



**Northern Ireland  
Assembly**

**COMMITTEE FOR THE ECONOMY**

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**29 JANUARY 2020**

**ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

**10:00am**

Present: Dr Caoímhe Archibald (Chairperson)  
Ms Sinéad McLaughlin (Deputy Chairperson)  
Mr Alan Chambers  
Mr Gordon Dunne MBE  
Mr John O'Dowd  
Mr Christopher Stalford  
Ms Claire Sugden

In Attendance: Mr Peter Hall (Assembly Clerk)  
Ms Sinead Kelly (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Michael Greer (Clerical Supervisor)  
Mr Thomas Manning (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Stewart Dickson  
Mr Gary Middleton

*The meeting began at 10:08am in open session*

**1. Apologies**

As noted above.

## **2. Draft Minutes**

*Agreed:* the Committee agreed the draft Minutes of the meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2020.

## **3. Chairpersons Business**

The Chairperson informed Members that she has been invited as Chair to address the NI Assembly Business Trust event “New Decade, New Assembly” on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> February in the Long Gallery.

*Noted:* Members noted the invitation and the contact details for RSVP.

The Chairperson informed Members that the first meeting of the Ministerial Forum for Trade took place on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2020.

*Noted:* Members noted that the Minister will provide an update on the Forum at next week’s meeting.

## **4. Departmental Briefing: Overview of Department – Skills and Education Group and Economic Strategy Group**

*The officials joined the meeting at 10.10am*

Members received a briefing from:

**Mr Diarmuid McLean**, Head of Economic Policy Division, Department for the Economy.

**Ms Heather Cousins**, Head of Skills and Education Group, Department for the Economy.

The key issues discussed included the current stage of the City Deals; Digital Projects, Tourism; Funding for Universities, the expansion of Magee College and the Apprenticeship Levy.

*Claire Sugden joined the meeting at 10:32am*

*Christopher Stalford left the meeting at 10:38am*

*Christopher Stalford joined the meeting at 11:48am*

*The officials left the meeting at 11.50pm*

## **5. Matters Arising**

There were no items of Business.

## **6. SR's RE Student Finance (Subject to Negative Resolution)**

*The officials joined the meeting at 11:52am*

Members received a briefing from:

**Mr Trevor Cooper**, Higher Education Branch, Department for the Economy.

**Mr Jonathan O'Callaghan**, Student Finance Branch, Department for the Economy.

The officials outlined the SRs in relation to Student Finance.

*The officials left the meeting at 12.08pm*

### **6.2 - SR 2019/35 The Education (Student Support (No.2), etc.) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019**

SR 2019/35 The Education (Student Support (No.2), etc.) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019

*Question put and agreed:*

*"That the Committee for the Economy has considered SR 2019/35 The Education (Student Support (No.2), etc.) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2019 and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules' report."*

### **6.3 - SR 2018/35 The Education (Student Support) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018**

Members considered SR 2018/35 The Education (Student Support) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2018

*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."*

### **6.4 - SR 2017/43 The Education (Student Support) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017**

Members considered SR 2017/43 The Education (Student Support) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017

*Question put and agreed:*

*“That the Committee for the Economy has considered SR 2017/43 The Education (Student Support) (Amendment) (No. 2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017 and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules’ report.”*

## **7. SR’s Relating to Education (Subject to No Procedure)**

### **7.1 - SR 2018/139 The Education (Recognised Bodies) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018**

Members considered SR 2018/139 The Education (Recognised Bodies) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018

*Question put and agreed:*

*“That the Committee for the Economy has considered SR 2018/139 The Education (Recognised Bodies) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018 and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules’ report.”*

### **7.2 - SR 2018/69 The Employment Rights (Increase of Limits) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018**

Members considered SR 2018/69 The Employment Rights (Increase of Limits) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018

*Question put and agreed:*

*“That the Committee for the Economy has considered SR 2018/69 The Employment Rights (Increase of Limits) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018 and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules’ report.”*

## **8. SR RE Industrial Relations (Subject to Negative Resolution)**

*The officials joined the meeting at 12:12pm*

Members received a briefing from:

**Mr Colin Jack**, Director, Business and Employment Regulation Division, Department for the Economy

**Ms Kellie Sprott**, Employment Relations and Legislation 1, Department for the Economy

**Ms Dearbhla Redmond**, Employment Relations Policy and Legislation 2, Department for the Economy

The officials outlined the SRs in relation to Industrial Relations.

