



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR THE EXECUTIVE OFFICE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

Room 30, Parliament Buildings, Belfast

Present: Mr Colin McGrath MLA (Chairperson)*
Mr Doug Beattie MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Ms Martina Anderson MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Mr Trevor Lunn MLA
Mr George Robinson MLA*
Mr Pat Sheehan MLA
Ms Emma Sheerin MLA*

Apologies: Mr Christopher Stalford MLA

In Attendance: Ms Marie Austin (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Craig Mealey (Assistant Clerk)

* Members who attended the meeting via video conferencing.

The meeting commenced at 2:05pm in open session.

The Deputy Chairperson chaired the meeting.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 23 September 2020.

3. Matters Arising

None.

4. October 2020 Monitoring Round – Oral Evidence Session with Departmental Officials

The following officials joined the meeting at 2:07pm:

Mark Browne, Accounting Officer, The Executive Office

Neelia Lloyd, Director of Finance and Corporate Services, The Executive Office

Tara Kennedy, Head of Finance Branch, The Executive Office.

The officials briefed the Committee on the Department's October 2020 Monitoring Round return.

The oral evidence was followed by a question and answer session.

The oral evidence session was reported by Hansard.

Officials agreed to provide further information on the Northern Ireland Investment Fund including details of the top 5 investments to be made before the end of the financial year; a breakdown of costs/spend on 'data analytics' in relation to COVID-19; and, clarification on whether data analytics covers COVID-19 tracking on a cross-border basis.

The Chairperson thanked officials for their attendance.

The meeting was suspended at 2:43pm.

The meeting resumed at 2:49pm.

5. Brexit – Contingency Planning – Preparations for a “No Deal” Brexit – Oral evidence session with Departmental Officials

The following officials joined the meeting at 2:49pm:

Andrew McCormick, Director General, International Relations, The Executive Office

Karen Pearson, Director, EU Operational Readiness and Covid Recovery, The Executive Office.

The officials briefed the Committee on Brexit issues including readiness for a non-negotiated outcome.

The oral evidence was followed by a question and answer session.

The oral evidence session was reported by Hansard.

The Chairperson thanked officials for their attendance.

Agreed: In relation to contact with the Irish Government/officials outside of the main talks, the Committee agreed to request further information on the level/type of contact and the range of issues under discussion.

6. Forward Work Programme

The Committee considered the Forward Work Programme for September to October 2020.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to arrange an oral evidence session on progress on each of the work strands in the ‘New Decade, New Approach’ document that fall within the remit of the Executive Office.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that further consideration should be given to the format/venue for the Brexit Stakeholder Event for local councils.

7. Correspondence

- i. The Committee considered correspondence from the Clerk to the Committee for the Economy regarding the “High Street Task Force”.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to ask The Executive Office to provide the information requested by the Committee for the Economy.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a written briefing on the Executive’s High Street Task Force including details of membership and remit.

- ii. The Committee noted correspondence from Mr Steve Aiken MLA, Leader of the Ulster Unionist Party, regarding the UK Internal Market Bill.

8. Chairperson’s Business

The Deputy Chairperson reminded Members about the informal meeting with representatives from Historical Institutional Abuse groups on Thursday 1 October 2020. All Members were invited to attend.

9. Any Other Business

None.

10. Date, Time and Place of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 7 October 2020 at 2:00pm in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:54pm.

**Mr Doug Beattie MLA
Deputy Chairperson, Committee for the Executive Office**