



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Communities

Minutes of Proceedings

Thursday 24 March 2022

Meeting Location: Starleaf Virtual Meeting

Present by Video or Teleconference:

Ms Paula Bradley MLA (Chairperson)

Ms Kellie Armstrong MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Mr Paul Frew MLA

Mr Mark Durkan MLA

Ms Ciara Ferguson MLA

Ms Áine Murphy MLA

Ms Aisling Reilly MLA

Apologies:

Mr Andy Allen MBE MLA

Mr Stephen Dunne MLA

In Attendance by Video or Teleconference:

Dr Janice Thompson (Assembly Clerk)

Mr Sean McCann (Assistant Clerk)



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Ms Rachel Ashe (Clerical Supervisor)

Ms Antoinette Bowen (Clerical Officer)

The Chairperson, Paula Bradley, assumed the Chair. The meeting began at 9.45am in open session. The following Members were present at the start of the public session: Paula Bradley, Ciara Ferguson, Kellie Armstrong, Áine Murphy.

Declaration of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

1. Apologies

Andy Allen

Stephen Dunne

2. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson expressed condolences, on behalf of the Committee, to Andy Allen MLA on the news of the recent death of his brother.

The Chairperson informed Members of the receipt of a letter of thanks to the Committee from the Minister and added her own thanks to Members, Departmental Officials, Committee staff and witnesses for their work during the mandate.

3. Draft Minutes

Paul Frew joined the meeting at 9.53 am.



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Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 10 March 2022 and Wednesday 16 March 2022.

The Committee also agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 24 March 2022 would be sent to the Chairperson for sign-off.

4. Matters Arising

Aisling Reilly joined the meeting at 10.00 am.

Mark Durkan joined the meeting at 10.00 am.

The Chairperson informed Members that they had received a Departmental response regarding the Community Development Networks Forum.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward a copy of the Departmental response to the Community Development Networks Forum.

The Chairperson informed Members that they had received a Departmental response regarding correspondence from CCEA on the Betting Bill recommendations. The Committee was content to note.

The Chairperson informed Members that they had received a Departmental response regarding the Emergency Fuel Payments and the Emergency Supplementary Payments Scheme. The Committee was content to note.

The Chairperson informed Members that they had received a Departmental response regarding the PAC Report on the Sports Sustainability Fund. The Committee was content to note.

The Chairperson informed Members that they had received a copy of the latest report from the Examiner of Statutory Rules. The Committee was content to note.

The Chairperson informed Members that they had received a response from the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) regarding the Thermal Insulation Programme. The Committee was content to note.



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The Chairperson informed Members that they had received a Departmental response regarding the Access and Inclusion Programme. The Committee was content to note.

The Chairperson informed Members that they had received a Departmental response regarding Anti-Social Behaviour. The Committee was content to note.

The Chairperson informed Members that they had received a Departmental response regarding the funding announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Committee was content to note.

The Chairperson informed Members that they had received a Departmental response regarding future hybrid council meetings. The Committee was content to note.

The Chairperson informed Members that they had received a Departmental response regarding the 'spend to date' for the Sub-Regional Stadia Programme. The Committee was content to note.

The Chairperson informed Members that they had received a Departmental response regarding the Supporting People Programme. The Committee was content to note.

The Chairperson informed Members that they had received a Departmental response regarding the Gender Pay Gap. The Committee was content to note.

The Chairperson informed Members that they had received a Departmental response regarding the NIHE January Monitoring Bids. The Committee was content to note.

5. Draft Legacy Report

The Chairperson informed Members that they had been provided with a copy of the draft Committee Legacy Report.

Agreed: Members agreed that the report be published on the Committee pages of the Assembly website.



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6. DePaul briefing on delivering Housing First Services in Northern Ireland

The Chairperson welcomed the following representatives to the meeting:

David Carroll

Deirdre Canavan

The representatives briefed the Committee and participated in a question and answer session with Members.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their attendance.

7. RaISe briefing on Rural and Urban Community Networks

The Chairperson informed Members that they were due to be briefed by RaISe but that, due to the late receipt from the Department of numerous items of subordinate legislation, the briefing had been cancelled to allow sufficient time for the legislation to be scrutinised. The Chairperson passed on her apologies to the researcher for cancelling at late notice and thanked him for his informative paper.

