



COMMITTEE FOR THE ECONOMY

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

17 FEBRUARY 2021

ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

10:00am

Present:

Dr Caoímhe Archibald (Chairperson)
Ms Sinéad McLaughlin (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Stewart Dickson
Mr Gordon Dunne MBE
Mr Paul Givan
Mr John O'Dowd
Mr John Stewart
Mr Christopher Stalford
Ms Claire Sugden

In Attendance:

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

Apologies:

The meeting began at 10:06am in closed session.

1. Research and Information Service (RaISe) Briefing – Labour Market

The Official joined the meeting at 10.08am

Members received a briefing from:

Christopher Rothwell, Research Office, Northern Ireland Assembly

Key issues discussed included: the need to measure labour market performance, an overview of the labour market structure, the key indicators and how they are linked and policy challenges for short, medium and long term.

The Official left the meeting at 10.52am

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 3.

3. Skills Strategy and Economic Output Micro Inquiry Special Report

Members discussed the Committee Skills Strategy and Economic Output Micro Inquiry Special Report

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

Agreed: The Committee considered and agreed the following motion for debate regarding the micro inquiry Special Report:

"That this Assembly notes the Committee for the Economy's Special Report [NIA 79/17-22] providing evidence from stakeholders to inform the forthcoming Skills Strategy; supports the development of a cross-departmental and inclusive approach to skills development; recognises the need for collaboration between the public sector, employers, industry, and all levels of education to ensure that our people have the right skills and access to lifelong learning; and calls on the Minister for the Economy and her Executive colleagues to use this evidence in planning for the new Skills Strategy".

The Committee agreed to move to return to agenda item 2.

2. Departmental Briefing – Update on Project Stratum

The Officials joined the meeting at 11.16am

Members received a briefing from:

Geraldine Fee, Head of Tourism, Telecoms, Minerals & Petroleum Branch

Trevor Forsythe, Grade 7 Telecoms, Department for the Economy

Key issues discussed included: the current role out of Project Stratum.

The Officials left the meeting at 11.57am

The Committee agreed to move to open session at 11:57am.

4. Apologies

As noted above.

5. Minutes

Agreed: the Committee agreed the Minutes from 10th February 2021.

6. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson informed Members that the Budget Bill will be introduced on 1st March and that there will be also be a Supply Resolution and Vote on Account debate 1st March 2021 and if the Finance Committee agrees to accelerated passage, it is expected that the 2nd stage of the Budget Bill will be taken on 2nd March 2021.

7. Matters Arising

Members agreed to deal with Agenda Item 7 via correspondence, due to time constraints.

8. Departmental Written Briefing - Update on Apprenticeship Recovery

Members agreed to defer Agenda Item 8 until next week, due to time constraints.

9. Departmental Written Briefing - ESF Succession Project

Members agreed to defer Agenda Item 9 until next week, due to time constraints.

10. Programme for Government - Draft Outcomes Framework

Members agreed to defer Agenda Item 10 until next week, due to time constraints.

11. Consultation on the Future of the Northern Ireland Non-Domestic Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme

Members agreed to defer Agenda Item 11 until next week, due to time constraints.

12. Correspondence

Members agreed to deal with Agenda Item 12 via correspondence, due to time constraints.

13. Any Other Business

Members discussed the current situation around certain students including those attending Theological Colleges being excluded from the £500 student support grant.

Agreed: the Committee agreed to write to the Minister asking that these students receive the same support.

14. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on Wednesday 24th February 2021 in Room 30, Parliament Buildings at 10am.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12.02pm

Dr Caoímhe Archibald
Chairperson
Committee for the Economy
24th February 20201