



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

# Committee for The Executive Office

## Minutes of Proceedings

**Wednesday 25 September 2024**

**Meeting Location:** Room 30, Parliament Buildings

**Present:**

Ms Paula Bradshaw MLA (Chairperson)

Ms Connie Egan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Mr Timothy Gaston MLA

Mr Harry Harvey MLA

Mr Brian Kingston MLA

Ms Carál Ní Chuilín MLA

Ms Sinéad McLaughlin MLA

**Present by Video or Teleconference:**

Ms Emma Sheerin MLA

**Apologies:**

Ms Claire Sugden MLA

**In Attendance:**

Mr Michael Potter (Assembly Clerk)

Mr Tom Armstrong (Assistant Assembly Clerk)

Mr Michael McClelland (Clerical Supervisor)

Ms Andrienne Magee (Clerical Officer)

*The meeting commenced at 2.01pm in open session*

**1. Apologies**

As above.

**2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. Chairperson's Business**

The Chairperson informed the Committee of her attendance at a Good Relations event at Belfast City Hall.

**4. Draft Minutes**

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 25 September 2024.

**5. Matters Arising**

Members were informed that the PSNI have requested that they attend the Committee on the 2nd October in order to give their views on the racist incidents.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to invite the PSNI to give evidence on 2 October.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Committee for Justice to inform them that the PSNI is attending the Committee on 2 October.

The Committee discussed invoking Section 44 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 to compel institutions to appear before the Committee to give evidence Historical Institutional Abuse.

## **6. Oral Briefing – Historical Institutional Abuse Redress Board**

*The witnesses joined the meeting at 2.06pm*

*Emma Sheerin MLA joined the meeting by teleconference at 2:11pm*

Members received a briefing from:

- The Hon Mr Justice Fowler, President, HIA Redress Board
- Jim Coffey, Secretary, HIA Redress Board
- Gillian McClean, Deputy Secretary, HIA Redress Board

The witnesses provided the Committee with an overview of the work of the Historical Institutional Abuse Redress Board.

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

The Chairperson thanked the witnesses for their attendance.

*The witnesses left the meeting at 2:59pm.*

## **7. Inquiry into Gaps in Equality Legislation – Older People – Oral Briefing**

*The witnesses joined the meeting at 3.02pm*

Members received a briefing from:

- Dr Kellie Turtle, Head of Policy and Engagement, Age NI
- Dr Paschal McKeown; Charity Director; Age NI
- Evelyn Hoy, Chief Executive, COPNI
- Conor Tinnelly; Policy, Advice and Research Unit, COPN

The witnesses provided the Committee an overview of gaps in equality legislation affecting older people.

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

The Chairperson thanked the witnesses for their attendance.

*The witnesses left the meeting at 16:04pm.*

*Sinéad McLaughlin MLA left the meeting at 16:10pm*

## **8. Inquiry into Gaps in Equality Legislation – Future Steps**

**Agreed:** Members agreed to schedule further oral briefings with representatives from the following sectors:

- Children and young people
- Women
- LGBT
- Race/ethnicity
- Disability
- Religious Groups

## **9. Draft Forward Work Programme**

The Chairperson advised members that she will chair the next Inter-Parliamentary Forum scheduled for 15 November where discussion is likely to include common frameworks.

**Agreed:** Members agreed to write to the First Minister and deputy First Minister to seek ministerial attendance at the Inter-Parliamentary Forum.

**Agreed:** Members agreed to schedule a briefing from the EU Affairs Manager on 13 November.

**Agreed:** Members agreed to invite the Independent Monitoring Authority for Citizens' Rights Agreement to attend on 13 November.

Members considered the draft forward work programme

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

## **10. Correspondence**

- i. The Committee noted the summary of Committee correspondence.
- ii. The Committee noted the draft Statutory Rule, The Period Products (Executive Office Specified Public Service Bodies) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024.
- iii. The Committee noted Correspondence from Committee for Communities on Development of an anti-poverty strategy.
- iv. The Committee noted Correspondence from De La Salle Order stating they will not attend the Committee on 25 September.
- v. The Committee noted written Submission from Congregation of the Sisters of Nazareth.
- vi. The Committee noted the draft Statutory Rule, The Fair Employment (Monitoring) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2024 and explanatory memorandum.
- vii. The Committee noted HIA Recommendations from the Rosetta Trust.
- viii. The Committee noted arrangements for an independent review of the operation of the Commissioner for Survivors of Institutional Childhood Abuse (COSICA) from the Executive Office.
- ix. The Committee noted Department of Finance Outturn and Forecast Outturn Data (covering June and July 2024).
- x. The Committee noted Correspondence from NSPCC stating NSPCC priorities for NI Executive.
- xi. The Committee noted Briefing Paper on the Financial Provisions Bill.
- xii. The Committee noted update on Interim Public Sector Transformation Board

- xiii. The Committee noted correspondence from Committee on the Administration of Justice seeking an opportunity to address the Committee.
- xiv. The Committee noted a written submission on Gaps in Equality Legislation from the Human Rights Consortium.
- xv. The Committee noted unsigned correspondence from an individual on Irish Mother and Baby Institutions Payment Scheme.
- xvi. The Committee noted TEO response on Mother and Baby Homes, Magdalene Laundries and Workhouses.
- xvii. The Committee noted TEO response on Community Relations Council Funding.

## **11. Any Other Business**

Members were advised that the Northern Ireland Judicial Appointments Commission have requested to run a lunchtime event to provide information on its work and relevant issues to this Committee and the Justice Committee.

**Agreed:** Members agreed to sponsor the event to be held in February.

## **12. Date, Time and Place of next meeting**

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

*The meeting was adjourned at 4:18pm.*

**Paula Bradshaw MLA**

**Chairperson, Committee for the Executive Office**