



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for The Executive Office

Minutes of Proceedings

Wednesday 21 February 2024

Meeting Location: Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present:

Ms Paula Bradshaw MLA (Chairperson)

Ms Connie Egan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Mr Harry Harvey MLA

Mr Brian Kingston MLA

Ms Sinéad McLaughlin MLA

Ms Carál Ní Chuilín MLA

Ms Emma Sheerin MLA

Ms Claire Sugden MLA

In Attendance:

Mr Michael Potter (Assembly Clerk)

Mr Tom Armstrong (Assistant Assembly Clerk)

Ms Andrienne Magee (Clerical Supervisor)

The meeting commenced at 2.05pm in open session

1. Apologies

There were no apologies

2. Chairperson's Business

There was no Chairperson's Business.

3. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 14 February 2024.

4. Matters Arising

The Committee noted two allocations of resources announced by the Minister for Finance for The Executive Office on 19 February:

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ask for details of these partnerships.

5. Oral Evidence Session – Head of Northern Ireland Civil Service

Officials from The Executive Office joined the meeting at 2.08pm

Members received a briefing from;

- Jayne Brady, Head of Northern Ireland Civil Service
- Gareth Johnson, Acting Accounting Officer and Deputy Director, Good Relations & Inclusion, The Executive Office
- Chris Stewart, Deputy Secretary, Executive Support

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

The Chairperson thanked The Executive Office officials for their attendance

Officials from The Executive Office left the meeting at 3.15pm

Sinéad McLaughlin left the meeting at 3.17pm

6. Oral Briefing – RalSe

Mr Orme joined the meeting at 3.17pm

Members received a briefing from;

- Stephen Orme, Research Officer, RalSe

Mr Orme provided the Committee with an overview of Assembly Research and Information Services.

The Chairperson thanked Mr Orme for his attendance

Mr Orme left the meeting at 3.39pm

7. SR 2023/197 – The Fair Employment (Specification of Public Authorities) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2023

The Committee considered statutory rule SR 2023/197 – The Fair Employment (Specification of Public Authorities) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2023 and agreed the following motion:

Agreed: The Committee for the Executive Office has considered SR 2023/197 – The Fair Employment (Specification of Public Authorities) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2023 and has no objection to the Rule.

8. Draft Forward Work Programme

Agreed: Members agreed that they were content to proceed with the briefings as set out in the work programme.

9. Correspondence

- i. The Committee noted summaries of Committee Correspondence
- ii. The Committee noted a letter from the Parliamentary Undersecretary of State, Home Office to the Chair of the Protocol on Ireland/Northern Ireland Sub-Committee on the Illegal Migration Act.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite the Dedicated Mechanism to brief the Committee on developments regarding Article 2 of the Windsor Framework since the last mandate.

- iii. The Committee noted a letter from the Human Rights Consortium seeking permission to be added to consultation lists moving forward.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to add the Human Rights Consortium to the Committee consultation list.

- iv. The Committee noted a letter from the Children's Law Centre requesting a copy of the Departmental First Day Brief

Agreed: The Committee agreed to share the First Day Brief with the Children's Law Centre

- v. The Committee noted a press release and report from the NI Fiscal Council on the UK Government's Financial Support Package for the Restored Executive.
- vi. The Committee noted a letter from the Victims and Survivors Service seeking to brief the Committee on their work.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite the Victims and Survivors Service to give evidence to the Committee

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite the Commissioner for Survivors of Institutional Abuse (COSICA) to brief the Committee on her role and to provide an update on developments since the last mandate

- vii. The Committee noted a press release from the Department of Finance regarding public sector pay.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite officials to brief the Committee on the Department's spending plans for the next financial year.

- viii. The Committee noted an invitation to the Chair and Deputy Chair from Playboard NI for the launch ADAPT my Play
- ix. The Committee noted a memo from the Clerk to the Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee and a letter from the Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee to the First Minister and deputy First Minister on the functions of the Democratic Scrutiny Committee.
- x. The Committee noted a letter and first day brief from Barnardo's NI.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to add Barnardo's NI to the Committee consultation list

- xi. The Committee noted a letter from introduction from Pivotal, an independent public policy think tank.

10. Any Other Business

- i. Brian Kingston noted he would be unable to attend next week's Committee meeting.
- ii. The Committee noted that three Executive Office officials were to appear before the Democratic Scrutiny Committee on Thursday 22 February.

11. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 28 February 2024 at 2:00pm in Room 30, Parliament Buildings

The meeting was adjourned at 3.46pm

Paula Bradshaw MLA

Chairperson, Committee for the Executive Office

28 February 2024