



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

# Committee for the Executive Office

## Minutes of Proceedings

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2022

**Meeting Location:** Room 30 Parliament Buildings

**Present:**

Mr John Stewart MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Mr Pádraig Delargy MLA

Mr Trevor Lunn MLA

Mr Pat Sheehan MLA

Ms Emma Sheerin MLA

**Present by Video or Teleconference:**

Ms Sinéad McLaughlin MLA (Chairperson)

Ms Diane Dodds MLA

**Apologies:** None

**In Attendance:** Mr Michael Potter (Assembly Clerk)  
Ms Sarah-Anne McKinley (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Ms Alison Belshaw (Clerical Supervisor)

The meeting commenced at 2.05pm in open session.

## **1. Apologies**

As above.

## **2. Chairperson Business**

The Committee paid their respects following the recent death of Christopher Stalford MLA. Christopher had been a Member of the Committee since 2016.

The Committee held a minute's silence as a mark of respect.

*Emma Sheerin joined the meeting at 2.10pm*

The Committee discussed the recent visit by the House of Commons Procedures Committee to Parliament Buildings on 23 February 2022 which some Members of the Committee for the Executive Office attended.

The Chairperson updated the Committee in relation to correspondence from the Department regarding the arrangements for the official apology for victims and survivors of historical institutional abuse scheduled for 11 March 2022.

The Chairperson updated the Committee regarding the junior Ministers and how they are unable to attend the Committee without the First Minister and deputy First Minister in place, however junior Minister Kearney represented the Executive Office at a meeting of the Joint Committee on the 21 March 2022.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek clarity on what duties the junior Ministers are still undertaking in the absence of the First Minister and deputy First Minister.

## **3. Draft Minutes**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

#### **4. Matters Arising**

The Chairperson updated the Committee in relation to the Committee stakeholder online event on the Strategy to Tackle Violence Against Women & Girls that will take place on Thursday 24 February at 10am.

The Chairperson updated the Committee in relation to the publication of the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Bill of Rights.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ask what the next steps are in relation to the Bill of Rights as the report does not contain clear recommendations that the Committee can pursue.

#### **5. Fair Employment (School Teachers) Bill: Council for Catholic Maintained Schools & Catholic Schools' Trustee Service – Oral Briefing**

Representatives from the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools & Catholic Schools' Trustee Service joined the meeting at 2.33pm.

- Mr Gerry Campbell, Chief Executive, CCMS
- Mr Tony McCusker, CCMS Council Member, Chair of the Finance and Personnel Committee
- Ms Patricia Carville, CCMS Vice Chair of Council and Member of CCMS Finance and Personnel Committee
- Bishop Donal McKeown, Chair of Council and Chair of CSTS

The Council for Catholic Maintained Schools & Catholic Schools' Trustee Service briefed the Committee in relation to the Fair Employment (School Teachers) Bill.

*Emma Sheerin left the meeting at 2.44pm*

*Emma Sheerin returned to the meeting at 3.03pm*

*John Stewart left the meeting at 3.08pm*

*John Stewart returned to the meeting at 3.14pm*

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

The Chairperson thanked the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools & Catholic Schools' Trustee Service for their attendance.

## **6. Fair Employment (School Teachers) Bill: Integrated Education Fund and Ulster University – Oral Briefing**

The Secretary and Member of the Transferor Representatives' Council joined the meeting at 3.22pm.

- Mr Paul Collins, Head of Public Affairs and Advocacy Integrated Education Fund
- Dr Matthew Milliken Researcher, School of Education UNESCO Centre Ulster University
- Ms Katrina Crilly, Principal of Oakgrove Integrated College

The Integrated Education Fund and Ulster University briefed the Committee in relation to the Fair Employment (School Teachers) Bill.

*Trevor Lunn left the meeting at 3.39pm*

*Trevor Lunn returned to the meeting at 3.45pm*

*Pat Sheehan left the meeting at 3.48pm*

*Pat Sheehan returned to the meeting at 3.50pm*

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

The Chairperson thanked the Integrated Education Fund and Ulster University for their attendance.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to invite to the Assembly Research Service to brief the Committee on the Bill report in relation to the Fair Employment (School Teachers) Bill.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to stop taking oral evidence in relation to the Bill and to consider the oral evidence, consultation results and research paper for consideration of the Fair Employment (School Teachers) Bill at the meetings on the 9 and 16 March 2022.

## **7. SL1: The Departments (Transfer of Functions) (Appeals Service) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022**

The Committee considered the Departments (Transfer of Functions) (Appeals Service) Order (Northern Ireland) 2022.

*Emma Sheerin left the meeting at 4.05pm*

*Emma Sheerin returned to the meeting at 4.08pm*

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed they were content with the proposed Order however that it would be carried over to the next mandate in the absence of a First Minister and deputy First Minister to introduce the Order in the Assembly.

## **8. Forward Work Programme**

The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme for March 2022.

## **9. Correspondence**

- i. The Committee noted correspondence from the Northern Ireland Office in relation to issues surrounding the Dedicated Mechanism.
- ii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Northern Ireland Office regarding the Nationality and Borders Bill and ETA Requirements.
- iii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Executive Office in relation to the Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy - Extension of Call for Views.
- iv. The Committee noted a press release from the Executive Office regarding the Six Dimensions of the Nation Brands Index 2021.
- v. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Communities to the Executive Office in relation to the funding announcement by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.
- vi. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs regarding the Draft Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland.
- vii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Finance Committee in relation to the Finance Department response on the Hart Report actions and Budget Act.
- viii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance regarding the Draft Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland.
- ix. The Committee noted correspondence from the Speaker to all Committee Chairs in relation to Business Committee decisions.

- x. The Committee noted correspondence from the Chairperson's Liaison Group Clerk to all Committees regarding increasing diversity of witnesses at Committees.
- xi. The Committee noted a Joint statement by the UK Foreign Secretary and European Commission Vice-President on the meeting of the Withdrawal Agreement Joint Committee 21 February 2022.
- xii. The Committee noted a press release from the Executive Office in relation to the Junior Ministers' statement on the death of Christopher Stalford MLA.
- xiii. The Committee noted correspondence from Survivors Together regarding condolences on the death of Christopher Stalford MLA.
- xiv. The Committee noted correspondence from the Chairpersons' Liaison Group in relation to the Draft Report on Strengthening Committee Scrutiny.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Chairpersons' Liaison Group to convey that it is content with the report.

## **10. Any Other Business**

None.

## **11. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting**

The next Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday 2 March 2022 at 2:00pm, in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 4.11pm.

**Sinéad McLaughlin MLA**  
**Chairperson, Committee for the Executive Office**