



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for The Executive Office

Minutes of Proceedings

Wednesday 11 June 2025

Meeting Location: Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Ms Paula Bradshaw MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Timothy Gaston MLA
Mr Harry Harvey MLA
Mr Brian Kingston MLA
Sinéad McLaughlin MLA

Online: Ms Carál Ní Chuilín MLA
Ms Claire Sugden MLA

Apologies: Mr Stewart Dickson MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Ms Áine Murphy MLA

In Attendance: Mr Keith McBride (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Sarah-Anne McKinley (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Neil Porter (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Andrienne Magee (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced at 2.01pm in public session.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Declarations of Interest

As below.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson advised Members that, following the second session of the Committee's Trauma Informed Approach training with the Safeguarding Board last week, the Chairperson would like to formally write to the Safeguarding Board to thank them for their work with the Committee.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to send a thank you letter on behalf of the Committee to the Safeguarding Board.

Timothy Gaston joined the meeting at 2.06pm.

The Chairperson and Members condemned the recent disorder across Ballymena and other areas in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the PSNI to thank them for their service during the recent disorder and to express regret to the frontline officers who were injured. The Committee also agreed to request that a robust response be applied in

bringing those responsible to justice. Additionally, the Committee agreed to ask how the PSNI intends to address this issue given its current resource going forward.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ask what learning has been applied since the disorder last summer. The Committee also agreed to ask whether TEO policies and its wider work, particularly under T:BUC, Community Relations, Race Relations, Communities in Transition, the Refugee Integration Strategy, and the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy are effectively addressing the root causes of this issue.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that Committee staff should draft the letters as a matter of urgency, and for the letters to be sent to Members for approval before being issued.

4. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 4 June 2025.

5. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

6. Assembly Bill Office - Oral Briefing

The oral evidence session began in closed session at 2.19pm

The official joined the meeting at 2.19pm.

Carál Ní Chuilín joined the meeting at 2.38pm.

Members discussed the forthcoming Inquiry into Mother and Baby Institutions, Magdalene Laundries and Workhouses and Redress Scheme Bill.

The official left the meeting at 2.40pm.

7. Committee approach and timetable – Inquiry into Mother and Baby Institutions, Magdalene Laundries and Workhouses and Redress Scheme Bill

Members discussed the Committee approach and timetable for the forthcoming Inquiry into Mother and Baby Institutions, Magdalene Laundries and Workhouses and Redress Scheme Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft Bill timetable and to extend the Committee stage of the Inquiry into Mother and Baby Institutions, Magdalene Laundries and Workhouses and Redress Scheme Bill until the 30 January 2026.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to circulate the Chair's speaking notes to all Members in advance of the Second Stage debate on the Inquiry into Mother and Baby Institutions, Magdalene Laundries, Workhouses and Redress Scheme Bill.

8. Assembly Legal Services – Implications of UK Supreme Court judgment in For Women Scotland Limited v The Scottish Ministers

The oral evidence session began in closed session at 2.49pm

The official joined the meeting at 2.49pm.

Members discussed the legal advice provided on the Implications of UK Supreme Court judgment in For Women Scotland Limited v The Scottish Ministers.

The official left the meeting at 3.51pm.

The Chairperson informed Members that she had leave the meeting early to travel on Committee business to the Interparliamentary Forum in London and asked the Committee to elect a temporary Chairperson in her absence.

The Chair called for proposals for a temporary Chairperson.

Harry Harvey proposed that Brian Kingston take the Chair and Sinéad McLaughlin seconded the proposal.

There were no more nominations.

The proposal was carried and Brian Kingston took the Chair.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that Brian Kingston should be elected temporary Chairperson of the Committee for the remainder of the meeting.

Paula Bradshaw left the meeting at 3:51pm

Agreed: The Committee agreed to take a short comfort break and suspend the meeting.

The meeting was suspended at 3.52pm.

The meeting resumed in closed session at 4.10pm with Brian Kingston as Chairperson.

Timothy Gaston proposed that the Committee should publish the legal advice. The Chair then put the question to the Committee that the proposal be agreed.

The Committee divided: Ayes 3; Noes 3; Abstain 0

Ayes: Mr Timothy Gaston; Mr Harr Harvey; Mr Brian Kingston.

Noes: Ms Sinéad McLaughlin; Ms Carál Ní Chuilín; Ms Claire Sugden.

The proposal was not carried.

Claire Sugden proposed that the Committee should seek further advice from Legal Services on the matter before deciding whether to publish the legal advice. The Chair then put the question to the Committee that the proposal be agreed.

The Committee divided: Ayes 6; Noes 0; Abstain 0

Ayes: Mr Timothy Gaston; Mr Harry Harvey; Mr Brian Kingston; Ms Sinéad McLaughlin; Ms Carál Ní Chuilín; Ms Claire Sugden.

Noes: None.

Agreed: The Committee agreed for the Clerk to seek further advice from Legal Services on the publishing of the legal advice the Committee received.

The Committee moved into open session at 4.12pm.

9. Assembly Research and Information Services (RaISe) – Paper on trauma informed approach in context of victims and survivors – Oral Briefing

The official joined the meeting at 4.13pm.

Members received a briefing from:

- Annabel Reid – Senior Research Officer, RaISe

The official provided information on Trauma informed approach in context of victims and survivors in other jurisdictions.

The oral briefing session was followed by a question and answer session.

Sinéad McLaughlin left the meeting at 4:20pm

The Chairperson thanked the official for her attendance.

The official left the meeting at 4.26pm.

