



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

# Committee for the Executive Office

## Minutes of Proceedings

Wednesday 16th February 2022

**Meeting Location:** Room 30 Parliament Buildings

**Present:**

Ms Sinéad McLaughlin MLA (Chairperson)

**Present by Video or Teleconference:**

Mr Pat Sheehan MLA

Ms Diane Dodds MLA

Mr Pádraig Delargy MLA

Mr Alex Easton MLA

Ms Emma Sheerin MLA

**Apologies:**

Mr Trevor Lunn MLA

Mr John Stewart MLA

**In Attendance:**

Mr Michael Potter (Assembly Clerk)

Ms Sarah-Anne McKinley (Assistant Assembly Clerk)

Ms Alison Belshaw (Clerical Supervisor)

The meeting commenced at 2.06pm in open session.

## **1. Apologies**

As above.

## **2. Chairperson Business**

The Chairperson updated the Committee in relation to the Committee's request to seek an informal meeting with the Executive Office Permanent Secretary, which could not take place, and how a letter has been sent regarding arrangements for the official apology for victims and survivors of Historical Institutional Abuse.

*Pádraig Delargy joined the meeting at 2.07pm*

The Chairperson updated the Committee in relation to a rescheduled meeting of the Inter-Parliamentary Forum which will now take place on Friday 25 February 2022 in the House of Lords.

The Chairperson updated the Committee in relation to a recent news article on the Community Renewal Fund provided by the UK Government under the Department for Levelling Up.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request a written briefing on the Community Renewal Fund and requirements for funding.

The Chairperson updated the Committee in relation to organising a group photo of all Members for the Committee legacy report.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to schedule a group photo of Members on Monday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022 in Parliament Buildings.

## **3. Draft Minutes**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

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

The Chairperson updated the Committee in relation to correspondence from the Department regarding engagement with the Committee following the resignation of the First Minister.

The Chairperson updated the Committee in relation to a summary paper prepared by the Clerk on the consolidated response to the consultation on the draft budget 2022-2025.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to forward the summary paper to the Finance Committee.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request an update on the Meenan Square development.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ask where the financial requirements consequent to the language and culture commitments in the New Decade New Approach agreement will come from.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ask where the financial requirements for the implementation of the report of the Flags, Identity, Culture and Tradition (FICT) Commission will come from.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Finance Minister to ask about stadia funding for Northern Ireland.

#### **5. Fair Employment (School Teachers) Bill: Equality Commission – Oral Briefing**

The Commissioner and the Director of Policy & Research from the Equality Commission joined the meeting at 2.15pm.

- Ms Geraldine McGahey OBE Chief Commissioner, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
- Mr Darren McKinstry Director, Policy & Research, Equality Commission for Northern Ireland

The Equality Commission briefed the Committee in relation to the Fair Employment (School Teachers) Bill.

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

The Chairperson thanked the Equality Commission for their attendance.

## **6. Fair Employment (School Teachers) Bill: Transferor Representatives' Council – Oral Briefing**

The Secretary and Member of the Transferor Representatives' Council joined the meeting at 2.34pm.

- Ms Karen Jardine Member, Transferor Representatives' Council
- Dr Peter Hamill Secretary, Transferor Representatives' Council

The Transferor Representatives' Council briefed the Committee in relation to the Fair Employment (School Teachers) Bill.

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

The Chairperson thanked the Transferor Representatives' Council for their attendance.

## **7. Forward Work Programme**

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme for February and March 2022.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to invite the NIA EU Affairs Manager to brief the Committee in relation to EU Exit matters.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to invite the Integrated Education Fund and the Ulster University to brief the Committee in relation to the Fair Employment (School Teachers) Bill.

## **8. Correspondence**

- i. The Committee noted correspondence from the Finance Committee in relation to Estimates Memoranda for 2021-2022 spending.
- ii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Business Office regarding the Executive Committee (Functions) Act 2020 and amendments to the Ministerial Code.
- iii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Northern Ireland Veterans Commissioner in relation to Victims and Survivors Service funding.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Victims and Survivors Service to ask for the criteria by which they assess funding for groups.

- iv. The Committee noted a press release from the Executive Office, Department of Health and Department of Justice in relation to the Domestic and Sexual Abuse & Violence Against Women and Girls Strategies - Calls for Views closing date extended.
- v. The Committee noted a press release from the Executive Office regarding Northern Ireland Civil Service Permanent Secretary appointments.
- vi. The Committee noted correspondence from the Executive Office in relation to the SL1: The Departments Transfer of Functions (Appeals Service) Order.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to consider the SL-1: The Departments Transfer of Functions (Appeals Service) Order at next week's meeting.

- vii. The Committee noted a joint statement by Vice-President Maroš Šefčovič and UK Foreign Secretary Liz Truss regarding the Protocol on Ireland/ Northern Ireland.
- viii. The Committee noted correspondence from Conor Burns MP to House of Lords Sub-Committee on the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland in relation to queries on Article 2 of the Protocol on Ireland/ Northern Ireland.
- ix. The Committee noted correspondence from the Northern Ireland Audit Office regarding secondments from the Strategic Investment Board to the Northern Ireland Civil Service.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to forward this correspondence to the Finance Committee.

- x. The Committee noted a press release from the Department of Finance in relation to an update on the Draft Budget 2022-2025.
- xi. The Committee noted a press release from the Department of Health regarding the establishment of a regional trauma network for Northern Ireland.
- xii. The Committee noted a press release from the Department of Health in relation to the easing of COVID- 19 regulations.
- xiii. The Committee noted the final Report from the Ad Hoc Committee on a Bill of Rights.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to consider the report at next week's meeting to decide what action the Committee may wish to take.

## **9. Any Other Business**

None.

## **10. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting**

The next Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday 23 February 2022 at 2:00pm, in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 2.57pm.

**Sinéad McLaughlin MLA**  
**Chairperson, Committee for the Executive Office**