



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

# Committee for The Executive Office

## Minutes of Proceedings

**Wednesday 4 June 2025**

**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 Áine Murphy MLA
- Ms Carál Ní Chuilín MLA

**Online:** None

**Apologies:** Sinéad McLaughlin MLA

**In Attendance:**

- Mr Nick Mitford (Assembly Clerk)
- Ms Sarah-Anne McKinley (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
- Mr Neil Porter (Clerical Supervisor)
- Ms Andrienne Magee (Clerical Officer)

*The meeting commenced at 3.42pm in public session.*

### **1. Apologies**

As above.

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

Carál Ní Chuilín declared an interest as Communities Minister from June 2020 to December 2020 under item 7 the Strategic Investment Board Retention and Disposal Schedule.

### **3. Chairperson's Business**

The Chairperson updated Members that the Open University have sent a report titled, 'Learnings from 'Why Riot?': The 'whys' beneath youth violence.' The report is of interest to Committee given its relevance to Good Relations.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to note the report and to arrange an oral briefing with the Open University and add it to the Committee's forward work programme.

### **4. Draft Minutes**

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 4 June 2025.

### **5. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

### **6. The Executive Office Permanent Secretary - Departmental Business Plan - Oral Briefing**

The witnesses joined the meeting at 3.45pm.

Members received a briefing from:

- David Malcolm - TEO, Permanent Secretary (Interim)
- Gareth Johnston – TEO, Deputy Secretary, Good Relations & Inclusion
- Claire Archbold – TEO, Deputy Secretary, Finance, People & Planning
- Brenda Henderson – TEO, Deputy Secretary, Executive Services & International Relations

The witnesses provided an update on Departmental Business Plan.

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

The Chairperson thanked the witnesses for their attendance.

*Harry Harvey left the meeting at 4.52pm and returned at 4.57pm.*

*The witnesses left the meeting at 5.02pm.*

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ask:

- The most up-to-date research or evaluation findings relating to the Communities in Transition (CIT) programme including clarification on the areas identified for Phase 3 of the CIT programme, including confirmation on whether these are the same areas targeted in Phases 1 and 2, or if there have been any changes.
- An explanation of how the T:BUC programme delivers shared housing, including the criteria for selecting locations and how T:BUC delivers shared housing
- In relation to the Language Commissioners, how much is the current budget bid short of the amount required to deliver the new Language Bodies?
- That an oral briefing is scheduled from the Department in relation to Race Relations.
- To ask for the delay in response to correspondence sent by the Committee on the 7 May in relation to SIB and Ending Violence against Women and Girls.

## **7. The Strategic Investment Board – Retention and Disposal Schedule**

The Committee considered the most recent Retention and Disposal Schedule for the Strategic Investment Board, which is required to be laid before the Northern Ireland

Assembly under section 8(2) of the Public Records Act (Northern Ireland) 1923, and in accordance with the Rules of the Disposal of Documents Order 1925, by the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the Retention and Disposal Schedule for the Strategic Investment Board.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Committee for Communities to confirm that it has approved the Retention and Disposal Schedule for the Strategic Investment Board.

## **8. Inquiry into Gaps in Equality Legislation – Agree Final Draft Report**

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to defer this item and to meet informally at 1.15pm on Wednesday 11 June, ahead of the Committee meeting to discuss the Draft Report.

## **9. Correspondence**

- i. The Committee noted the summary of Committee correspondence.
- ii. The Committee noted correspondence from Committee for Finance regarding the Deaths, Still-Births and Baby Loss Bill which has completed its Second Stage on Monday 7 April. As per normal practice, the Committee for Finance is now seeking views of all Assembly Statutory Committees on the Bill.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department to ask whether TEO has any views or comments on the Bill, and whether there are any implications, or any role, for TEO arising from this Bill.

- iii. The Committee noted a response from the Department of Justice to the Committee's correspondence of 9 May requesting information on the Department's role in the oversight of training schools and prisons during the period covered by the HIA together with details of related records.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to Survivors Together and forward the responses received following the actions arising from their oral evidence session on

the 2 April and to advise them to come back to the Committee with any further queries.

**Agreed:** The Committee also agreed to forward the responses to the other HIA victim and survivors groups: Rosetta Trusts, Survivors Together, Survivors North West and SAVIA.