10. Correspondence

- i. The Committee noted the summary of Committee correspondence.
- ii. The Committee considered correspondence from the Assembly Executive Review Committee regarding a review of Assembly Committee Engagement on cross-cutting Executive Strategies and its Call for Evidence.

Carál Ní Chuilín declared an interest as a Member of the Assembly Executive Review Committee

Agreed: The Committee agreed to send any response or comment to the Clerk by Friday 20 June to allow the Committee to consider a draft response at its meeting on 25 June.

- iii. The Committee noted a response to the Committee's correspondence of 13 May in relation a potential briefing by the NIO to the Committee regarding the Government's approach to Northern Ireland legacy issues.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the NIO to suggest Wednesday 10 September as a potential date for the briefing.

- iv. The Committee noted a response from the Executive Office to the Committee's correspondence of 25 March requesting an update on the work of the North West Development Fund (NWDF).

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Irish Government to seek further information on the current outputs of the NWDF, as the additional funding allocation was provided by the Irish Government.

- v. The Committee noted a response from the Department of Education to the Committee's correspondence from 26 March to ascertain whether their Department has a role delivering the Ending Violence against Women and Girls Strategy; and if so, how much funding was bid for and/or earmarked by their Department and for what activities for the Ending Violence against Women and Girls Strategy, given it has been identified as a priority in the Programme for Government.

- vi. The Committee noted a response from the AERA Committee to the Committee's correspondence from 26 March to ascertain whether their Department has a role delivering the Ending Violence against Women and Girls Strategy; and if so, how much funding was bid for and/or earmarked by their Department and for what activities for the Ending Violence against Women and Girls Strategy, given it has been identified as a priority in the Programme for Government.

Agreed: The Committee agreed for the Clerk to compile a briefing note on the responses received highlighting key themes for the Committee to consider at its meeting on 25 June.

- vii. The Committee considered correspondence from Claire Sugden MLA on her Proposed Private Member's Bill, Age Discrimination (Goods, Facilities and Services).

Claire Sugden declared an interest as the Member proposing the Private Member's Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ask whether TEO has any views or comments on the Bill, and whether there are any implications, or any role for TEO arising from this Bill.

- viii. The Committee considered correspondence from the Executive Office informing the Committee of the First and deputy First Ministers' decision on whether the office of the Commissioner for Survivors of Institutional Child Abuse should continue, as required by the HIA (NI) Act 2019.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ask that they provide the final report to the Committee.

- ix. The Committee noted a response from the Executive Office to the Committee's correspondence of 14 April requesting a list of assets held by TEO along with details on the cost for implementing health and safety measures, the associated management costs, and any usage plan for these assets.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department and ask that they keep the Committee updated on the Regional Government HQ following completion of the work with the Historic Environment Division to determine options for its future use.

- x. The Committee noted an invitation from NIHRC event to the launch of its new independent research report 'The Environment, Human Rights and the Windsor Framework'.
- xi. The Committee noted a response from the Secretary of State to the Committee's correspondence of 16 May regarding an extension to the application deadline for the Troubles Permanent Disablement Payment Scheme.
- xii. The Committee noted a response from the Executive Office to the Committee's correspondence of 11 April regarding the opportunity to promote awareness and understanding of the Ending Violence Against

Women and Girls (EVAWG) Strategic Framework at the Balmoral Show this year.

- xiii. The Committee noted a response from the Executive Office to the Committee's correspondence of 9 May requesting information regarding the appointment of the Commissioners and the Members of Office of Identity and Expression.
- xiv. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Education to the Committee for Education regarding Department's role in delivering the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy.
- xv. The Committee noted a response from the Executive Office to the Committee's correspondence of 16 May requesting information regarding the Troubles Permanent Disablement Payment Scheme, including the communications strategy, funding, geographical breakdown and an update on the recruitment process for the new Commissioner for Victims and Survivors.
- xvi. The Committee noted a response from the Department of Justice to the Committee's correspondence of 15 May requesting information on the Troubles Permanent Disablement Payment Scheme (TPDPS) including the absence of a case management system for administration of the TPDPS, the structural review of the TPDPS and the result of an Audit report of TPDPS.
- xvii. The Committee noted Committee correspondence from Feryal Clark MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State Department for Science, Innovation & Technology regarding Unnumbered Regulation 2023/2411 Decision of the Joint Committee established by the Agreement on the - Withdrawal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland from the European Union and the European Atomic Energy Community to add the following EU legislation to the Windsor Framework. Regulation (EU) 2023/2411 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 October

2023 on the protection of geographical indications for craft and industrial products and amending Regulations (EU) 2017/1001 and (EU) 2019/1753.

11. Forward Work Programme

The Committee considered the draft forward work programme.

The Committee noted an update from the Assistant Clerk in relation to next week's meeting with the Draft Final Report of the Inquiry being added to the agenda. The Committee will also meet informally on Wednesday 18 June at 1.15pm to discuss the party responses to date. Committee staff will circulate an invitation to Members.

The Committee also noted an update from the Assistant Clerk regarding the need for the Committee to formally request that the Examiner of Statutory Rules consider the Delegated Powers Memorandum for the forthcoming Inquiry into Mother and Baby Institutions, Magdalene Laundries and Workhouses and Redress Scheme Bill and brief the Committee following consideration.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request that the Examiner of Statutory Rules consider the Delegated Powers Memorandum relating to the Inquiry into Mother and Baby Institutions, Magdalene Laundries and Workhouses and Redress Scheme Bill and brief the Committee at its meeting on Wednesday 10 September.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to proceed with the remaining briefings as set out in the forward work programme.

12. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

13. Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 18 June at 2.00pm in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 4.40pm.

Paula Bradshaw MLA

Chairperson, Committee for the Executive Office

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