



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

# Committee for the Economy

## Minutes of Proceedings

16th March 2022

**Meeting Location:** Senate Chamber

**In Attendance:** Dr Caoimhe Archibald (MLA (Chairperson))  
Mr John O'Dowd MLA  
Mr Peter Weir MLA  
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA  
Mr Keith Buchanan MLA  
Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA

**Attendance by Video or Teleconference:**

Mr Matthew O'Toole MLA (Deputy Chairperson)  
Mr Stephen Dunne MLA  
Ms Claire Sugden MLA



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**In Attendance:** Mr Peter Hall (Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Thomas Armstrong (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Aaron Pakenham (Clerical Officer)

**Attendance by Video or Teleconference:**

Mr Michael Greer (Clerical Supervisor)  
Ms Sinead Kelly (Assistant Assembly Clerk)

The meeting commenced at 10:07am in open session.

**1. Apologies**

As noted above.

**2. Draft Minutes**

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the Minutes from 9<sup>th</sup> March 2022.

**Agreed:** Members agreed to amend the Record of Decisions from 9<sup>th</sup> March to share letter from Neill O'Brien to Finance Minister and agreed the Record of Decisions as amended.



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### 3. Chairperson's Business

**Noted:** Members noted a letter from the Head of the Civil Service regarding Permanent Secretary appointments.

**Agreed:** Members noted the update following the meeting with the Chair and panel of the Independent Review of Invest NI and agreed that the Clerk would forward the Committee's Micro Inquiry reports would be forwarded to the Review.

Members agreed to move to closed session 10.14am

### 4. Briefing from the NI Audit Office – Department for the Economy Annual Report and Accounts 2020-2021

Members received a briefing in closed session from:

Kieran Donnelly	Comptroller & Auditor General, NI Audit Office
Rodney Allen	Chief Operating Officer, NI Audit Office

Members agreed to move to open session at 11.52am

### 5. Employment (Zero Hours and Banded Weekly Working Hours) Bill – Draft Committee Report

The Committee considered the draft report on the Employment (Zero Hours and Banded Weekly Working Hours) Bill.

The Committee considered the **Executive Summary** as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with the Executive Summary as drafted.



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The Committee considered the **Introduction and Committee Approach** as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with the Introduction and Committee Approach as drafted.

The Committee considered the **Consideration of the Bill** as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with the Consideration of the Bill as drafted.

The Committee considered the **Clause by Clause Scrutiny of the Bill** as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with the Clause by Clause Scrutiny of the Bill as drafted.

The Committee considered the **List of Appendices** as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with the List of Appendices as drafted.



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## 6. Onshore Fracking (Prohibition) Bill – Draft Committee Report

The Committee considered the draft report on the Employment (Zero Hours and Banded Weekly Working Hours) Bill.

The Committee considered the **Executive Summary** as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with the Executive Summary as drafted.

The Committee considered the **Introduction and Committee Approach** as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with the Introduction and Committee Approach as drafted.

The Committee considered the **Consideration of the Bill** as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with the Consideration of the Bill as drafted.

The Committee considered the **Others Issues Raised in the Consideration of the Bill** as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with the Other Issues raised in the Consideration of the Bill as drafted.



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The Committee considered the **Clause by Clause Scrutiny of the Bill** as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with the Clause by Clause Scrutiny of the Bill as drafted.

The Committee considered the **List of Appendices** as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with the List of Appendices as drafted.

Members agreed to move to Agenda Item 8

**8. SR 2022/75 The Education (Student Support, etc.) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022**

Members noted a response from the Department in relation to the queries raised on this SR.

Members considered the SR 2022/75 The Education (Student Support, etc.) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022.

Question out and agreed:

**“That the Committee for the Economy has considered SR 2022/75 The Education (Student Support, etc.) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022, and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules report.”**



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Members agreed to move to Agenda Item 10.

**10. Committee for the Economy Draft Legacy Report 2017-2022**

The Committee considered the Legacy Report 2017-2022.

The Committee considered the **Title page, Table of Contents and Committee Powers and Membership.**

Agreed: Members agreed the Title page, Table of Contents and Committee Powers and Membership.

The Committee considered the **Review of the 2017-2022 Mandate – Scrutiny.**

Agreed: Members agreed the Review of the 2017-2022 Mandate – Scrutiny.

The Committee considered the **Review of the 2017-2022 Mandate – Approach.**

Agreed: Members agreed the Review of the 2017-2022 Mandate – Approach.

