



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

# Committee for Health

## Minutes of Proceedings

**6 June 2024**

**Meeting Location:** Room 29, Parliament Buildings

**Present:**

Liz Kimmins MLA (Chairperson)

Danny Donnelly MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Órlaithí Flynn MLA

Nuala McAllister MLA

**Present by Video or Teleconference:**

Alan Chambers MLA

Colin McGrath MLA

Alan Robinson MLA

**Apologies:**

Linda Dillon MLA

Diane Dodds MLA

**In Attendance:**

Keith McBride, Clerk

Roisin Donnelly, Assistant Clerk

Angela McParland, Assistant Clerk

Jonathan Lamont, Clerical Supervisor

Noel Gallagher, Clerical Officer

Antoinette Bowen, Clerical Officer

The meeting commenced at 2.06pm in public session.

**1. Independent Review of Children's Social Care Services – Professor Ray Jones**

The following representative joined the meeting at 2.07pm:

Professor Ray Jones, Emiratus Professor of Social Work at Kingston University and St George's University of London.

*Colin McGrath joined the meeting at 2.11pm*

The representative briefed the Committee on the Independent Review of Children's Social Care Services.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

*Alan Chambers joined the meeting at 2.49pm*

*Alan Robinson joined the meeting at 3.17pm*

The Chairperson thanked the representative for his attendance.

**Agreed:** The Committee noted that it will receive a Departmental written brief shortly, ahead of the oral briefing scheduled for 27 June on the matter. The Committee agreed to write to the Department to receive confirmation that the written brief will contain a summary of responses

on the Department's consultation which sought views on the majority of the recommendations of the report of the Review.

## **2. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Linda Dillon MLA and Diane Dodds MLA.

*Nuala McAllister left the meeting at 3.26pm*

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

The Chairperson reiterated the Committee's support for the strike action by junior doctors and that the Committee hopes a joint solution can be found soon between the doctors and the Department.

The Chairperson advised Members that she had attended a launch in Parliament Buildings that morning held by the Community Development and Health Network to launch its Building Community Pharmacy Partnership Impact Report and highlighted to Members the importance of the role of community pharmacies in communities.

## **4. Draft Minutes**

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 30 May 2024.

## **5. Matters Arising**

The Committee noted the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy 2024-2031.

The Committee considered Ministerial correspondence on the Victims and Prisoners Act and the infected blood compensation scheme.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to publish the correspondence on the Committee's Legislation Consent Memorandum web page, alongside papers considered at its previous briefing on the matter.

## **6. June Monitoring Round – Briefing from the Department of Health**

The following officials from the Department of Health (DoH) joined the meeting at 3.28pm:

Brigitte Worth - Director of Finance, DoH;

David Keenan - Head of Financial Planning, DoH;

Danielle Mallon - Head of Financial Management;

Linda Carter - Head of Capital Resources Unit; and

Brian Dunlop - Deputy Principal of Capital Resources, DoH.

The officials briefed the Committee on the June Monitoring Round.

*Colin McGrath left the meeting at 3.36pm*

*Nuala McAllister returned to the meeting at 3.37pm*

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

The Chairperson thanked the officials for their attendance.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Minister to highlight that Children's Social Care Services is a priority for the Committee and sees an urgency in implementing recommendations from the Report of the Review. Further, the Committee agreed to ask the Minister for detail of bids for this year for Transformation Funding and future plans in regards to Transformation Funding.

The Committee agreed to write to the Department to receive information on work by the Department to provide incentives for people to move from agencies to staff bank.

The Committee agreed to write to the Department to receive further information from the Department's Property Management Branch on back log maintenance deemed as high risk.

The Committee agreed to write to the Department to receive detail on the type of cyber security being funded.

## **7. Correspondence**

- i. The Committee noted a copy of the Committee for Finance's report on Engagement on the 2024/25 Draft Executive Budget.
- ii. The Committee considered a copy of correspondence sent to the Department from the Committee for the Economy on departmental co-operation on childminding policy.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department to be copied into the Department's response to the Economy Committee.

- iii. The Committee considered a copy of correspondence sent to the Department from the Committee for Justice asking the Department for information on the timeframe of the Adult Protection Bill and the findings of any consultation, including details of any impact assessments carried out by the Department.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to write to the Department to be copied into the Department's response to the Justice Committee.

- iv. The Committee noted the Strategic Investment Board's Investing Activity Report for May 2024.
- v. The Committee noted the Alzheimer Society's Report on the Economic Impact of Dementia.
- vi. The Committee considered correspondence from NI Childminding Association in relation to briefing the Committee.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed to schedule an informal meeting with NI Childminding Association.

- vii. The Committee noted a number of items of correspondence from individuals.

## **8. Forward Work Programme**

The Committee considered a draft Forward Work Programme.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed its Forward Work Programme.

## **9. Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

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

The next meeting of the Committee for Health is scheduled to take place at 2.00pm on 13 June 2024.

The meeting was adjourned at 4.12pm.

**Liz Kimmins MLA**

**Chairperson, Committee for Health**

**13 June 2024**