*Christopher Stalford left the meeting at 12:17pm*

*Claire Sugden left the meeting at 12.18pm*

*Christopher Stalford returned to the meeting at 12:22pm*

*Claire Sugden returned to the meeting at 12.25pm*

*The officials left the meeting at 12.26pm*

### **8.1 - SR 2017/223 The Recognition and Derecognition Ballots (Qualified Persons) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2017**

Members considered SR 2017/223 The Recognition and Derecognition Ballots (Qualified Persons) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2017

*Question put and agreed:*

*“That the Committee for the Economy has considered SR 2017/223 The Recognition and Derecognition Ballots (Qualified Persons) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2017 and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules’ report.”*

### **8.2 - SR 2017/224 The Trade Union Ballots and Elections (Independent Scrutineer Qualifications) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2017**

Members considered SR 2017/224 The Trade Union Ballots and Elections (Independent Scrutineer Qualifications) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2017

*Question put and agreed:*

*“That the Committee for the Economy has considered SR 2017/224 The Trade Union Ballots and Elections (Independent Scrutineer Qualifications) (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2017 and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules’ report.”*

### **8.3 - SR 2020/02 The Industrial Tribunals and Fair Employment Tribunal (Early Conciliation: Exemption and Rules of Procedure) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020**

Members considered SR 2020/02 The Industrial Tribunals and Fair Employment Tribunal (Early Conciliation: Exemption and Rules of Procedure) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020

*Question put and agreed:*

*“That the Committee for the Economy has considered SR 2020/02 The Industrial Tribunals and Fair Employment Tribunal (Early Conciliation: Exemption and Rules of Procedure) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules’ report.”*

### **8.4 - SR 2020/03 The Industrial Tribunals and Fair Employment Tribunal (Constitution and Rules of Procedure) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020**

Members considered SR 2020/03 The Industrial Tribunals and Fair Employment Tribunal (Constitution and Rules of Procedure) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020

*Question put and agreed:*

*“That the Committee for the Economy has considered SR 2020/03 The Industrial Tribunals and Fair Employment Tribunal (Constitution and Rules of Procedure) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules’ report.”*

#### **8.5 - SR 2020/04 The Industrial Tribunals (1996 Order) (Application of Conciliation Provisions) Order (Northern Ireland) 2020**

Members considered SR 2020/04 The Industrial Tribunals (1996 Order) (Application of Conciliation Provisions) Order (Northern Ireland) 2020

*Question put and agreed:*

*“That the Committee for the Economy has considered SR 2020/04 The Industrial Tribunals (1996 Order) (Application of Conciliation Provisions) Order (Northern Ireland) 2020 and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules’ report.”*

### **9. SR’s RE Industrial Relations (Subject to No Procedures)**

#### **9.1 - SR 2017/199 (C.12) The Employment Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (Commencement No. 1) Order (Northern Ireland) 2017**

Members considered SR 2017/199 (C.12) The Employment Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (Commencement No. 1) Order (Northern Ireland) 2017

*Question put and agreed:*

*“That the Committee for the Economy has considered SR 2017/199 (C.12) The Employment Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (Commencement No. 1) Order (Northern Ireland) 2017 and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules’ report.”*

#### **9.2 - SR 2018/79 C. 7) The Employment Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (Commencement No. 2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018**

Members considered SR 2018/79 C. 7) The Employment Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (Commencement No. 2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018

*Question put and agreed:*

*“That the Committee for the Economy has considered SR 2018/79 C. 7) The Employment Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (Commencement No. 2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018 and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules’ report.”*

**9.3 - SR 2018/80 The Employment Rights (Increase of Limits) (No. 2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018**

Members considered SR 2018/80 The Employment Rights (Increase of Limits) (No. 2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018

*Question put and agreed:*

*“That the Committee for the Economy has considered SR 2018/80 The Employment Rights (Increase of Limits) (No. 2) Order (Northern Ireland) 2018 and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules’ report.”*

**9.4 - SR 2019/63 The Employment Rights (Increase of Limits) Order (Northern Ireland) 2019**

Members considered SR 2019/63 The Employment Rights (Increase of Limits) Order (Northern Ireland) 2019

*Question put and agreed:*

*“That the Committee for the Economy has considered SR 2019/63 The Employment Rights (Increase of Limits) Order (Northern Ireland) 2019 and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules’ report.”*

**9.5 - SR 2020/01 The Employment Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (Commencement No.3) Order (Northern Ireland) 2020**