The Chair and Vice Chair then expressed thanks on behalf of the Committee to the researchers who have supported the Committee during the mandate.

The meeting was adjourned at 11.05 am

The meeting restarted at 11.16 am with the following members present: Paula Bradley, Kellie Armstrong, Mark Durkan, Ciara Ferguson, Paul Frew, Áine Murphy, Aisling Reilly.

8. SL1 – The Draft Universal Credit (Welfare Supplementary Payment) Regulations (NI) 2022

Agreed: The Committee was content for the Department to proceed to make the Rule.



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9. SL1 – The Draft Welfare Supplementary Payments (Amendment) (No.2) Regulations (NI) 2022

Agreed: The Committee was content for the Department to proceed to make the Rule.

10. SL1 – The Social Fund (Child Funeral Fund) Regulations (NI) 2022

Agreed: The Committee was content for the Department to proceed to make the Rule.

11. SL1 – The Occupational Pension Schemes (Collective Money Purchase Schemes) Regulations (NI) 2022

Agreed: The Committee was content for the Department to proceed to make the Rule.

12. SL1- The Draft Local Government Pension Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2022

Agreed: The Committee was content for the Department to proceed to make the Rule.



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13.SL1 – The Occupational Pension Schemes (Collective Money Purchase Schemes) (Modifications and Consequential and Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (NI) 2022

Agreed: The Committee was content for the Department to proceed to make the Rule.



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14. SR 2022/83 – The Occupational Pension Schemes (Charges and Governance) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2022

Agreed: The Committee for Communities considered SR 2022/83 – The Occupational Pension Schemes (Charges and Governance) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2022 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, had no objection to the Rule.

15. SR 2022/84 – The Social Security (Industrial Injuries) (Prescribed Diseases) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2022

Agreed: The Committee for Communities considered SR 2022/84 – The Social Security (Industrial Injuries) (Prescribed Diseases) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2022 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, had no objection to the Rule.

16. SR 2022/85 – The Licensing (Notice Relating to Local Producers Licence) Regulations

Agreed: The Committee for Communities considered SR 2022/85 – The Licensing (Notice Relating to Local Producers Licence) Regulations and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, had no objection to the Rule.

17. SR 2022/86 – The Social Security Revaluation of Earnings Factors Order (NI) 2022

Agreed: The Committee for Communities considered SR 2022/86 – The Social Security Revaluation of Earnings Factors Order (NI) 2022 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, had no objection to the Rule.



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18. SR 2022/87 – The Occupational Pension Schemes (Schemes that were Contracted-out) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2022

Agreed: The Committee for Communities considered SR 2022/87 – The Occupational Pension Schemes (Schemes that were Contracted-out) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2022 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, had no objection to the Rule.

19. SR 2022/88 – The Energy Payment Support Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2022

Agreed: The Committee for Communities considered SR 2022/88 – The Energy Payment Support Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2022 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, had no objection to the Rule.

20. SR 2022/98 – The Occupational Pension Schemes (Fraud Compensation Levy) (Amendment) (NI) 2022

Agreed: The Committee for Communities considered SR 2022/98 – The Occupational Pension Schemes (Fraud Compensation Levy) (Amendment) (NI) 2022 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, had no objection to the Rule.

21. SR 2022/99 – The Registration of Clubs (Accounts) Regulations (NI) 2022

Agreed: The Committee for Communities considered SR 2022/99 – The Registration of Clubs (Accounts) Regulations (NI) 2022 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, had no objection to the Rule.



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22. SR 2022/111 – The Guaranteed Minimum Pensions Increase Order (NI) 2022

Agreed: The Committee for Communities considered SR 2022/111 – The Guaranteed Minimum Pensions Increase Order (NI) 2022 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, had no objection to the Rule.

23. SR 2022/115 – The Occupational and Personal Pension Schemes (Disclosure of Information) (Requirements to Refer Members to Guidance etc.) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2022

Agreed: The Committee for Communities considered SR 2022/115 – The Occupational and Personal Pension Schemes (Disclosure of Information) (Requirements to Refer Members to Guidance etc.) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2022 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, had no objection to the Rule.

