



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Communities

Minutes of Proceedings

Tuesday 9 November 2021

Meeting Location: Room 30, Parliament Buildings, Belfast

Present: Ms Paula Bradley MLA (Chairperson)
Ms Kellie Armstrong MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Andy Allen MLA
Mr Stephen Dunne MLA
Mr Mark Durkan MLA
Ms Ciara Ferguson MLA
Mr Paul Frew MLA
Ms Áine Murphy MLA

Apologies: Ms Aisling Reilly MLA

In Attendance: Dr Janice Thompson (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Sean McCann (Assistant Clerk)
Ms Rachel Ashe (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Antoinette Bowen (Clerical Officer)



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The meeting began in open session at 9.01 am. The following Members were present at the start of the open session: Paula Bradley, Kellie Armstrong, Andy Allen, Stephen Dunne, Mark Durkan, Ciara Ferguson, Paul Frew.

1. Declaration of Interests

Andy Allen declared an interest as a private landlord.

Stephen Dunne declared an interest as a private landlord.

Paul Frew declared an interest as a private landlord and as a qualified electrician.

2. Apologies

Ms Aisling Reilly MLA

3. Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 4 November 2021.



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4. Chair's Business

The Chair advised the Members, that although the meeting was to continue to take evidence on the Private Tenancies Bill, there is one matter concerning the Betting, Gaming, Lotteries and Amusements (Amendment) Bill that she would like to mention.

As we will not be in a position to start to take oral evidence sessions on that Bill until December, the Chair proposed that the Call for Evidence closing date is changed from 12th November to Friday 26th November.

Agreed: The Members agreed to the proposal.

5. Private Tenancies Bill Papers

The Chairperson informed Members that they had been provided with a Departmental response to queries raised during the Second Stage debate. The Committee noted the response.

The Chairperson informed Members that they had been provided with a response from the Department for the Economy to Committee queries on the progress of the energy strategy for Northern Ireland. The Committee noted the response.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for the Economy to request that it includes the Private Rented Sector in its energy strategy.

The Chairperson informed Members that they had been provided with a response from the Chartered Institute for Housing on the training it provides for letting and managing residential properties.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request further information on the cost of attending the course.



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6. Briefing by PropertyPal on the Private Tenancies Bill

The following representative joined the meeting:

Mr Jordan Buchanan

The representative from PropertyPal briefed the Committee and took part in a question and answer session with Members.

The Chairperson thanked the representative for their attendance.

Agreed: The representative agreed to forward further information to the Committee in relation to grants that landlords receive in England and Wales to cover the cost of upgrading properties to meet requirements of Energy Performance Certificates.

7. Briefing by the UK Collaborative Centre for Housing Evidence on the Private Tenancies Bill

The Chairperson informed Members that they had been due to receive a briefing from CaCHE at today's meeting but that, due to availability issues, that would not be taking place but a written paper had been provided.

Agreed: Members agreed to invite CaCHE to brief at a later date.

8. Briefing by the National Union of Students Northern Ireland on the Private Tenancies Bill

The following representative joined the meeting:

Ms Ellen Fearon

The representative from the National Union of Students Northern Ireland briefed the Committee and took part in a question and answer session with Members.

The Chairperson thanked the representative for her attendance.



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Agreed: The representative agreed to forward further information to the Committee in relation to specific amendments to the Bill that the National Union of Students would like to see.

9. Date, time and location of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 11 November 2021 in Room 29, Parliament Buildings, at 9.00 am.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:17am.

Paula Bradley MLA
Chairperson, Committee for Communities