



**COMMITTEE FOR THE OFFICE OF THE FIRST MINISTER AND DEPUTY
FIRST MINISTER
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS
WEDNESDAY 20 MAY 2015
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr Mike Nesbitt (Chairperson)
Mr Chris Lyttle (Deputy Chairperson)
Ms Megan Fearon
Mrs Brenda Hale
Mr Alex Maskey
Ms Bronwyn McGahan
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Jimmy Spratt

Apologies: Mr Alex Attwood
Mr Michael Copeland
Mr David McIlveen

In Attendance: Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assembly Clerk)
Miss Karen Jardine (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stephen Magee (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Richard Reid (Clerical Officer)

The meeting began in closed session at 2.03 pm.

1. Inquiry into Building a United Community

The Committee considered a confidential paper outlining areas for potential recommendations on the Inquiry into Building a United Community.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to bring the paper back for a fuller discussion at next week's meeting.

The meeting moved into open session at 2.05pm.

2. Apologies

Apologies were noted as above.

3. Chairperson's Business

Agreed: Members agreed that the Chairperson would write to Mr Alex Attwood to offer condolences on behalf of the Committee following the recent death of his mother.

Chairs' Forum

The Committee noted an invitation from the Chairs' Forum to a breakfast briefing on the Northern Ireland Economic Outlook which is to be held on Wednesday 27 May 2015 in the Waterfront Plaza, Belfast.

Historical Institutional Abuse Public Lecture

The Committee noted an invitation to a public lecture by Professor Kathleen Daly on "What is required for effective redress for historical institutional abuse" which is to be held at the Ulster University Belfast campus on Monday 15 June 2015.

Members also noted the recent announcement by the Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry to add three institutions to the scope of the Inquiry, along with issues arising from the actions of Father Brendan Smyth in so far as these relate to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department noting the extension to the number of modules to be undertaken by the Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry, and its continued concern for those victims who fall outside the scope of the current Inquiry terms of reference; and to advise of the Committee's intention to raise this matter during the forthcoming briefing with the First Minister and deputy First Minister.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to Sir Anthony Hart to seek further information on the addition of the three institutions to the Inquiry, and clarification on the specific area of inquiry with regard to Father Brendan Smyth; and to seek assurance that these additions will not impact negatively on the timescale of the Inquiry, and associated costs.

Committee Invitations

The Committee noted the list of current invitations.

4. Draft Minutes of the meetings held on 13 May 2015

Agreed: The draft minutes of the proceedings of 13 May 2015 were agreed by the Committee.

5. Matters Arising

Children's Services Co-operation Bill

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward correspondence recently received from the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to the Committee for Health, Social Services and Public Safety for information.

NIPSO

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content to share relevant papers with the Ad Hoc Committee as required, given the limited time that Committee has to consider the Public Services Ombudsperson Bill.

List of Outstanding Correspondence

The Committee noted the list of outstanding correspondence.

6. Correspondence

Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

The Committee noted a memo from the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment regarding its visit to the Stuttgart region.

Shackleton Barracks

The Committee noted a letter from OFMDFM regarding the disposal of the Shackleton Barracks site at Ballykelly

Ms Fearon left the meeting at 2.11pm.

7. Draft Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted the draft Forward Work Programme to July 2015

8. Commissioner for Children and Young People.

Representatives from the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People the joined the meeting at 2.12pm.

Mr Maskey joined the meeting at 2.12pm.

Ms Koulla Yiasouma, NI Commissioner for Children and Young People; and Ms Mairead McCafferty, Chief Executive of the NI Commissioner for Children and Young People, appeared before the Committee for discussion and questions on the work of the Commissioner for Children and Young People. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard.

Mr Spratt joined the meeting at 2.14pm.

Ms Fearon returned to the meeting at 2.33pm.

The witnesses agreed to provide further updates on a number of issues including: sight of the draft shadow report prepared in relation to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child examination of the fifth UK State Party Report; and information on the outcome of the meeting with the First Minister and deputy First Minister on the Article 24 Report.

The witnesses left the meeting at 2.57 pm.

9. Children and Young People

Departmental officials joined the meeting at 2.58 pm

Mr Martin Tyrrell and Ms Pauline Donnan appeared before the Committee for discussion and questions on the Brightstart Childcare Framework. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard.

Mr Moutray left the meeting at 3.29pm.

Officials agreed to provide further information on a number of issues including: a departmental paper regarding the proposed HMRC Tax Free Childcare scheme; clarification on the start date of the HMRC scheme including information on plans for an appropriate local advertising campaign; the definition of ‘rural’ as used in the RSM McClure Watters research on childcare; information on the numbers of successful applications in rural areas to the School Age Childcare Grant Scheme; and a Department of Agriculture and Rural Development “think-piece” on Rural Childcare.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety for information on uptake of the Childcare and Family Support NI App.

The officials left the meeting at 3.33 pm

10. Any Other Business

There was no other Committee business.

11. Date, Time and Location of next meeting

The next meeting will be held at 2.00 pm in Room 30 on Wednesday 27 May 2015.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 3.34 pm.