



Northern Ireland Assembly

COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Thursday 24 September 2015
Room 29, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Fra McCann MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Jim Allister MLA
Mr Roy Beggs MLA
Ms Paula Bradley MLA
Mr Gregory Campbell MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mr Sammy Douglas MLA
Mr Phil Flanagan MLA
Mr Gordon Lyons MLA

In Attendance: Dr Kevin Pelan (Assembly Clerk)
Mrs Ashleigh Mitford (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stewart Kennedy (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Alicia Muldoon (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chairperson)
Mrs Dolores Kelly

The meeting commenced in open session at 10.03 a.m.

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted as above.

2. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The draft minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2015 were agreed.

3. Chairperson's Business

Gordon Lyons joined the meeting at 10.09 a.m.

Members noted that the Temporary Permanent Secretary will brief the Committee on 1 October 2015 on his priorities for the coming months and the restrictions that may apply to civil servants during periods of ministerial vacancy in assisting the committee to carry out its functions.

Members were reminded that an informal meeting has been scheduled with RICS in Parliament Buildings at 9.30 on 7 October 2015. Members were asked to indicate their availability to attend this meeting as it was agreed by the Committee on 3 September 2015 that it could be a useful pre-cursor to the proposed departmental update on the review of the role and regulation of the private rented sector in December.

Members noted that the Clerk will present proposed housing issues for inclusion in the Committee's Forward Work Programme at the Committee meeting of 1 October 2015. The proposals will be based on the Committee's strategic planning discussions and the meeting between the Chair and the Chief Executive of the NIHE on 17 September 2015.

4. Matters Arising

Members noted that Supporting Communities NI is holding its annual conference at the Tullyglass Hotel, Ballymena on Thursday 22 October 2015 to highlight their work in relation to Community Participation.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that this would be a good opportunity to engage with stakeholders and show their support to the members of this organisation. The Committee therefore agreed to hold its meeting of 22 October 2015 at the Tullyglass Hotel, Ballymena to take evidence on the Houses in Multiple Occupation Bill and to attend part of the conference.

The Committee noted and discussed a memo from the Clerk in relation to the Committee for Justice's call for evidence on the Justice No.2 Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Clerk should provide a response to the Committee for Justice as set out in the memo, subject to agreed amendments.

5. Departmental Briefing – Housing (Amendment) Bill

The following departmental officials joined the meeting at 10.11 am

- Dr Heloise Brown, Head of Housing Research, Policy and Legislation, DSD
- Ms Eilish O'Neill, Head of Private Rented Housing, DSD
- Mr Stephen Baird, Policy and Legislation Manager, DSD
- Ms Maryann Dempsey, Deputy Principal of Private Rented Housing, DSD

The departmental officials briefed the Committee and this was followed by questions from members.

The officials left the meeting at 10.45 am

This session was recorded by Hansard

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department on a number of issues.

6. Departmental Briefing – SHRP Regulatory Framework Consultation Response Report

The following departmental officials joined the meeting at 10.47 am

- Mr Paul Price, Social Housing Reform Programme, Programme Manager, DSD
- Mr Shane Clements, Social Housing Reform Programme, Policy Project Manager, DSD

Sammy Douglas joined the meeting at 10.52 am

The departmental officials briefed the Committee and this was followed by questions from members.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request updates from the Department in relation to work being undertaken to avoid duplication of regulation between the regulator for social housing providers and the Charities Commission.

The officials left the meeting at 11.03 am

7. Departmental Briefing – Update on Volunteering Strategy Implementation / National Citizen Service Programme

The following departmental officials joined the meeting at 11.04 am

- Mr Jack O'Connor, Voluntary and Community Unit, DSD
- Ms Donna Marie Hancock, Voluntary and Community Unit, DSD
- Donna Doran, Voluntary and Community Unit, DSD

The departmental officials briefed the Committee and this was followed by questions from members.

During questions two members declared interests relevant to proceedings:

Stewart Dickson declared an interest as a volunteer leader in the Boys' Brigade.

Roy Beggs declared an interest Boys Brigade Officer, as Treasurer of Carrickfergus Community Drugs and Alcohol Advisory Group and as a Sure Start Committee member.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to seek further information from the Department regarding likely achievement of some of the set objectives.

The officials left the meeting at 11.41 am

8. SR 331 The State Pension Credit (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

The Committee had no objections to the Rule.

The Chairperson read the following motion into the record:

“That the Committee for Social Development has considered the Statutory Rule SR 331/20104 The State Pension Credit (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules report, has no objections to the Rule.”

9. Correspondence

The Committee noted a correspondence memo.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to action all correspondence as outlined on the correspondence memo.

10. Forward Work Programme

Agreed: The Committee agreed its Forward Work Programme.

11. AOB

No items were raised.

12. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee for Social Development will take place on 01 October 2015 at 10:00am.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 11.43 a.m.

Alex Maskey

Chairperson, Committee for Social Development

01 October 2015