- iv. The Committee noted a response from the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland to the Committee's correspondence of 6 May requesting information on the recent Supreme Court ruling.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to consider further as part of the oral briefing with Assembly Legal Services on the Implications of UK Supreme Court judgment For Women Scotland Limited v The Scottish Ministers at next week's meeting.

- v. The Committee noted a response from Mid Ulster Council to the Committee's correspondence of the 7 May and its request for details on allocation of the Local Change Fund in relation to Ending Violence Against Women and Girls.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to note and to consider further action when responses have been received from all local council areas.

**Agreed:** The Committee also agreed to contact those outstanding councils who have yet to respond.

- vi. The Committee noted a correspondence from Fermanagh & Omagh District Council regarding a council sub-committee, who's primary purpose of which, is to progress research and data-analysis relating to its District, with a particular focus on policy interventions and the associated resource modelling. The Council have also requested an opportunity to present its findings to the Committee.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to arrange in the first instance an informal meeting with the Chair and Deputy Chair to discuss this work.

- vii. The Committee noted a response from the Executive Office to the Committee's correspondence of 14 April requesting information regarding

ongoing funding to support the Refugee Integration Strategy and Delivery Framework.

**Agreed:** The Committee to write to the Department to ask that a copy of the funding paper sent to the Planning Group is sent to the Committee when agreed.

- viii. The Committee noted a written statement from the First Minister and deputy First Minister on the publication of the final Refugee Integration Strategy and Delivery Framework.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to schedule an oral briefing on the Strategy and associated Delivery Framework before the end of the year.

- ix. The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance in relation to an Analysis of 2024-2025 Outturn and Forecast Outturn.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department for an explanation for the underspends in relation to Non Ring-Fenced Resource DEL, Ring-fenced Resource DEL and Capital DEL.

- x. The Committee noted correspondence from the Examiner of Statutory Rules - The fortieth report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules. There are were no rules for the attention of the Committee.

- xi. The Committee noted a press release from TEO following a meeting between the First Minister, deputy First Minister and the Prime Minister on the 23 May. The Spending Review, budgetary challenges, Welfare Reform, international trade tariffs and the EU-UK reset deal were discussed.

- xii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Executive Office in relation to Investment Strategy NI – Investing Activity Report - summary of the projects and investing activities which have been entered on the DTS by NICS departments and their agencies.

- xiii. The Committee noted Correspondence from the Executive Office to the Committee for the Economy regarding the Maze/Long Kesh site.

- xiv. The Committee noted an invitation from Queens University Belfast to a “Queen’s MBA Information Breakfast” on Friday 13 June at Queen’s University Business School. Any Member who wishes to attend can register in the link included in the invitation.
- xv. The Committee noted correspondence from the First Minister and deputy First Minister in relation to a written statement they made to the Assembly on 29 May 2025 alongside the final Refugee Integration Strategy and Delivery Framework.
- xvi. The Committee noted correspondence from the Executive Office in relation to Period Products (Free Provision) Act (Northern Ireland) 2022: Report by the Northern Ireland Executive May 2022 – 2025. This report was laid in the Business Office on the 29 May.
- xvii. The Committee noted a response from the Executive Office to Committee’s correspondence of 7 May requesting information regarding the roles and responsibilities of the Junior Ministers.
- xviii. The Committee noted a response from the Executive Office to the Committee’s correspondence of 9 May requesting information on analysis of 2024 – 2025 Outturn and Forecast Outturn for February and March.

## **10. Forward Work Programme**

The Committee considered the draft forward work programme.

The Committee noted an update from the Assistant Clerk in relation to next week’s meeting with an additional oral briefing scheduled with Assembly Legal Services on the Implications of the UK Supreme Court judgement For Women Scotland Limited v The Scottish Ministers.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to proceed with the remaining briefings as set out in the forward work programme.

### **11. Any Other Business**

The Committee agreed to write to the Commissioner for Survivors of Institutional Childhood Abuse to request an oral briefing with the Committee to provide an update on her work.

### **12. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 11 June at 2.00pm in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

*The meeting was adjourned at 5.22pm.*

**Paula Bradshaw MLA**

**Chairperson, Committee for the Executive Office**

**Wednesday 4 June 2025**