24. SR 2022/120 – The Social Security (Medical Evidence) and Statutory Sick Pay (Medical Evidence) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2022

Agreed: The Committee for Communities considered SR 2022/120 – The Social Security (Medical Evidence) and Statutory Sick Pay (Medical Evidence) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2022 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, had no objection to the Rule.

25. SR 2022/121 – The Occupational Pension Schemes (Master Trusts) Regulations (NI) 2022



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Agreed: The Committee for Communities considered SR 2022/121 – The Occupational Pension Schemes (Master Trusts) Regulations (NI) 2022 and recommended that it is confirmed by the Assembly.

26. SR 2022/130 – The Coronavirus Act 2020 (Extension of Modifications of Requirements Regarding Medical Certificates for Cremations) Order (NI) 2022

Agreed: The Committee for Communities considered SR 2022/130 – The Coronavirus Act 2020 (Extension of Modifications of Requirements Regarding Medical Certificates for Cremations) Order (NI) 2022 and recommended that it is confirmed by the Assembly.

27. SR 2022/137 – The Mesothelioma Lump Sum Payments (Conditions and Amounts) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2022

Agreed: The Committee for Communities considered SR 2022/137 – The Mesothelioma Lump Sum Payments (Conditions and Amounts) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2022 and recommended that it is confirmed by the Assembly.

28. SR 2022/143 – The Social Security Benefits Up-rating Order (NI) 2022

Agreed: The Committee for Communities considered SR 2022/143 – The Social Security Benefits Up-rating Order (NI) 2022 and recommended that it is confirmed by the Assembly.

29. SR 2022/144 – The Social Security Benefits Up-rating Regulations (NI) 2022



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Agreed: The Committee for Communities considered SR 2022/144 – The Social Security Benefits Up-rating Regulations (NI) 2022 and recommended that it is confirmed by the Assembly.

30. SR 2022/142 – The Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Act (NI) 2021 (Consequential Provision) Regulations (NI) 2022

Agreed: The Committee for Communities considered SR 2022/142 – The Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Act (NI) 2021 (Consequential Provision) Regulations (NI) 2022 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, had no objection to the Rule.

31. Disposal of Document Order 1925 – Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Retention and Disposal Schedule

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the disposal schedules.

32. Correspondence

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

Departmental letter regarding Discretionary Housing Payments Review

Departmental letter and copy of SR 2022 89 (C.10) The Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) (2011 Act) (Commencement No. 6) (NI) 2022

Copy of SR 2022 107 (C. 12) Financial Guidance and Claims Act 2018 (Commencement No. 1) Order (NI) 2022

Correspondence from Co-Ownership on Launch of Co-Own for Over 55s



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Copy of correspondence to Utility Regulator and BBC, copied to Committee from an individual regarding energy price rises

Copy of SR 2022 110 (C.13) The Pension Schemes (2021 Act) (Commencement No. 2) Order

NIHE Cavity Wall Insulation Action Plan 2022

Link to Departmental response to DWP Consultation on Child Maintenance - Modernising and Improving our Service

Letter regarding The Welfare Reform (NI) Order 2015 (Commencement No. 16, No. 8, 13 and 14 and Transitional and Transitory Provisions (Amendment) Order (NI) 2022

Copy of Department's final Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity

33. Action Mental Health briefing on European Social Fund (ESF) Funding

The meeting was adjourned at 11.45 am to allow the witness to resolve technical difficulties.

The meeting recommenced at 11.50 am.

Aisling Reilly left the meeting at 11.51 am.

Mark Durkan left the meeting at 12.07 pm.

The Chairperson welcomed the following representative to the meeting:

David Babington

The representative briefed the Committee and participated in a question and answer session with Members.

The Chairperson thanked the representative for his attendance.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to each Minister expressing concern over the lack of cross-departmental working regarding the successor to the ESF



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Programme and the risk of losing key projects and key staff in programmes providing services to vulnerable people.

34. Any Other Business

The Chairperson thanked Members and Committee team again for their hard work during the mandate and wished the Members well in the upcoming election.

The meeting ended at 12.10pm

Paula Bradley MLA
Chairperson, Committee for Communities