



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Education

Minutes of Proceedings

15 March 2022

Meeting Location: Teleconference

Present by Video or Teleconference:

Mr Pat Sheehan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Ms Nicola Brogan MLA

Mr Robbie Butler MLA

Mr Harry Harvey MLA

Mr Daniel McCrossan MLA

Mr Justin McNulty MLA

Mr Robin Newton MBE MLA

Ms Aoibhinn Treanor (Assembly Clerk)

Mr Mark McQuade (Assistant Clerk)

Mr Marcus Matthews (Clerical Supervisor)

Mr Craig Mealy (Clerical Officer)

Apologies:

Mr Chris Lyttle MLA (Chairperson)

Mrs Diane Dodds MLA



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The meeting commenced at 9:15am in public session with Mr Sheehan acting as Chairperson.

1. Apologies

Apologies as above.

2. Chairperson's Business

There was no Chairperson's business.

3. Budget Update - Oral Briefing from the Department of Education

The Committee noted:

- A briefing paper from the Department of Education;
- An oral statement made by the Minister of Finance providing a budget update on 15 February 2022;
- An Assembly Research paper - Executive's Draft Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland: A preliminary examination against key principles underpinning public investment strategies; and
- An Assembly Research paper – Public expenditure on education.



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The following witnesses joined the meeting by video conference at 9:15am:

Mr Gary Fair, Finance Director, Department of Education.

Mr Neil Palmer, Deputy Finance Director, Department of Education.

Mr Seamus Gallagher, Director of Investment and Infrastructure, Department of Education.

The witnesses briefed the Committee on the Department of Education Budget.

This was followed by a question and answer session.

Mr Newton joined the meeting at 9:38am.

Mr Butler left the meeting at 9:58am.

Mr Harvey left the meeting at 10:03am.

The Chairperson thanked the witnesses for the briefing.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to reflect the budget situation in its legacy report.

4. Any Other Business

The Committee discussed concerns regarding reports that 17 children have died in care settings in the last 5 years.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Minister of Education and the Minister of Health seeking an explanation for this.

5. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The next formal Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday 16 March 2022 by video conference at 9:00am.



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The meeting was adjourned at 10:10am.

Chris Lyttle MLA

**Chairperson, Committee for Education
23 March 2022**