



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for The Executive Office

Minutes of Proceedings

Wednesday 11 December 2024

Meeting Location: Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present:

Ms Paula Bradshaw MLA (Chairperson)

Mr Stewart Dickson MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Mr Timothy Gaston MLA

Mr Harry Harvey MLA

Mr Brian Kingston MLA

Ms Sinéad McLaughlin MLA

Ms Carál Ní Chuilín MLA

Present by Video or Teleconference:

Ms Emma Sheerin MLA

Ms Claire Sugden MLA

In Attendance:

Mr Michael Potter (Assembly Clerk)

Mr Jim McManus (Assembly Clerk)

Mr Tom Armstrong (Assistant Assembly Clerk)

Mr Neil Porter (Clerical Supervisor)

Ms Andrienne Magee (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced at 2.01pm in public session.

1. Apologies

None.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson informed the Committee that she attended the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission Annual Human Rights Statement 2024 launch event on 9 December 2024.

4. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 4 December 2024.

5. Matters Arising

The Chairperson advised members that the Northern Ireland Secretary of State made a statement last week to begin the process of formally repealing the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023.

6. Inquiry into Gaps in Equality Legislation – Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission - Oral Evidence

The witnesses joined the meeting at 2.02pm.

Members received evidence from:

- Ms Alyson Kilpatrick, Chief Commissioner, Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission
- Dr Colin Caughey, Director of Policy, Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission
- Dr Claire McCann, Senior Policy & Research Officer, Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission

The witnesses provided evidence for the Committee's inquiry into gaps in equality legislation.

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

The Chairperson thanked the witnesses for their attendance.

The witnesses left the meeting at 3.16pm.

7. Inquiry into Gaps in Legislation – YouthAction NI Oral Briefing

The witnesses joined the meeting at 3.17pm.

Members received a briefing from:

- Mr Sean Madden, Senior Youth Worker, YouthAction NI
- Ms Olivia Davidson-Millar, Youth Worker, YouthAction NI

The witnesses provided evidence for the Committee's inquiry into gaps in equality legislation.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

The Chairperson thanked the witnesses for their attendance.

The witnesses left the meeting at 4.05pm.

The meeting was suspended at 4.05pm.

The meeting resumed at 4.10pm with the following Members present:

Ms Paula Bradshaw MLA (Chairperson), Mr Stewart Dickson (Deputy Chairperson), Mr Timothy Gaston MLA, Mr Harry Harvey MLA, Mr Brian Kingston MLA and Ms Carál Ní Chuilín MLA.

The following Members were present by Video or Teleconference:

Ms Emma Sheerin MLA and Ms Claire Sugden MLA

8. Inquiry into Gaps in Legislation – RalSe Oral Briefing

The officials joined the meeting at 4.10pm.

Members received a briefing from:

- Ms Annabel Reid, Senior Researcher
- Mr Thomas Lough, Research Officer

The officials provided a briefing on the Committee's inquiry into gaps in equality legislation.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

The officials undertook to send their presentation to the Committee.

The Chairperson thanked the officials for their attendance.

The officials left the meeting at 4.47pm.

Agreed: The Committee secretariat will provide the Committee with the following documents and legislation:

- The King's Speech 2024.
- The 2024 Labour Party manifesto.
- Great Britain Equality Act 2010.
- Republic of Ireland Employment Equality Acts and Equal Status Acts

Agreed: The Committee secretariat will provide the Committee with information on the process of bringing forward a Committee Bill.

9. Draft Forward Work Programme

The Committee considered the draft forward work programme.

The Chairperson advised the Committee that historical institutional abuse victim and survivor groups will be meeting with the First Minister and deputy First Minister on the morning of 15 January 2025.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to invite the groups meeting with the First Minister and deputy First Minister to the Committee meeting on 15 January 2025.

Agreed: The Committee 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 correspondence from The Executive Office on The Fair Employment (Monitoring) (Amendment) regulations (Northern Ireland) 2024.
- iii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Finance on the Quarterly sickness absence in the Northern Ireland Civil Service July 2024 – September 2024.
- iv. The Committee noted a response from the Executive Office to the Committee's request for information on the establishment of the NI Climate Commissioner.
- v. The Committee noted the Twenty-Eighth Report from the Examiner of Statutory Rules to the Assembly and appropriate Committees.
- vi. The Committee noted correspondence from the Windsor Framework Democratic Scrutiny Committee on Regulation (EU) 2023/988 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 May 2023 on general product safety.

- vii. The Committee noted correspondence from Co-operation Ireland on the €40m Peaceplus Change Makers Small Grants Programme.
- viii. The Committee considered and noted correspondence from The Executive Office on the Maritime Museum in Ebrington Square, Derry/Londonderry.
- ix. The Committee noted correspondence from the Peace Summit Partnership.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to add the Peace Summit Partnership to the forward work programme.

- x. The Committee noted correspondence from the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.
- xi. The Committee noted correspondence from Queens University Belfast.

11. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

12. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 15 January 2025 at 2.00pm in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 4.52pm.

Paula Bradshaw MLA

Chairperson, Committee for the Executive Office