



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for The Executive Office

Minutes of Proceedings

Wednesday 19 May 2021

Meeting Location: Virtually via Video Conferencing

Present by Video or Teleconference:

Mr Colin McGrath MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Doug Beattie MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Ms Martina Anderson MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Mr Trevor Lunn MLA
Mr George Robinson MLA
Mr Pat Sheehan MLA
Ms Emma Sheerin MLA
Mr Christopher Stalford MLA

Apologies: None

In Attendance by Video or Teleconference:

Mr Michael Potter (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Carla Campbell (Assistant Clerk)
Ms Sarah-Anne McKinley (Assistant Clerk)
Ms Alice O'Hare (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Andrienne Magee (Clerical Officer)



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The meeting commenced at 2:01pm in open session

1. Apologies

As Above.

2. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson acknowledged Mr Doug Beattie's appointment as leader of the Ulster Unionist Party and wished him well.

3. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 12 May 2021.

4. Matters Arising

The Chairperson informed Members that during the meeting on 12 May there had been technical difficulties which made it unclear if agreement had been reached on inviting Maroš Šefčovič, EU Commission Vice President for Interinstitutional Relations and Lord Frost, Minister of State to the Cabinet Office, to attend the Committee.



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Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite Maroš Šefčovič and Lord Frost to attend the Committee.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Finance Committee to share the Committees consideration of the 2021-22 spending plans for the Executive Office.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Economy Committee to ask what work has been carried out in relation to the impact on Businesses to date on the Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol.

Emma Sheerin joined the meeting at 2:03pm.

5. Historical Institutional Abuse – Oral Evidence: Victims and Survivors Service

The representatives joined the meeting at 2:05pm

- Ms Margaret Bateson, Chief Executive Officer, Victims and Survivors Service.
- Mr Oliver Wilkinson, Chairperson, Victims and Survivors Service.

The representatives briefed Members on the support available from the Victims and Survivors Service for victims and survivors of Historical Institutional Abuse.

Doug Beattie joined the meeting at 2:06pm.

George Robinson joined the meeting at 2:30pm



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Christopher Stalford joined the meeting at 2:32pm

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

The oral evidence was reported by Hansard.

The Chairperson thanked the representatives for their attendance.

6. Historical Institutional Abuse – Oral Evidence with Departmental Officials

The Officials joined the meeting at 2:49pm

- Mr Gareth Johnston, Director, Victims and Survivors Division, The Executive Office.
- Ms Roberta Dalton, Departmental Official, The Executive Office.
- Ms Alison Armstrong, Departmental Official, The Executive Office.

The Officials briefed Members on the Historical Institutional Abuse redress process.

Christopher Stalford left the meeting at 3:29pm.

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

Agreed: The Committee agreed to lay a motion in the Assembly to call for a review of the Redress Board.



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Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite the Historical Institutional Abuse Redress Board to attend the Committee.

7. SR 2021/114 The Departments (Transfer of Functions) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021

The Committee considered SR 2021/114 The Departments (Transfer of Functions) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021, which is subject to the affirmative procedure.

Agreed: The Committee for the Executive Office has considered SR 2021/114 The Departments (Transfer of Functions) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021 and recommends that it be affirmed in the Assembly.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department and ask for an explanation of how the situation arose that meant that this statutory rule was required.

8. SR 2021/113 The Public Services Ombudsman Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (Commencement) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021

The Committee considered SR 2021/113 The Public Services Ombudsman Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (Commencement) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021. While not subject to Assembly procedure, it was laid in the interests of good practice to ensure transparency and accessibility.

Agreed: The Committee for the Executive Office has considered SR 2021/113 The Public Services Ombudsman Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (Commencement) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021 and is content with the Rule.



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9. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme for May to June 2021.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing session on Historical Institutional Abuse with victims' groups for 23 June 2021.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to change the date for the oral briefing on the June Monitoring Round to 9 June 2021.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing session on Urban Villages and Communities in Transition for 2 June 2021.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Committee for the Economy and the Committee for Finance to ask for suggested stakeholders in regard to Covid recovery and the High Streets Task Force.

10. Correspondence

- i. The Committee noted a response from the First Minister and deputy First Minister regarding Executive Office briefings to the Committee for Health in relation to COVID-19 matters.
- ii. The Committee noted a written Ministerial statement from the First Minister and deputy First Minister on decisions of the Executive on COVID-19, 13 May 2021.
- iii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance sharing revised accruing resource breakdown for the year 2021-22.
- iv. The Committee noted a statement from the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Brandon Lewis, on the Government's Legislative Programme (Northern Ireland) 2021-22.



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- v. The Committee noted a statement by Lord Frost calling on the EU to show pragmatism on the Ireland/Northern Ireland Protocol after meetings with a number of business and community representatives in Northern Ireland.
- vi. The Committee considered correspondence from the House of Lords European Affairs Sub-Committee on the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland expressing their willingness to engage with the Committee for the Executive Office.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Chairperson would liaise with the Chairperson of the House of Lords European Affairs Sub-Committee on the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland in relation to engagement between the Committees.
- vii. The Committee considered correspondence from Community Relations in Schools in raising a number of issues in relation to the Urban Villages and Communities in Transition programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite Community Relations in Schools to provide an oral briefing to the Committee on their experience of the Urban Villages and Communities in Transition programme.
- viii. The Committee noted a statement from the UK Government following the Prime Ministers meeting with the Irish Taoiseach, 14 May 2021.
- ix. The Committee noted correspondence from the National Lottery Heritage Fund regarding the Shared History Fund – Northern Ireland Centenary.

11. Any Other Business

Members discussed the next stage of engagement with the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman in relation to the Complaints Standards Authority function.



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12. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 26 May 2021 at 2:00pm, virtually via Starleaf.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:04pm.

Colin McGrath MLA

Chairperson, Committee for the Executive Office