



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Public Accounts Committee

Minutes of Proceedings

Thursday, 9 December 2021

Meeting Location: The Senate, Parliament Buildings, Belfast

Present: Mr William Humphrey MBE MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Roy Beggs MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Maolíosa McHugh MLA
Mr Andrew Muir MLA

Present by Video or Teleconference:
Mr Cathal Boylan MLA
Ms Órlaithí Flynn MLA
Ms Cara Hunter MLA

Apologies: Mr David Hilditch MLA
Mr William Irwin MLA

In Attendance: Ms Lucia Wilson (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Gillian Barker (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Ms Suzanne Patton (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Marion Johnston (Clerical Officer)

The meeting went into Public Session at 2.08 pm.

The Committee noted the order of the Agenda has changed due to Dr Brady HOCS joining the meeting later than previously arranged.



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The following NIAO Officials joined the meeting:

Mr Kieran Donnelly CB C&AG;
Mr Rodney Allen, Chief Operating Officer; and
Mr Roger McCane, Audit Manager.

The following NIAO Official joined the meeting remotely:

Mr Kyle Bingham, Assembly Support Officer.

1. Apologies

None

2. Draft Minutes of 2 December 2021

Agreed: The draft minutes of the meeting of 2 December 2021 were signed and agreed to be published.

3. Declaration of Interests

The following Members declared an interest in Agenda Items 9, in relation to the inquiry in to Closing the Gap – Social Deprivation and links to Educational Attainment.

Mr William Humphrey MBE MLA declared he is a Governor, Edenbrooke Primary School, Governor of Girls Model Belfast; and a former pupil of Boys Model.

Mr Roy Beggs MLA declared he is a Governor of Roddensvale School, Larne and a Committee Member of SureStart.

Mr Cathal Boylan MLA declared he is a Governor, Clea Primary School, Keady.



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Mr Andrew Muir MLA declared he is a Governor, Priory Integrated College, Holywood.

Mr Maolíosa McHugh MLA declared he is Chairman of pre-school, Naíscoil na Deirge.

4. Matters Arising

None

5. Correspondence

The following NIAO officials joined the meeting room:

Mr Kieran Donnelly CB C&AG; and
Mr Rodney Allen, Chief Operating Officer.

The following NIAO official joined the meeting remotely:

Mr Kyle Bingham, Assembly Support Officer.

Audit Committee – Report on Draft Budgets 2022 - 25

The Committee noted correspondence dated 01 December 2021, from the Audit Committee regarding the Report on Draft Budgets 2022-25. The Committee noted that, at its meeting on 30 November 2021, the Audit Committee agreed the draft budget presented in respect of the Northern Ireland Audit Office. The Report on Draft Budgets 2022 – 25 will be included in the Executive’s Draft Budget 2022-25 and has been published on the Audit Committee’s webpage.

Clerking and Member Support [CAMS]

The Committee noted correspondence dated 03 December, from Clerking and Members Support Office regarding a Member Development course on ‘Deaf Awareness. Two sessions are being facilitated by RNIA that will last two hours via Zoom, Friday 17 December 2021 (9:00am – 11:00am) and Friday 21 January 2022



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(9:00am – 11:00am). Places are primarily for Members, however, party staff can be accommodated.

Head of Renewable NI regarding their latest report entitled ‘Powering a Green Recovery’

The Committee noted correspondence dated 01 December 2021, from Mr Steven Agnew, Head of Renewable NI regarding their latest report entitled ‘Powering a Green Recovery’.

Mr Colum Boyle AO DoF – Procurement Practices

The Committee noted correspondence dated 7 December 2021 from Colum Boyle AO DoF regarding procurement practices for Schools. Mr Boyle refers to his attendance at the Committee meeting on 25 November 2021 and has followed up on the issue regarding CPD - how do companies ‘get on the list’ - and the procurement practices for schools. The correspondence outlines the NI Executive Policy and the recent published document ‘PPN 04/21 Procurement Control Limits’.

The Committee noted the Policy is effective for procurement over £5k, and that amounts below this, should demonstrate value for money by evidence of simple price checks.

Agreed: The Committee noted the published document PPN 04/21 Procurement Control Limits.

Agreed: The Committee noted the Audit Office plan a review on Procurement Control Limits.

The meeting went into Closed Session at 2.19 pm

6. Dr Jayne Brady Head of Civil Service [HOCS] – Briefing Session

The following NIAO officials joined the meeting:



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Mr Kieran Donnelly CB, C&AG and Mr Rodney Allen, Chief Operating Officer.

The following NIA Official joined the meeting remotely:

Mr Kyle Bingham, Assembly Support Officer.

Mr Kieran Donnelly CB, C&AG briefed the Committee regarding the evidence session with Dr Jayne Brady HOCS. The Committee noted the relevant papers for the evidence session:

- MOR – Capacity and Capability in the NICS;
- MOR – The LandWeb Project and Digital Transformation;
- MOR – Major Capital Projects; and
- NIAO Potential Questions.

The Committee discussed areas of questioning for the evidence session.