The Committee considered the **Review of the 2017-2022 Mandate – Suggested Issues for the Successor Committee.**

Agreed: Members agreed the Review of the 2017-2022 Mandate – Suggested Issues for the Successor Committee.

The Committee considered the **List of Appendices.**

Agreed: The Committee agreed the **List of Appendices.**



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Members agreed to move to Agenda Items 14 – 19

**14. SR 2022/101 The Employer’s Liability (Compulsory Insurance) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022**

Members considered SR 2022/101 The Employer’s Liability (Compulsory Insurance) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022.

Question put and agreed:

**“That the Committee for the Economy has considered 2022/101 The Employer’s Liability (Compulsory Insurance) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022, and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules report.”**

**15. SL1 - The Statutory Parental Bereavement Pay (Administration) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022**

Members considered SL1 - The Statutory Parental Bereavement Pay (Administration) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022.

Agreed: The Committee agreed it was content with the policy intent of the SL1.

**16. SL1 - The Statutory Parental Bereavement Pay (Persons Abroad and Mariners) Regulations (NI) 2022**

Members considered SL1 - The Statutory Parental Bereavement Pay (Persons Abroad and Mariners) Regulations (NI) 2022.

Agreed: The Committee agreed it was content with the policy intent of the SL1.





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**17. SL1 - The Statutory Parental Bereavement Pay (General) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022**

Members considered SL1 - The Statutory Parental Bereavement Pay (General) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022.

Agreed: The Committee agreed it was content with the policy intent of the SL1.

**18. SL1 - The Parental Bereavement Leave Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022**

Members considered SL1 - The Parental Bereavement Leave Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022.

Agreed: The Committee agreed it was content with the policy intent of the SL1.

**19. SL1 - The Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay (Consequential Amendments to Subordinate Legislation) Regulations (NI) 2022**

Members considered SL1 - The Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay (Consequential Amendments to Subordinate Legislation) Regulations (NI) 2022

Agreed: The Committee agreed it was content with the policy intent of the SL1.

Members agreed to move to Agenda Item 7

**7. Matters Arising**

**Noted:** Members noted a letter from the Committee for Infrastructure to the Financial Secretary to the Treasury regarding rebated fuel entitlement and fuel duty.

**Noted:** Members noted the Domestic Abuse (Safe Leave) Bill – Minutes of Proceedings and Annotated Marshalled list for Consideration Stage.

**Noted:** Members noted correspondence from the Minister to the Committee regarding Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay Regulations.



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Members agreed to move to Agenda Item 11

### **11. InterTradeIreland Briefing - Annual Report and Accounts 2020**

Members noted the InterTradeIreland Annual Report and Accounts 2020.

### **12. Correspondence**

**Noted:** Members noted a letter from the Chair of the Protocol Sub-committee to BEIS regarding the Subsidy Control Bill.

**Noted:** Members noted the Examiner of Statutory Rules - Eighteenth Report of Session 2021-2022.

**Noted:** Members noted correspondence from an individual regarding the DfE Audit Qualification of 2020-21 Accounts.

**Noted:** Members noted the Examiner of Statutory Rules - Nineteenth Report of Session 2021-2022.

**Agreed:** Members noted the Economic Crime (Transparency and Enforcement) Bill 2022 and agreed to respond to the Department to indicate that the Committee had no objections to the Bill.

**Noted:** Members considered correspondence from an individual regarding QUB's Annual Report 2020-21.

### **13. Any Other Business**

**Agreed:** Members discussed the apparent use of Russian coal at Kilroot Power Station and agreed to seek clarity from the Department, the Utility Regulator, DAERA and Belfast City Council as to the official position and what instruction there has been from the UK Government in this regard.



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**Agreed:** Members discussed the increasing fuel prices and agreed to write to the Competition and Markets Authority regarding value for money for consumers and the potential for unusual practices.

**Agreed:** Members agreed to write to the Department to ask whether any discussions have taken place around the potential for an essential user rebate in relation to fuel prices, for example, for hauliers and taxi drivers.

**Agreed:** Members discussed the International Holocaust Remembrance definition of anti-Semitism and agreed to ask the University of Ulster and Queen's University for their position on adopting this definition.

### **14. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2022 in Room 30, Parliament Buildings at 10am.

**The meeting was adjourned at 12.34pm.**

**Dr Caoimhe Archibald MLA**  
**Chairperson, Committee for the Economy**