



Northern Ireland Assembly

COMMITTEE FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

Thursday 19 February 2015
Room 29, Parliament Buildings

- Present: Mr Alex Maskey MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Mickey Brady MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Jim Allister MLA
Mr Roy Beggs MLA
Ms Paula Bradley MLA
Mr Gregory Campbell MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mrs Dolores Kelly MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA
Mr Sammy Wilson MLA
- In Attendance: Dr Kevin Pelan (Assembly Clerk)
Mrs Ashleigh Mitford (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Stewart Kennedy (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Richard Reid (Clerical Officer)
- Apologies: Mr Maurice Devenney MLA

The Chairperson opened the meeting in closed session at 10.03am.

1. Committee Inquiry – Procedural Issues

Mr Sammy Wilson MLA joined the meeting 10.09am

The Committee considered correspondence from the Minister for Social Development which included a partially redacted version of the Special Adviser Fact-Finding Report.

The Committee noted in the Minister's correspondence that he was prepared to release sections of the report of a factual nature provided the Committee agrees to respect the confidentiality of the report and not to refer to it in public or in its report without his agreement.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the deadline for the release of the full report under section 44 (7) of the 1998 Act be extended until 5 pm on Thursday 26 February 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to receive a written submission from the Minister in relation to the further sections of a factual nature for consideration at its next meeting on 26 February 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Minister and the Speaker to advise them of its decision.

Ms Dolores Kelly MLA and Mickey Brady MLA left the meeting at 11.15am

The Chairperson declared the meeting open at 11.15am

2. Apologies

Apologies were as noted above.

3. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The draft minutes of the meeting held on 9 and 12 February 2015 were agreed.

4. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson confirmed the earlier decision, made in closed session, to agree the deadline for the release of the full report under section 44 (7) of the 1998 Act be extended until 5 pm on Thursday 26 February 2015.

5. Matters Arising

- 5.1** The Chairperson reminded the Committee that at last week's meeting some members raised a number of queries regarding the regulation of the private rented sector. The Chairperson also reminded members that the Committee is scheduled to receive a briefing from the Department on the Regulation Review of the private rented sector at its meeting on 19 March.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to wait until the briefing on 19 March to raise any queries members might have.

- 5.2** The Chairperson reminded the Committee that at its meeting on 5 February some members raised a number of queries around the Affordable Warmth Scheme. The Chairperson drew members' attention to information collated by the Committee Office to help address those queries.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider the information and to raise any further queries under AOB or at next week's meeting.

- 5.3** The Chairperson drew members' attention to correspondence from the BBC regarding Phase 3 of its Inquiry.

6. Pensions Bill – Draft Report

The Committee considered the draft report on the Pensions Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Table of Contents of the Report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the following appendices stand as part of the Report:

Appendix 1 - Minutes of Proceedings

Appendix 2 - Minutes of Evidence

Appendix 3 - Written Evidence

Appendix 4 – Department Correspondence

Appendix 5 – Other Papers

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Recommendations of its Report

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Introduction of its Report

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Consideration of Evidence of its Report as amended

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Conclusions of its Report as amended

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Executive Summary of its Report

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Report be the 10th Report of the Committee for Social Development

Agreed: The Committee agreed the extract of minutes of 19 February to be included in the Committee's Report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed for the Report to be printed.

7. SL1 The National Employment Savings Trust (Amendment) Order 2015

Agreed: The Committee noted the Westminster statutory instrument.

8. SR 52/2015 The Social Security (Industrial Injuries) (Prescribed Diseases) (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 52/2015 The Social Security (Industrial Injuries) (Prescribed Diseases) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules' report has no objections to the Rule.

9. SR 57 The Child Maintenance (2008 Act) (Commencement No. 15) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015

The Committee noted the Commencement Order.

10. Correspondence

The Chairperson drew member's attention to a number of items of correspondence.

- 10.1** The Committee considered correspondence from the SSA regarding its use of Interviews under Caution and its statutory authority to do so.
Agreed: The Committee agreed to seek further clarification from the SSA on this matter.
- 10.2** The Committee noted correspondence from the Charity Commission regarding its investigative process
Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward this response to Mr Burke who initially wrote to the Committee on this issue.
- 10.3** The Committee noted correspondence from Jeffrey Donaldson MP on behalf of the Lisburn Carer's Forum.
Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider these issues on 5 March during the briefing from the NI Human Rights Commission on the Human Rights of the Carer.

11. Forward Work Programme

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Forward Work Programme as drafted.

12. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee for Social Development will take place on 26 February 2015 at 10.00am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting moved into closed session at 11.29am

Agreed: The Committee agreed to defer the Inquiry Phase 2 and Phase 3 Items of Business until its meeting on 26 February 2015.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 11.31am.

Alex Maskey

Chairperson, Committee for Social Development

26 February 2015