The meeting remained in Closed Session at 2.29 pm

7. First Consideration of the Report - Inquiry into 'Addiction Services in NI'

The following NIAO officials joined the meeting:

Mr Kieran Donnelly CB C&AG;
Mr Rodney Allen, Chief Operating Officer; and
Mr Roger McCane, Audit Manager.

The following official joined the meeting remotely:

Mr Kyle Bingham, Assembly Support Officer NIAO.

The Committee noted the draft report is classified as RESTRICTED and therefore for Members use only.



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The Committee considered its draft report, 'Addiction Services in NI' and agreed the title of the report is "**Addiction Services in NI**".

The Committee agreed the section on Membership and Powers and the List of Abbreviations.

The Committee made the following decisions regarding each section and paragraphs within the report, that is – **Agreed, Agreed as amended or to be reworded.**

Recommendations 1 - 9: Paragraphs 8 – 17

Recommendation 1	Paragraph 8	Read and Agreed
	Paragraph 9	Read and Agreed as amended
Recommendation 2	Paragraph 10:	Read and Agreed
Recommendation 3	Paragraph 11:	Read and Agreed
Recommendation 4	Paragraph 12:	Read and Agreed
Recommendation 5	Paragraph 13:	Read and Agreed
Recommendation 6	Paragraph 14:	Read and Agreed
Recommendation 7	Paragraph 15:	To be reworded
Recommendation 8	Paragraph 16:	To be reworded
Recommendation 9	Paragraph 17:	To be reworded

Section 'Introduction': Paragraph 18

Paragraph 18: Read and Agreed

Section 'Background': Paragraphs 19 – 23

Paragraph 19: Read and Agreed
Paragraph 20: Read and Agreed
Paragraph 21: Read and Agreed
Paragraph 22: Read and Agreed
Paragraph 23: Read and Agreed as amended



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Agreed: Section Title: ‘Harms caused by drug and alcohol misuse are significant and likely to get worse’.

Paragraph 24: To be reworded
Paragraph 25: Read and Agreed
Paragraph 26: Read and Agreed
Paragraph 27: Agreed and amended

Agreed: The Committee agreed to change where appropriate, references to the word ‘misuse’ in the report to ‘use’.

Paragraph 28: Read and Agreed
Paragraph 29: Read and Agreed

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a further consideration of the report, at next week’s PAC meeting, 16 December 2021.

Ms Cara Hunter MLA left the meeting at 3.52 pm

Mr Andrew Muir MLA left the meeting at 4.06 pm

The meeting was adjourned at 3.00 pm.

The meeting went into Public Session at 3.09pm

8. Dr Jayne Brady Head of Civil Service [HOCS] - Evidence Session

The following Departmental Officials joined the meeting:

Dr Jayne Brady, HOCS.

The following Departmental Officials joined the meeting remotely:

Ms Jill Minne Head of NICS HR
Mr Bill Pauley, DoF; and
Mr Brett Hannam, SIB.



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In attendance were the following NIAO officials:

Mr Kieran Donnelly, CB C&A and Mr Rodney Allen, Chief Operating Officer.

The Committee noted additional papers for the evidence sessions:

- Biographies of Dr Jayne Brady, HOCS and
- Biography, Ms Jill Minne, Head of NICS HR.

Dr Jayne Brady HOCS made an opening statement which was then followed by a question and answer session.

The Committee thanked Dr Brady and her officials for attending the meeting.

The meeting went in to Closed Session at 4.38 pm

9. Dr Jayne Brady HOCS – Discussion Session

In attendance were the following officials:

Mr Kieran Donnelly, CB C&AG; and
Mr Rodney Allen, Chief Operating Officer.

The following NIAO official joined the meeting remotely:

Mr Kyle Bingham, Assembly Support Officer.

The Committee, discussed with NIAO officials, the evidence session with Dr Jayne Brady HOCS.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to Dr Brady to thank her for her evidence and request that she returns to the Committee in March 2022.

The meeting went in to Closed Session at 4.42 pm



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10. Inquiry into ‘Closing the Gap – Social Deprivation and links to Education Attainment’ – Draft Report Visit to Boys Model and Updated Issues Paper.

In attendance were the following officials:

Mr Kieran Donnelly, CB C&AG; and
Mr Rodney Allen, Chief Operating Officer.

The following NIAO officials joined the meeting remotely:

Mr Patrick Barr, Director;
Mr Andrew Allen, Audit Manager; and
Mr Kyle Bingham, Assembly Support Officer.

PAC Visit to Boys Model School – draft Report

The Committee considered the draft Report ‘PAC Visit to Boys Model.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the report and that it will be published with the final inquiry report ‘Closing the Gap – Social Deprivation and links to Education Attainment’.

Updated Issues Paper

The Committee agreed the updated Issues Paper regarding the inquiry, ‘Closing the Gap – Social Deprivation and links to Education’ and noted the updated paper will form part of the main report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the updated Issues Paper will form part of the final report.

The meeting remained in Closed Session at 4.48 pm

11. Draft Forward Work Programme



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The following NIAO officials joined the meeting:

Mr Kieran Donnelly, CB C&AG; and
Mr Rodney Allen, