communities