

DÁIL ÉIREANN

AN COMHCHOISTE UM LEANAÍ, MÍCHUMAS, COMHIONANNAS AGUS LÁNPHÁIRTÍOCHT

JOINT COMMITTEE ON CHILDREN, DISABILITY, EQUALITY AND INTE- GRATION

Dé Máirt, 29 Meán Fómhair 2020

Tuesday, 29 September 2020

Tháinig an Comhchoiste le chéile ag 4 p.m.

The Joint Committee met at 4 p.m.

Comhaltaí a bhí i láthair / Members present:

| Teachtaí Dála / Deputies | Seanadóirí / Senators |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Patrick Costello, | Mary Fitzpatrick, |
| Cathal Crowe, | Sharon Keogan, |
| Alan Dillon, | Erin McGreehan, |
| Mark Ward, | Lynn Ruane, |
| Jennifer Whitmore. | Mary Seery Kearney. |

Teachta / Deputy Kathleen Funchion sa Chathair / in the Chair.

Business of Joint Committee

Chairman: We have a quorum and are now in public session. This is our first meeting. I welcome the members. It is great to have the committee up and running and to be getting under way with work. I particularly welcome members who are newly elected to the Dáil or Seanad. We have not received any apologies.

As we know too well, Ireland and the wider world have changed fundamentally since the previous committee was dissolved. We have all been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and our lives altered in ways we could not have envisaged only a short time ago. We are learning every day how this is presenting challenges to our work and the way we sit between the National Convention Centre and here. That has had a knock-on effect on getting the committees up and running. I endeavour to be fair and impartial to all members and all witnesses. I had the privilege of chairing the Joint Committee on the Implementation of the Good Friday Agreement in the last Dáil for a period and I would like to think that people would have said I was very fair. I look forward to working with everybody and to this being a very active, progressive and proactive committee. It has a big remit and there are many issues but it is also extremely exciting.

The first item on our agenda will be the election of a Vice Chairman. We are not having that procedure today but if members want to put forward nominations, they should email them to the clerk. I suggest that we try to get that done at the next meeting as it is important to have a Vice Chairman, particularly in the current climate as we never know who might have to take some time off. While it is important to get it done, I do not think it would be fair to throw it at people today. Members are welcome to take the time to send in any nominations and then we will deal with the matter at our next meeting. Is that agreed? Agreed.

I propose that we go into private session. Is that agreed? Agreed.

The joint committee went into private session at 4.05 p.m. and adjourned at 5 p.m. until 4 p.m. on Tuesday, 6 October 2020.