Members considered SR 2020/01 The Employment Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (Commencement No.3) Order (Northern Ireland) 2020

*Question put and agreed:*

*“That the Committee for the Economy has considered SR 2020/01 The Employment Act (Northern Ireland) 2016 (Commencement No.3) Order (Northern Ireland) 2020 and has no objection to the Rule, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules’ report.”*

## **10. SR 2020/12: The Seafarers (Collective Redundancies, Information and Consultation and Insolvency Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020**

Members considered the SR 2020/12: The Seafarers (Collective Redundancies, Information and Consultation and Insolvency Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020

Question put and agreed:

*That the Committee for the Economy has considered SR 2020/12: The Seafarers (Collective Redundancies, Information and Consultation and Insolvency Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 and, subject to the report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules, has no objection to the Rule.*

## **11. The Electricity and Gas (Internal Markets) Regulations 2020**

Members considered correspondence from the Minister advising that the Department will lay a regulation on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February which will amend UK legislation for consistency with the Electricity Regulation and Agency Regulation that were adopted as part of the EU Clean air package.

*Noted:* Members noted the correspondence from the Minister.

## **12. Annual Reports and Accounts**

*Noted:* the Committee noted a list of the Annual Reports and Accounts that had been laid in the Assembly during suspension.

## **13. Forward Work Programme**

Members considered the Forward Work Programme

*Agreed: the Committee agreed to the Forward Work Programme.*

Members considered the draft itinerary for the Committee visit to Magee College, Derry.

*Agreed: the Committee agreed to allow staff to proceed with the arrangements.*

## **14. Correspondence**

Members considered correspondence from Paul Frew MLA regarding the current independent status of SONI and the impact on consumers

*Agreed: Members agreed to write to the Department seeking further information*



Members considered correspondence from NI Farm Groups requesting a meeting with the Committee.

*Agreed: Members agreed to schedule a meeting in the Forward Work Programme and to forward the correspondence to the DAERA Committee.*

Members considered a request from the National Union of Students to meet with Chair to discuss the Higher Education Strategy.

*Agreed: that the Chair and Deputy Chair will meeting with NUS-USI and report to the Committee.*

Members considered a request from Hospitality Ulster to meet with the Chair to discuss issues facing the industry.

*Agreed: the Committee agreed to invite Hospitality Ulster to the Stakeholder dinner in Derry on 25/26 February.*

Members considered correspondence from the Chief Executive of Belfast Chamber requesting to brief the Committee.

*Agreed: Members agreed to schedule a meeting in the Forward Work Programme.*

Members considered the briefing note from Katy Hayward regarding the competence of the NI Assembly in the context of the UK withdrawal from the EU.

*Agreed: Members agreed to arrange a meeting with Katy Hayward.*

Members considered correspondence from Workforce Training Services regarding the introduction of the new Traineeship Programme and requesting a meeting with the Chair.

*Agreed: Members agreed to ask the Department for a response to the issues raise.*

Members considered an email from a member of the public regarding an alleged failure by local Universities to undertake equality screening in the distribution of funding.

*Agreed: Members agreed to send the correspondence to the NI Audit Office, PAC Committee and the Permanent Secretary of the Department for the Economy.*

Members considered correspondence from the Chair of the Education Committee requesting a joint Committee session regarding the “14-19” Strategy.

*Agreed: Members agreed to a joint Committee session in March 2020.*

Members noted correspondence from OFCOM in relation to 3G and Broadband.

*Agreed: Members agreed to schedule a meeting in the Forward Work Programme*

Members noted the Investment Strategy Northern Ireland Delivery Report.

Members noted an invitation from Ulster University and Queens University to the launch of their paper “Health, Equality and the Economy” on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February.

Members considered correspondence from the Irish Congress of trade Unions requesting that the Committee host an event to mark Workers Memorial Day on the 26<sup>th</sup> April.

*Agreed: the Committee agreed to host the event.*

## **15. Any Other Business**

There were no items of business.

*Christopher Stalford left the meeting at 12:42pm*

## **16. January Monitoring Round**

Members considered the Finance Ministers’ statement on the January Monitoring Round and the 2019-20 In-Year monitoring allocations.

*Agreed: the Committee would write to the Minister requesting a written brief on the Department’s baseline budget and priorities.*

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

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2020 in Room 29, Parliament Buildings

*The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12:49pm*

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**Dr Caoímhe Archibald**  
**Chairperson**  
**Committee for the Economy**

**29<sup>th</sup> January 2020**