



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR THE ECONOMY

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

11 NOVEMBER 2020

ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

10:00am

Present:

Dr Caoímhe Archibald (Chairperson)
Ms Sinéad McLaughlin (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Stewart Dickson
Mr Gordon Dunne MBE
Mr Gary Middleton
Mr John O'Dowd
Mr Christopher Stalford
Mr John Stewart

In Attendance:

Mr Peter Hall (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Sinead Kelly (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Ms Maeve Holly (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr David McClure (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Michael Greer (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Thomas Manning (Clerical Officer)

Apologies:

Ms Claire Sugden

The meeting began at 10:04am in open session.

1. Apologies

As noted above.

2. Minutes

Agreed: the Committee agreed the Minutes from 4th November 2020.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson informed the members of a memo to Committees on Committee Rotas and Meeting Times. This is in order to address the current issues relating to Statutory and Standing Committees' use of Star Leaf and to allow adequate time for cleaning and broadcasting requirements.

The Chairperson informed the Members that the Chairpersons' Liaison Group has agreed that there would be a short suspension of Committee meetings this morning from 10:50 to 11:20 to allow Members and staff the opportunity to pay their respects on Remembrance Day.

The Chairperson informed Members that she has received communications from tour guides, etc. indicating that they are not part of any of the groups moving forward with recovery plans for their sectors and they have generally not received funding from any of the relief schemes.

Agreed: Members agreed to write to the Minister highlighting the issues raised.

The Chairperson advised Members that the Domestic Abuse and Family Proceedings Bill is currently awaiting Consideration Stage to be scheduled.

Agreed: to write to the Minister supporting the views of the Justice and Health Committees on the issue of Paid Special Leave for victims of Domestic Abuse, and for the Chair to speak supporting this at Consideration Stage.

The Chairperson highlighted to Members the Cost analysis by the Department of the current 4-week Restrictions.

Agreed: to ask the Minister to share the analysis.

The Chairperson raised an issue regarding VAT being payable on PPE imported from the EU into Northern Ireland.

Agreed: to write to the Economy and Finance Ministers seeking clarification.

The Committee agreed to move to Agenda item 5.

5. Matters Arising

Noted: Members noted a response from the Departmental relating to due diligence FTC on the Ulster University expansion.

Noted: Members noted correspondence to the Lord Speaker in Westminster from the Welsh Government regarding the UKIM Bill amendments.

Noted: Members noted correspondence to the Secretary of State for NI from the Chair of the NI Affairs Committee in relation to how the British Government plans to replace EU Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds with the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF).

Agreed: to write to the regarding plans to replace EU Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds with the Shared Prosperity Fund (SPF).

Noted: Members noted correspondence from Renewable NI to the Audit Office regarding its NIRO report and a number of complaints stemming from it.

Agreed: to forward the Correspondence onto the PAC Committee.

Noted: Members noted a press release for the UK statement following the fourth meeting of the Ireland/Northern Ireland Specialised Committee between the UK Government and the European Commission.

Agreed: to write to the Minister regarding post transition period trading.

Noted: Members noted a joint letter from the Committee on the Administration of Justice regarding the Citizens' Rights (Frontier Workers) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020 forwarded from the Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs.

Noted: Members noted purposed letter to the Minister from the Chair drafted by the Clerk in relation to the Economic Advisory Group's Terms of Reference.

Agreed: to amend the letter as per the discussion.

Noted: Members noted correspondence from the PAC Committee regarding Case study 10 of the Audit Office's Major Capital projects report.

Noted: Members noted a response from the Executive Office regarding the High Streets Task Force.

Noted: Members noted a response from St. Mary's University College in relation to Covid cases and information collection.

Noted: Members noted a response from Stranmillis University College in relation to Covid cases and information collection.

6. SL1 – Posted Workers (Agency Workers) Order (Northern Ireland) 2020

Members considered SL1 – Posted Workers (Agency Workers) Order (Northern Ireland) 2020

Agreed: Members indicated that they are content with the policy implications of the proposed legislation.

7. SL1 – The Health and Safety (Consequential Amendments) (EU Exit) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020

Members considered SL1 – The Health and Safety (Consequential Amendments) (EU Exit) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020.

Agreed: Members indicated that they are content with the policy implications of the proposed legislation.

8. SL1 – Priority Dispatch Provisions of the EU Electricity (Recast) Regulations 2019

Members considered SL1 – Priority Dispatch Provisions of the EU Electricity (Recast) Regulations 2019.

Agreed: Members indicated that they are content with the policy implications of the proposed legislation.

9. SR 2020/236 The Insolvency (Amendment) (2016 Act) (Commencement No.2 and Saving Provision) Order (Northern Ireland) 2020

Noted: Members noted the commencement order of SR 2020/236 The Insolvency (Amendment) (2016 Act) (Commencement No.2 and Saving Provision) Order (Northern Ireland) 2020.

10. SR 2020/211 The Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020 (Coronavirus) (Amendment of Relevant Period for Meetings of Registered Societies and Credit Unions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020.

Noted: Members noted the final approved version of SR 2020/211 The Corporate Insolvency and Governance Act 2020 (Coronavirus) (Amendment of Relevant Period for Meetings of Registered Societies and Credit Unions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020.

11. Correspondence

Noted: Members noted correspondence from the Department to ESF Project Promoters regarding an update on funding for Priority 1 and 2 beneficiaries supported by the NI European Social Fund Programme which is due to end in March 2022.

Agreed: Members agreed to receive a briefing from NICVA.

Noted: Members noted correspondence from the NUS-USI regarding student travel over the Christmas period.

Agreed: Members agreed to write to the Minister highlighting the issues raised.

Noted: Members noted correspondence from Fermanagh and Omagh District Council in relation to Project Stratum.

Agreed: Members agreed to arrange a briefing with Fermanagh and Omagh District Council.

Noted: Members noted the the twenty-seventh report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules 2019-2020.

Noted: Members noted correspondence from an individual in regards to the TUI Belfast Base furlough extension refusal.

Agreed: Members agreed to write to the Finance Minister highlighting the issues raised.

12. Forward Work Programme

Noted: Members noted the latest Committee forward work programme.

12. Any Other Business

There were no items of business.

The Chairperson suspended the meeting at 10.37am due the NI Assembly Act of Remembrance.

The Committee resumed in closed session at 1130am.

4. Macro Economy Micro Inquiry [Closed Session]

Members discussed the Committee Macro Economy Micro Inquiry event that was held on the 5th November and considered the draft report on the event.

Agreed: Members agreed to amend the draft report as per Members' discussions.

13. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on Wednesday 18th November 2020 in Room 29, Parliament Buildings at 10am.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12.37pm

Dr Caoímhe Archibald
Chairperson
Committee for the Economy
18th November 2020