



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

# Committee for the Economy

## Minutes of Proceedings

29<sup>th</sup> September 2021

**Meeting Location:** Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings

**Present:**

Dr Caoímhe Archibald (MLA (Chairperson))

Mr Keith Buchanan MLA

Mr Stephen Dunne MLA

Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA

Mr John O'Dowd MLA

Ms Claire Sugden MLA

Mr Peter Weir MLA

**Present by Video or Teleconference:**

Ms Sinéad McLaughlin MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

**Apologies:**

Mr Stewart Dickson MLA



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**In Attendance:** Mr Peter Hall (Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Thomas Manning (Clerical Officer)

**In Attendance by Video or Teleconference:**

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

The meeting commenced at 09:37am in open session.

**1. Apologies**

As noted above.

**2. Chairperson's Business**

The Chairperson advised Members that an invitation from the City of London Corporation had been received inviting the Chair to meet with its Policy Chair Catherine McGuinness who will be in Belfast on the 15<sup>th</sup> October.

**Agreed:** for the Clerk to arrange the meeting

The Chairperson informed Members of a request from QUB for academics to give evidence to the Committee around Climate and Sustainability at the beginning of November to coincide with COP26, the UN Climate Change Conference which is also taking place at that time.



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**Agreed:** to schedule a briefing at an appropriate time taking account of the Committee's priorities in relation to primary legislation.

The Chairperson provided an update on last week's informal meeting with the Institute for Global Food Security, QUB to discuss the findings of their report on Industrial Hemp Opportunities.

**Agreed:** to write to Invest NI to understand what work it has already done and its view on the proposal to set up an 'Expert Group'.

The Chairperson informed Members that The Children's Law Centre has asked for a meeting to discuss the issues of 16 and 17 year olds receiving the HSS £100 card.

**Agreed:** to arrange an informal meeting with The Children's Law Centre.

### 3. Draft Minutes

**Agreed:** The Committee agreed the Minutes from 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021.

### 4. Departmental Briefing – Energy Strategy

The officials joined the meeting at 09:43am

Members received a briefing from:

**Mr Richard Rogers,**

**Head of Energy Group, DfE**

**Mr Thomas Byrne,**

**Director of Sustainable Energy,  
DfE**

**Ms Maebh Cormacain,**

**Energy Division, DfE**



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Key issues discussed included the development of the Energy Strategy, the engagement the Department has had with consumers in developing the Strategy, the support for the propels in the Strategy and The current issues around Energy supply and costs to consumers.

The officials left the meeting at 10:56am

#### **5. Departmental Briefing – October Monitoring**

The officials joined the meeting at 10:57am

Members received a briefing from:

**Mr David Malcolm,**

**Head of Management Services &  
Regulation, DfE**

**Ms Johanna Park,**

**Accountant Grade 6, Financial  
Management, DfE**

**Ms Niamh McGarvey,**

**Accountant Financial Management  
Branch, DfE**

Key issues discussed included: the October monitoring round exercise, Current pressures within the DfE budget, Budget allocation & bids for funding and the High Street Support Scheme funding.

The officials left the meeting at 11:12am



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## 6. Ministerial Briefing – Economic Recovery Action Plan

The Minister joined the meeting at 11:31am

Members received a briefing from:

<b>Mr Gordon Lyons,</b>	<b>Minister for the Economy, DfE</b>
<b>Mr Paul Grocott</b>	<b>Economic Strategy Group, DfE</b>
<b>Mr Richard Rogers</b>	<b>Head of Energy Group, DfE</b>
<b>Ms Michelle Scott,</b>	<b>Economic Strategy Group, DfE</b>
<b>Mr Pearse McCann</b>	<b>EU Exit, DfE</b>

Key issues discussed included: The Economic Recovery Action Plan, the support provided to local business during the pandemic, the importance of launching the High Street Support Scheme and the impact it will have, the impact Covid-19 has had on the local economy and the need to rebuild the Economy with opportunities for everyone.

The Minister left the meeting at 13:14pm

**Agreed:** to write to the Department seeking an update on a number of areas discussed during the briefing.



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**Agreed:** to ask the Department for a weekly update on the roll-out of the High Street Support Scheme.

### 7. Matters Arising

**Noted:** Members noted a copy of correspondence from the Department for Infrastructure DALO regarding an update on the provision of training for HGV drivers to help to mitigate the current shortage of qualified drivers.

**Noted:** Members noted a copy of correspondence from the AERA Minister on behalf of himself and the Economy Minister to the Chair of the AERA Committee regarding labour shortages in the local pork sector.

**Noted:** Members noted a response from the FE Colleges sharing its views on the HE Cheating Services Prohibition Bill.

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

Members considered a number of papers in relation to the Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Bill.



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**9. SR 2021/258 The Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020 (Coronavirus) (Amendment of Relevant Period in Schedule 8) (No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021**

Members considered SR 2021/258 The Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020 (Coronavirus) (Amendment of Relevant Period in Schedule 8) (No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021 *Question put and agreed:*

“That the Committee for the Economy has considered SR 2018/35 The Education (Student Support) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018 and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules’ report.”

**10. SR 2021/259 The Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020 (Coronavirus) (Amendment of Schedule 11) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021**

Members considered SR 2021/259 The Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020 (Coronavirus) (Amendment of Schedule 11) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021.

**Question put and agreed:**

“That the Committee for the Economy has considered SR 2021/259 The Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020 (Coronavirus) (Amendment of Schedule 11) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021 and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules’ report.”



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**11. SR 2021/260 The Education (Student Fees (Amounts), Loan Repayment and Support etc.) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021**

Members considered SR 2021/260 The Education (Student Fees (Amounts), Loan Repayment and Support etc.) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021.

**Question put and agreed:**

“That the Committee for the Economy has SR 2021/260 The Education (Student Fees (Amounts), Loan Repayment and Support etc.)(Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021 and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules’ report.”

**12. SR 2021/268 The High Street (Coronavirus, Financial Assistance) Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021**

Members considered SR 2021/268 The High Street (Coronavirus, Financial Assistance) Scheme Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021.

The Committee noted the SR with Mr Weir, Mr Dunne and Mr Buchanan indicating their support for the SR.

**13. Correspondence**

Members agreed to deal with Agenda item 13 via correspondence due to time constraints.



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#### **14. Any Other Business**

There were no items of business.

**The meeting was adjourned at 13.20pm.**

**Dr Caoímhe Archibald MLA  
Chairperson, Committee for the Economy  
6<sup>th</sup> October 2021**