



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Audit Committee

Minutes of Proceedings

30 November 2021

Meeting Location: Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Present by Video or Teleconference:

Mr Daniel McCrossan MLA (Chairperson)
Mr William Irwin MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Jim Allister MLA
Mr Alan Chambers MLA

Apologies:

Ms Emma Rogan MLA

In attendance by Video or Teleconference:

Ms Marie Austin (Clerk to the Committee)
Ms Karen Barry (Assistant Clerk)
Mr Simon Gallaher (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Jim Nulty (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Alison Ferguson (Clerical Officer)

The meeting commenced at 12.35pm in closed session.



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1. Apologies

As noted above.

2. Declaration of Interests

No interests were declared.

3. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2021.

4. Matters Arising

The Committee noted a response from the Northern Ireland Audit Office to its request for details of the percentage spend on contracted-out audits.

5. Consideration of Draft Committee Report – Budget 2022-25

The Committee considered the final draft report on the Draft Budgets 2022-25, for the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission (NIAC), Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) and Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman (NIPSO).

Title page, Committee Powers and Membership page, Table of Contents page and List of Abbreviations

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



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Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Title page, Committee Powers and Membership page, Table of Contents page and List of Abbreviations.

Introduction

The Committee considered the Introduction section (paragraphs 1 to 5) of the report as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Introduction section of the report.

Northern Ireland Assembly Commission

The Committee considered paragraphs 6 to 18 of the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission section of the report as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with paragraphs 6 to 18 of the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission section of the report.

The Committee considered paragraph 19, as amended, of the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission section of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with paragraph 19, as amended, of the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission section of the report.

The Committee considered paragraphs 20 to 25 of the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission section of the report as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with paragraphs 20 to 25 of the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission section of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request that the Department of Finance reflects the Committee's position in relation to the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission's draft budget in the Executive's Draft Budget 2022-25 document.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to advise the Northern Ireland Assembly Commission of its concerns in relation to the staffing costs to support the implementation of simultaneous interpretation of Assembly business in Irish and Ulster Scots, ahead of the Commission tabling its budget motion in the Assembly.



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Northern Ireland Audit Office

The Committee considered the Northern Ireland Audit Office section (paragraphs 26 to 43) of the report as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Northern Ireland Audit Office section of the report.

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman

The Committee considered the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman section (paragraphs 44 to 58) of the report as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman section of the report.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Committee considered the Conclusions and Recommendations section (paragraphs 59 to 64) of the report as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Conclusions and Recommendations section of the report.

Links to Appendices

The Committee considered the Links to Appendices section of the report as drafted.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content with the Links to Appendices section of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that this report be the Fourth Report of the Audit Committee in the 2017-22 Mandate.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content for the Chairperson to agree the Minutes of Proceedings of the meeting for inclusion in Appendix 3 of the report.



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Agreed: The Committee agreed that the report be published on-line on the Assembly's webpages.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to lay the report in the Business Office and circulate a copy to all MLAs.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward a copy of the report to Department of Finance, Public Accounts Committee, and to the NIAC, NIAO and NIPSO.

6. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

7. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The next Audit Committee meeting will take place on Wednesday 15 December 2021, at 12.40pm in Rm 29.

The meeting was adjourned at 12.47pm.

Daniel McCrossan MLA, Chairperson, Audit Committee

3 December 2021