



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for the Economy

Minutes of Proceedings

19th May 2021

Meeting Location: Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present:

Dr Caoímhe Archibald (MLA (Chairperson)

Mr Stewart Dickson MLA

Present by Video or Teleconference:

Ms Sinéad McLaughlin MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Mr Gary Middleton MLA

Mr John O'Dowd MLA

Mr John Stewart MLA

Mr Mervyn Storey MLA

Mr Christopher Stalford MLA

Ms Claire Sugden MLA

Apologies:

Mr Mervyn Storey MLA

In Attendance: Mr Peter Hall (Assembly Clerk)



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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 10.03am in closed session

1. Departmental Briefing – Update on Current Issues

The officials joined the meeting at 10.03am

Members received a briefing from:

Ms Geraldine Fee, Tourism Policy, DfE

Ms Justin Kerr, Tourism Policy, DfE

Mr Paula Shearer, Accountant Tourism Policy, DfE

Key issues discussed included: current issues impacting on the work of the Department.

The officials left the meeting at 10.21am

The Committee moved into open session at 10.21am



2. Apologies

As noted above.

3. Draft Minutes

Agreed: the Committee agreed the Minutes from 12th May 2021.

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 5.

5. Departmental Briefing – Update on the UK Exit from the European Union

The officials joined the meeting at 10.22am

Members received a briefing from:

Mr Shane Murphy,	Head of EU Exit Preparation and Transition Group, DfE
Ms Giulia Ni Dhulchaointigh,	Head of EU Exit Trade Negotiations, DfE
Mr Alan Ramsey,	EU Exit Preparation and Transition Group, DfE

Key issues discussed included: the current issues facing Northern Ireland business and the adjustments they need to make, Issues facing workers from outside the Common travel area and the protection needed for them following



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the end of June and the challenges still facing NI businesses who trade between NI and UK on quotas and safeguarding.

Agreed: to write to the Department seeking clarification on a number of issues.

The officials left the meeting at 11.23am

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 12.

12. Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Bill - Departmental Briefing

The officials joined the meeting at 11.25am

Members received a briefing from:

Mr Colin Jack,	Head of EU Exit Preparation and Transition Group, DfE
Mr Laurence Rogers,	Head of EU Exit Trade Negotiations, DfE
Ms Kellie Sprott,	EU Exit Preparation and Transition Group, DfE

Key issues discussed included: the introduction of the bill, what changes will come from the bill and the timeframe the Department is working too.

Agreed: to write to the Department seeking a copy of the statistics used by the Department in drafting the bill.

The officials left the meeting at 11.42am

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 6.



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6. Briefing from NUS-USI & Student Unions Representatives -Student Support through Covid-19

The witnesses joined the meeting at 11.53am

Members received a briefing from:

Ms Ellen Fearon,	President, NUS-USI
Mr Jonathon Reid,	President, Stranmillis Students' Union
Ms Grian Ní Dhaimhín,	President, QUB Students' Union
Ms Colletee Cassidy,	President, Ulster University Students' Union
Déaglán Ó Murchú.	President, St Marys Student Union

Key issues discussed included: the issues facing students by Covid-19, the vast number of students that were not' eligible for support and the need for better engagement between the unions and Departmental officials.

Agreed: to schedule a briefing with officials to raise the issues discussed.

The witnesses left the meeting at 12.35pm

The Committee agreed to return to agenda item 4.



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4. Chairpersons Business

The Chairperson informed Members of a Clerk's memo and a presentation summarising the informal meeting with the English Language Teaching Colleges held last Thursday, 13th May.

Agreed: to raise the issues outlined with the Minister, Invest NI, Tourism NI, the House of Lords EU Affairs Committee and the Home Office.

The Chairperson informed Members of correspondence from the Chair of the new House of Lords European Affairs Sub-Committee, Lord Jay, on the Protocol following the end of the term of the House of Lords EU Committee.

Agreed: for the Clerk to arrange an initial phone call between the Chairs.

The Chairperson sought Members approval to ask the Department for its submission to DoF for June monitoring.

Agreed: to ask the Department for the information.

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 7.

7. Matters Arising

Noted: Members noted a Departmental response regarding issues raised after the recent budget briefing including a breakdown of the funding from the Treasury for the Protocol and the FTC for Ulster University.

Noted: Members noted a Departmental response to the correspondence forwarded by the Committee from a manufacturing business regarding disadvantages manufacturers in NI face when competing with businesses in Britain due to the rules of origin for goods travelling from Britain to Northern Ireland for processing.

Agreed: to forward to the individual who raised the matter.



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Noted: Members noted correspondence from the Clerk of the Finance Committee regarding information from the Department of Finance on the accruing resources within Departments for the year 2020-21.

Noted: Members noted a copy of the statement by the Education Minister to the Assembly on 17th May regarding the arrangements for CCEA qualifications in 2021/11.

Noted: Members noted follow up information provided by Ulster University following the informal meeting with the Committee on 25th March.

Noted: Members noted a copy of correspondence from a college lecturer to the Minister regarding issues around the ongoing pay dispute.

Agreed: to write to the Department to ask that the response is copied to the Committee.

Noted: Members noted correspondence from Belcoo Frack Free regarding the Department's handling of previous requests from the group.

Agreed: to forward to the Department for a response on the issues raised.

8. Rating (Coronavirus) and Directors Disqualification (Dissolved Companies) Bill

Members considered the Rating (Coronavirus) and Directors Disqualification (Dissolved Companies) Bill.

Noted: Members noted the Bill.

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 13.



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13. SL1 - Proposed Insolvency (Amendment) (2016 Act) (Consequential Amendments and Revocation) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021

Members considered SL1 – Proposed Insolvency (Amendment) (2016 Act) (Consequential Amendments and Revocation) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021

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

14. SR 2021/000 The Renewables Obligation (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021

Members noted a revised Explanatory Memorandum in relation to the SR on the Renewables Obligation (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2021 which the Committee agreed on 28th April 2021.

The Committee agreed to return to agenda item 9.

9. Correspondence

Noted: Members noted correspondence from the Clerk to the AERA Committee seeking written submissions on the PMB on Climate Change by 18th June 2021.

Agreed: to forward to the Department to ask if there are any issues arising from the Bill from the Department's perspective and remit and to agree a response from the Committee once this is received.

Noted: Members noted a copy of correspondence from the Department for Finance to the Finance Committee regarding clarification on outstanding funds to the Presbyterian Mutual Society.

Noted: Members noted correspondence from an individual calling for a Covid-19 public inquiry.



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Noted: Members noted correspondence from the Dairy Council inviting the Committee and the AERA Committee to a virtual site visit to hear about the sustainability of the Dairy Supply Chain.

10. Any Other Business

There were no items of business.

11. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on Wednesday 12th May 2021 in Room 29, Parliament Buildings at 10.00am

The meeting adjourned at 12.50pm

Dr Caoímhe Archibald MLA
Chairperson, Committee for the Economy
26th May 2021