



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

# Committee for the Economy

## Minutes of Proceedings

26<sup>th</sup> January 2022

**Meeting Location:** Senate Chamber

**In Attendance:** Dr Caoimhe Archibald (MLA (Chairperson))  
Mr Matthew O'Toole MLA (Deputy Chairperson)  
Mr Keith Buchanan MLA  
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA  
Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA  
Mr John O'Dowd MLA  
Mr Stephen Dunne MLA  
Ms Claire Sugden MLA  
Mr Peter Weir MLA

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

**In Attendance by Video or Teleconference:**

Ms Sinead Kelly (Assistant Assembly Clerk)

The meeting commenced at 10:03am in open session.



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Members agreed to move to agenda item 4

**4. Ministerial Briefing- Economic Recovery Action Plan, Budget and Energy Strategy**

Members received a briefing from:

**Mr Gordon Lyons,** Minister, Department for the Economy

**Paul Grocott** Head of Economic Strategy Group, Department for the Economy

**Richard Rodgers** Head of Energy Group, Department for the Economy

Key issues discussed included the Economic Recovery Action Plan, High Street Voucher Scheme, Review of Invest NI and the Energy Strategy.

Agreed: The Minister agreed to provide further information in relation to a number of issues.

The Minister left the meeting at 11.09am

Officials left the meeting at 11.30am

Members agreed to move to agenda item 1

**1. Apologies**

None.

**2. Draft Minutes**

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Minutes from 19<sup>th</sup> January 2022.



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### 3. Chairperson's Business

**Noted:** Members noted a background note provided by NICVA for the informal meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> January in relation to the loss of ESF funding.

**Noted:** Members noted a NICVA ESF User Group Briefing Paper.

**Agreed:** Members agreed to write to the Economy Minister, Finance Minister and the GB Minister for Levelling-Up regarding ESF funding.

### 5. Matters Arising

**Noted:** Members noted a response from the Department regarding the issues raised by the Workspace Group around the loss of £20m of ESF funding.

**Noted:** Members noted a copy of an SL1 from the Department of Justice - The Domestic Abuse – Sharing with Schools Etc Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022.

**Noted:** Members noted the tenth Report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules.

**Noted:** Members noted the ninth Report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules.

**Noted:** Members noted a copy of the Utility Regulator's Third Stage Consultation on modifications to the SONI licence.

**Agreed:** Members noted a copy of the Committee Forward Work Programme and agreed to request oral briefings on Project Stratum and the Skills Strategy and 14-19 Strategy.

**Noted:** Members noted correspondence from an individual relating to a case investigated by the NIPSO.

**Noted:** Members noted correspondence from an individual regarding alleged academic apartheid and freedom of speech issues in the university sector.



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**6. SR 2022/004 The Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act (Coronavirus) (Early Termination of Part 2 of Schedule 8) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022**

Members considered the SR 2022/004 The Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act (Coronavirus) (Early Termination of Part 2 of Schedule 8) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022.

Question put and agreed:

**“That the Committee for the Economy has considered the SR 2022/004 The Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act (Coronavirus) (Early Termination of Part 2 of Schedule 8) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022, and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules report.”**

**7. SR 2022/009 The Mines (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022**

Members considered the SR 2022/009 The Mines (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022.

Question put and agreed:

**“That the Committee for the Economy has considered the SR 2022/009 The Mines (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2022, and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules report.”**

**8. Domestic Abuse (Safe Leave) Bill – Formal Clause by Clause**

**Noted:** Members noted two pieces of correspondence from the Bill Sponsor Rachel Woods MLA in relation to the commencement date for the Bill and the financial implications.



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The Committee commenced its formal clause by clause consideration of the Domestic Abuse (Safe Leave) Bill.

The Chair put the question in relation to each clause.

### **Clause 1: Safe leave for victims of domestic abuse**

The Committee considered Clause 1 as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 1 as drafted.

### **Clause 2: Annual Report**

The Committee considered Clause 2 as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 2 as drafted.

### **Clause 3: Guidance**

The Committee considered Clause 3 as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 3 as drafted.

### **Clause 4: Commencement**

The Committee considered Clause 4 as drafted.

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed that it was content with Clause 4 as drafted.

**Noted:** The Committee noted that Mike Nesbitt would engage with the Bill Sponsor Rachel Woods MLA regarding Clause 4 and the issue of a commencement date for the Bill.

## **9. Employment (Zero Hours Workers and Banded Weekly Working Hours) Bill**

**Noted:** Members noted the Hansard of the discussion on the Bill from 19<sup>th</sup> January meeting.



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### 10. Small-Scale Green Energy Bill

**Agreed:** Members agreed to include the Examiner of Statutory Rules report on the delegated powers within the Bill as part of its report on the Bill.

### 11. Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Bill

**Agreed:** Members noted the legal advice in relation to the repercussive costs issue raised by the Department and agreed that the Clerk would explore how the legal advice could be shared with other Committees given its relevance to all Committees.

### 12. Correspondence

**Agreed:** Members noted correspondence from the Committee for the Executive Office regarding the Common Frameworks programme and agreed that the Clerk would respond to the Executive Office Committee to outline the Committee's intention to scrutinise the Common Frameworks it has received to date.

**Noted:** Members noted correspondence from the AERA Committee to the Economy Minister regarding the staffing crisis in the pork processing sector.

**Noted:** Members noted correspondence from the Chair of the Common Frameworks Scrutiny Committee to the BEIS and Energy Ministers regarding concerns around the lack of commitment to ongoing stakeholder and parliamentary engagement on the Common Frameworks.

**Noted:** Members noted correspondence from the Under-Secretary of State for Innovation to the Chair of the Protocol Sub-Committee regarding the practical impact that any future changes to food labelling requirements could have on goods moving from the North into Britain.



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**Noted:** Members noted a copy of the DfE Monthly Economic update.

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

None received.

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

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2022 in Room 30, Parliament Buildings at 10am.

**The meeting was adjourned at 12.10pm.**

**Dr Caoímhe Archibald MLA  
Chairperson, Committee for the Economy  
2<sup>nd</sup> February 2022**