



# Northern Ireland Assembly

## COMMITTEE FOR COMMUNITIES

### MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**Thursday 27 October 2016**  
**Room 29 Parliament Buildings**

Present: Colum Eastwood MLA (Chairperson)  
Michelle Gildernew MLA (Deputy Chairperson)  
Steven Agnew MLA  
Andy Allen MLA  
Nichola Mallon MLA  
Fra McCann MLA  
Adrian McQuillan MLA  
Carál Ní Chuilín MLA  
Christopher Stalford MLA

In Attendance: Kevin Pelan (Assembly Clerk)  
Ashleigh Mitford (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Stewart Kennedy (Clerical Supervisor)  
Ciarán Brannigan (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Jonathan Bell MLA  
Naomi Long MLA

*The meeting commenced in open session at 10:07 am*

*The Chairperson declared an interest in agenda items related to the Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Bill given family interests in licensed premises.*

## **1. Apologies**

Apologies are recorded above

## **2. Draft Minutes**

*Agreed:* The draft minutes of the meeting of 20 October 2016 were agreed.

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

The Chairperson reminded Members that they are invited to launch of the Vital Signs NI Report in the Long Gallery from 12.30pm – 2pm.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department in relation to the proposed rescheduling of the briefing *Regeneration: the way forward in the absence of a bill deferring regeneration powers to local councils*.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to reschedule the briefing.

*Michelle Gildernew joined the meeting at 10:09 am.*

## **4. Matters Arising**

The Committee noted the Department's response to the Committee's latest correspondence regarding concerns around the engagement of Committees in the Budget and Monitoring Round processes.

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The Committee noted three items of correspondence from the Department in relation to the Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Bill.

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The Committee noted correspondence from the Permanent Secretary of the Department for Communities in relation to appointments to public bodies.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to forward the letter from the Department to the Commissioner for Public Appointments in Northern Ireland for comment.

*Adrian McQuillan joined the meeting at 10:12am*

The Committee noted the Clerk's memo and correspondence from the Department regarding a Savings (Government Contributions) Bill Legislative Consent Memorandum.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that it was content with the rationale set out by the Department for proceeding by Legislative Consent Motion rather than an Assembly Bill

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to consider the points set out in the Clerk's memo as a basis for the draft Committee Report on the LCM. The Committee noted that it will be asked to agree its final Report on 10 November 2016.

The Committee noted a memo from the Clerk in relation to additional oral evidence sessions for the Committee Stage of the Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Bill.

*Agreed:* The Committee was content to schedule oral evidence as per the proposals in the paper.

*Andy Allen joined the meeting at 10:15 am.*

#### **5. Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Bill – Evidence Session with the Institute of Public Health in Ireland**

The committee noted a written submission.

The following witnesses joined the meeting at 10:15 am

- Dr Joanna Purdy, Public Health Development Officer, The Institute of Public Health in Ireland
- Dr Helen McAvoy, Senior Policy Officer, The Institute of Public Health in Ireland

The witnesses briefed the committee and this was followed by questions from members.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to seek further written information on a number of issues from the witnesses.

The witnesses left the meeting at 11:06 am.

*The session was recorded by Hansard.*

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#### **6. Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Bill – Evidence Session with Addiction NI and ASCERT**

The following witnesses joined the meeting at 11:07 am

- Gary McMichael, Chief Executive, ASCERT
- Alistair Sweet, Head of Clinical Services, Addiction NI

The witnesses briefed the committee and this was followed by questions from members

The witnesses left the meeting at 11:45 am

*The session was recorded by Hansard*

## **7. Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Bill – Evidence Session with Joint Industry Code for the Responsible Promotion and Retail of Alcohol**

The following witness joined the meeting at 11:45 am

- Duncan McCausland, Chair of Complaints Panel, Joint Industry Code for the Responsible Promotion and Retail of Alcohol

The witness briefed the committee and this was followed by questions from members

*Agreed:* Committee staff will source the report *Cheap Alcohol: The Price We Pay - The Alcohol Health Alliance*

The witnesses left the meeting at 12:07 pm

*The session was recorded by Hansard*

## **8. Licensing and Registration of Clubs (Amendment) Bill – Evidence Session with the Chief Medical Officer**

The following witness joined the meeting at 12:09 pm

- Dr Michael McBride, Chief Medical Officer, Department of Health

The witness briefed the committee and this was followed by questions from members

*Carál Ní Chuilín left the meeting at 12:18 pm*

*Andy Allen left the meeting at 12:38 pm*

The witness left the meeting at 12:51 pm

*The session was recorded by Hansard*

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to pursue a number of the areas discussed during the day's evidence sessions. These include: provision of a publically accessible electronic register of licenses; actions being taken by government departments to address alcohol related harm to coincide with the Bill; and the issue of the minimum pricing of alcohol in the context of last week's ruling by The Court of Session in Edinburgh against a challenge by the Scotch whisky industry which claimed minimum pricing of alcohol was a breach of European Law.

## **9. SL1 Social Security (Great Britain Reciprocal Arrangements) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016**

The Committee noted the SL1

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that it was content for the Rule to be made.

## **10. SR 353 The Pensions (2015 Act) (Consequential Amendments) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016**

The Committee noted the Statutory Rule. There were no objections to the Rule.

Question put and agreed:

*That the Committee for Communities has considered the Statutory Rule SR353/2016 The Pension 2015 Act (Consequential Amendments) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016 and recommends that it be confirmed by the Assembly*

## **11. Correspondence**

The Committee noted a correspondence memo and tabled correspondence.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to action correspondence as outlined in the correspondence memo.

## **12. Forward Work Programme**

The Committee noted its draft Forward Work Programme, a paper from the Clerk on strategic priorities and an invitation from Depaul to visit Stella Maris.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the priorities set out in the Clerk's paper should be the first in a series of priorities to be taken forward by the Committee. The Committee was content that committee staff develop the proposals further, in association with stakeholders, and begin to develop a programme of work.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to undertake a visit to Stella Maris after its meeting on 8 December 2016. This will tie in with homelessness awareness week and will be an opportunity for members to meet with stakeholders to discuss a way forward on proposed Committee work on homelessness.

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

## **13. AOB**

No items were raised

## **14. Date, time and location of the next meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee for Communities will take place on Thursday 10 November 2016 at 10.00 am in room 29, Parliament Buildings.

*The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12:53pm*

**Chairperson, Committee for Communities**

**10 November 2016**