



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for the Economy

Minutes of Proceedings

30th June 2021

Meeting Location: Room 30, Parliament Buildings

Present:

Dr Caoímhe Archibald (MLA (Chairperson))

Mr Keith Buchanan MLA

Mr Stewart Dickson MLA

Mr Peter Weir MLA

Present by Video or Teleconference:

Ms Sinéad McLaughlin MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Mr John O'Dowd MLA

Ms Claire Sugden MLA

Apologies:

Mr Gary Middleton MLA

Mr Mike Nesbitt MLA



Northern Ireland Assembly

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 10.09am in open session.

1. Apologies

As noted above.

2. Draft Minutes

Agreed: the Committee agreed the Minutes from 23rd June 2021.

Agreed: the Committee agreed the draft record of decision from 23rd June 2021.

3. Chairpersons Business

The Chairperson informed Members of a response from the AERA Committee to the Dairy Council accepting the invite for the AERA and Economy Committees to attend a virtual visit on Thursday 8th July at 1.30pm.



Northern Ireland Assembly

The Chairperson informed Members of correspondence from the Association of NI Travel Agents to the Minister regarding the delay in payment of the industry grant award and a call for a return to international travel.

Agreed: to seek an update from the Department on the financial support to travel agents and when payments will be made.

The Chairperson updated Members on the Informal meeting with University of Exeter academics regarding the Report on energy Governance.

Agreed: To invite the University of Exeter academics to brief the Committee prior to the Department's briefing on the analysis of responses to the Energy Strategy consultation.

The Chairperson informed Members of new funding arrangements under the European Social Fund.

Agreed: to ask the Department whether the new arrangements will mean that funding decisions will be delayed.

4. Briefing from CCEA - Assessment and awarding of Qualifications

The officials joined the meeting at 10.14am

Members received a briefing from:

Ms Margaret Farragher,	Interim CEO, CCEA
Ms Sharon King,	Business Manager, CCEA
Mr David Crosbie,	Programme Manager, CCEA

Key issues discussed included: the role of CCEA, the impact of the pandemic on the awarding of qualifications, the impact on local colleges of changes to



Northern Ireland Assembly

the awarding of qualifications, the potential issues for the upcoming academic year and the future of technical qualifications and awarding bodies.

Agreed: to write to the Department seeking clarification on a number of areas that were discussed during the briefing.

The officials left the meeting at 11.01am

5. Matters Arising

Noted: Members noted a response from the Minister regarding the HATS Network briefing session.

Agreed: to seek an update briefing in September.

Noted: Members noted a Departmental response to the Committee's request for further information on EU Exit, frontier workers and the EU Settlement scheme.

Agreed: to write to the Department seeking clarification on the role of border force authorities and the entitlement to benefits to those awaiting EU status.

Noted: Members noted a Departmental response regarding the Committee's request for further detail on the role of Invest NI in FTC and around the changes to accounting which have made FTC less attractive.

Noted: Members noted a response from the Education Minister regarding tourism skills.

Noted: Members noted a Departmental response to the Finance committee regarding the interaction between the Protocol and the UK Internal Markets Act.

Noted: Members noted correspondence from the AERA Committee highlighting that they have agreed to write to EnerChem Solutions to seek more information on the DCAF proposal.



Northern Ireland Assembly

Noted: Members noted a response from TEO to the Committee's queries regarding budget requirements for skills.

Noted: Members noted a response from TEO regarding drive-in cinemas.

Noted: Members noted correspondence from the department for BEIS to Lord Jay, Chair of the Protocol Sub-Committee regarding questions asked in relation to the implications of the application of Regulations to Northern Ireland under the Protocol.

Agreed: to forward to The Executive Office Committee and the EU Affairs Clerk for their information.

Noted: Members noted a copy of a Departmental press release outlining the department's NI Domestic Aviation Kickstart Scheme (NIDAKS).

Agreed: to write to the Department seeking further information on the criteria for the scheme.

Noted: Members noted a copy of the Hansard of the Concurrent meeting on 16th June on COVID-19 recovery with the Interim head of the civil service.

Noted: Members noted a copy of a Departmental response to the Committee in relation to buffet and carvery services in hospitality venues.

Noted: Members noted an overview of the Department 2020/21 Provisional Outturn position and a summary of the outcome of June monitoring.

Noted: Members noted a copy of correspondence from the Clerk of the Public Accounts Committee regarding NIAO reports.

Noted: Members noted a copy of a written statement from the Finance Minister on 24th June on the 2020-21 Provisional Outturn exercise and the Executive's June Monitoring exercise.

Noted: Members noted a copy of correspondence from the NI Affairs Committee to the Economy Minister regarding its inquiry into the NI Protocol



Northern Ireland Assembly

and the responsibilities which DfE will have in terms of alignment with EU legislation.

Agreed: to ask the Department to ensure that the Committee is copied into any correspondence with the NI Affairs Committee.

Agreed: to ask the Department whether they or Invest NI have been involved in any plans for an NI investment conference.

Noted: Members noted a copy of correspondence from EnerChem regarding their ongoing efforts to secure support for their proposal.

6. Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Bill

Members considered an update on the Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Bill.

7. SL1 - The Education (Student Fees (Amounts), Loan Repayment and Support etc.) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021

Members considered SL1 - The Education (Student Fees (Amounts), Loan Repayment and Support etc.) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2021.

Agreed: to ask the Department whether part-time students are included within its scope.

8. Correspondence

Noted: Members noted a copy of the Department's Economic Commentary for summer 2021.



Northern Ireland Assembly

Agreed: to ask the Department for a copy of the furlough figures for May 2021.

Noted: Members noted correspondence from the Finance Committee regarding the Financial Reporting (Departments and Public Bodies) Bill.

Agreed: to write to the Finance Committee to indicate that the Committee is broadly content with the Bill.

Noted: Members noted correspondence from the EU Affairs Manager with regards to an Institute for Government Report on the UK Internal Market.

Noted: Members noted a copy of a document outlining the work of the Northern Ireland Audit Office specific to the Department for the Economy.

Noted: Members noted a copy of the Forty-third Report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules 2020 – 2021.

Noted: Members noted a copy of a joint letter from the Committee on the Administration of Justice and a number of Legal and cross-border organisations to all Executive Ministers regarding the EU Settlement Scheme and the rights of EU citizens and their family members in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: to ask the Department to copy the Committee in to its response to the CAJ.

Noted: Members noted the latest ISNI Investing Activity Report.

9. Any Other Business

There were no items of business.



Northern Ireland
Assembly

10. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on Wednesday 7th July 2021 in Room 30, Parliament Buildings at 10.00am

The Committee agreed to move to closed session at 11.41am

11. Briefing from the NI Assembly Bill Office – Bill Procedure

The official joined the meeting at 11.41am

Members received a briefing from:

Ms Aoibheann Baker, Bill Clerk, NIA

Key issues discussed included: The Parental Bereavement (Leave & Pay) Bill.

The official left the meeting at 12.06pm

The meeting was adjourned at 12.06pm

Dr Caoímhe Archibald MLA
Chairperson, Committee for the Economy
7th July 2021