



Committee for Communities

Minutes of Proceedings

Thursday 7 October 2021

Meeting Location: Room 29, Parliament Buildings, Belfast

Present:

- Ms Paula Bradley MLA (Chairperson)
- Mrs Kellie Armstrong MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
- Mr Andy Allen MLA
- Mr Stephen Dunne MLA
- Ms Ciara Ferguson MLA
- Mr Paul Frew MLA
- Ms Aíne Murphy MLA
- Mr Fra McCann MLA

Present by Video or Teleconference:

Mr Mark Durkan MLA

Apologies: None

In Attendance:

- Dr Janice Thompson (Assembly Clerk)
- Mr Sean McCann (Assistant Clerk)
- Ms Antoinette Bowen (Clerical Supervisor)



The meeting began in open session at 9.05 am.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

2. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson updated Members on the rollout of the High Street Voucher Scheme.

The Chairperson informed Members that the Committee's 'Call for Evidence' on the Private Tenancies opened on 5 October 2021 and will close on 29 October 2021.

The Chairperson reminded Members that an event to mark the success of athletes who competed in the Olympic and Paralympic games will be held on 13 October in the Great Hall and that Members should make the Committee team aware of their plans to attend.

3. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 7 October 2021.



4. Matters Arising

The Chairperson informed Members that they had been provided with a Departmental response in relation to a minor capital works programme for sport.

The Committee noted the response.

5. Betting, Gaming, Lotteries and Amusements (Amendment) Bill

The Chairperson informed Members that they had been provided with draft questions for the Committee's 'Call for Evidence' on the Bill and with a draft signposting ad.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the call for evidence is issued and that the signposting ad is published.

6. Charities Bill

The Chairperson informed Members that they had been provided with a letter from Mr Tughan stating that he was no longer able to brief the Committee on the Bill. The Committee noted the letter.

The Chairperson also informed Members that they had been provided with a summary of evidence from three individuals in relation to the Bill. The Committee noted the summary.

7. Briefing by Robert Crawford on the Charities Bill

Aine Murphy joined the meeting at 9.19am.



Mark Durkan joined the meeting at 9.28am.

Kellie Armstrong joined the meeting at 9.36am.

The following individual joined the meeting:

Mr Robert Crawford

Mr Crawford briefed the Committee and took part in a question and answer session with Members.

The Chairperson thanked the individual for his attendance.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to Mr Crawford to ask him for copies of any Freedom of Information responses that he had received from the Department on the Bill.

8. Briefing by Trevor McKee on the Charities Bill

The following individual joined the meeting:

Mr Trevor McKee

Mr McKee briefed the Committee and took part in a question and answer session with Members.

The Chairperson thanked the individual for his attendance.

The meeting was suspended at 10.28am.

The meeting restarted at 10.35am with all Members present.

9. Departmental Briefing on October Monitoring Round

The following Officials joined the meeting:

Cherrie Arnold



Gavin Patrick

The Officials briefed the Committee and took part in a question and answer session with Members.

The Chairperson thanked the Officials for their attendance.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request an urgent briefing on the £55m bid to mitigate the withdrawal of the £20-per-week Universal Credit uplift.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a Departmental briefing on the Sub Regional Stadia Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a Departmental update on the Anti-Poverty Strategy.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a Departmental briefing on the fuel poverty payment.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a Departmental briefing on increasing housing options.

10. SR 2021/272 – The Occupational Pension Schemes (Administration, Investment and Charges and Governance) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2021

Agreed: The Committee considered SR 2021/272: The Occupational Pension Schemes (Administration, Investment and Charges and Governance) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, had no objection to the Rule.

11. Correspondence

The Chairperson informed Members that they had been provided with a request to attend the Housing Rights Private Rented Sector Conference on 24 November 2021.



Agreed: The Committee agreed to ask a member of the Assembly Research team to attend and report back.

The Chairperson informed Members that they had been provided with a memo from the Clerk for the Standards and Privileges Committee on its inquiry into Legislative Consent Motions (LCMs). The Chairperson reminded Members that the Committee had previously made comments on the use of LCMs back in October 2020.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ask if, since January 2020, whether there were any proposed LCMs that the Minister did not bring forward to the Assembly for consideration.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request information on the number of LCMs it had considered since January 2020.

Copy of Pivotal report -Transforming the 14 to 19 Education and Skills System in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite Pivotal to a future stakeholder event.

Letter from ShieldUs regarding Updated Good Law Project.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward a copy of the correspondence to the Department for Education for comment.

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

- i. Copy of SR 2021/271 -Pension Schemes Act 2021 (Commencement No. 2 Transitional and Saving Provisions) Order (NI) 2021
- ii. Copy of Imtac Annual Report 2021

12. Forward Work Programme

The Chairperson informed Members that, at the meeting on 14 October 2021, the Committee will be briefed by the Independent Review Panel and Social Enterprise NI on the Charites Bill.



13. Any Other Business

A Member raised the issue of applications to the Changing Places Toilet Fund.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request an update on the number of applications received and to ask how many councils had applied.

14. Date, Time and Place of the Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 14 October 2021 in Room 29, Parliament Buildings, at 9.00 am.

The meeting was adjourned at 11.32am.

Paula Bradley MLA
Chairperson, Committee for Communities