



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for the Economy

Minutes of Proceedings

8th December 2021

Meeting Location: Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present: Mr Matthew O'Toole MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Keith Buchanan MLA
Mr Peter Weir MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mr Stephen Dunne MLA
Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA

In Attendance by Video or Teleconference:

Dr Caoimhe Archibald (MLA (Chairperson))
Ms Claire Sugden MLA

Apologies: Mr John O'Dowd MLA

In Attendance: Mr Peter Hall (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Thomas Armstrong (Assistant Assembly Clerk)



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In Attendance by Video or Teleconference:

Ms Sinead Kelly (Assistant Assembly Clerk)

Mr Michael Greer (Clerical Supervisor)

The meeting commenced at 10:05am in open session.

1. Apologies

As noted above.

2. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Minutes from 1st December 2021.



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3. Chairperson's Business

Noted: Members noted an invitation from the Human Rights Commission to attend the launch of their 2021 Annual Human Rights Statement on Thursday 9th December.

Noted: Members noted a memo from the Clerking and Member Support Office regarding an online session on Deaf Awareness – part of the Member Development Programme.

Agreed: Members agreed that the Chair meet informally with Lord Jay, Chair of the Lords sub-committee on the Protocol for an update on its work on the margins of the Interparliamentary Forum on Brexit.

Agreed: Members noted that the Chair and Deputy Chair met with the Minister on 7th December regarding the Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Bill and agreed to write to the Minister to indicate the Committee's position on potential amendments to be brought forward by the Department at Further Consideration Stage.

Agreed: Members agreed to seek legal advice in relation to the general principle of repercussive costs which arose in relation to the Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Bill.

4. Employment (Zero Hours Workers and Banded Weekly Working Hours) Bill

Members received a briefing from:

Jemma Dolan MLA Fermanagh and South Tyrone
Pearse McFlynn Policy Team, Sinn Fein

Agreed: Members agreed to seek legal advice on what constitutes a contract in the context of the Bill and the definition of a worker.

The witness left the meeting at 11:24am



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5. Small-Scale Green Energy Bill – Oral Evidence from the Department for the Economy

Members received a briefing from:

Joe Reynolds Director, Energy Consumers Branch, DfE
Koichi Samuels Renewable Electricity Branch, DfE

The witness left the meeting at 11:54am

Members agreed to move to closed session 11.54am

6. Small-Scale Green Energy Bill: Legal Advice

Members discussed legal advice in relation to the Small-Scale Green Energy Bill.

Members agreed to move to open session 11.55am

7. Matters Arising

Noted: Members noted a response from the Minister regarding the repercussive costs of the Committee's proposed amendments to the Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay Bill.

Noted: Members noted a response from the Minister regarding the NI Holiday at Home Scheme.



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8. Domestic Abuse (Safe Leave) Bill

Members considered the Domestic Abuse (Safe Leave) Bill and a motion to extend the Committee Stage.

Question put and agreed on the motion:

“That, in accordance with Standing Order 33(4), the period referred to in Standing Order 33(2) be extended to 11th February 2022, in relation to the Committee Stage of the Domestic Abuse (Safe Leave) Bill (NIA Bill 41/17-22)”.

Members noted the Hansard from Rachel Woods MLA briefing on 24th November.

Members noted that the Citizen Space Survey on the bill was published on Friday 3rd December and that the public call for evidence will be published on Wednesday 8th December.

9. Advanced Research and Invention Agency Bill

Members noted responses from QUB and the Open University in relation to the Legislative Consent Motion on the Advanced Research and Invention Agency Bill.

10. SR 2021/319 The High Street (Coronavirus, Financial Assistance) Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2021

Members considered the SR 2021/319 The High Street (Coronavirus, Financial Assistance) Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2021.



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Question put and agreed:

“That the Committee for the Economy has considered the SR 2021/319 The High Street (Coronavirus, Financial Assistance) Scheme (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2021, and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules report.”

11. Correspondence

Noted: Members noted a report from Renewable NI on Powering a Green Economy.

Noted: Members noted a copy of the Competition and Markets Authority Annual Plan – 2022/23 Consultation NI.

Noted: Members noted a copy of MRDE’s Accounts for 2020-21.

Noted: Members noted a copy of BSDL’s Accounts for 2020-21.

Noted: Members noted a copy of DfE’s Economic Commentary for Winter 2021.

Agreed: Members noted correspondence from Disability Action and agreed to forward to the Department for consideration.

Noted: Members noted correspondence from the Minister regarding the Subsidy Control Bill.

Noted: Members noted correspondence from the Committee for Education regarding the Period Products Bill.

Noted: Members noted correspondence from the Clerk of the Finance Committee regarding the claims made by the Minister during the Consideration Stage of the Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Bill.

Noted: Members noted correspondence from the Clerk of the Finance Committee regarding the Westminster draft Online Safety Bill.



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Noted: Members noted correspondence from Pivotal providing a copy of its new research on educational migration from Northern Ireland.

Noted: Members noted a copy of the Consumer Council Corporate Plan.

Noted: Members noted correspondence from English UK, the national association for British Council accredited English language schools.

12. Departmental Written Briefing: Tourism Recovery Action Plan

Members noted a written briefing from the Department on the Tourism Recovery Action Plan.

13. Departmental Written Briefing: Economic Recovery Action Plan

Members noted a written briefing from the Department on the Economic Recovery Action Plan and agreed to consider this in more detail during the oral briefing on 19th January.

14. Any Other Business

15. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on Wednesday 15th December 2021 in Room 30, Parliament Buildings at 10am.

The meeting was adjourned at 12.16pm.

Dr Caoímhe Archibald MLA
Chairperson, Committee for the Economy



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15th December 2021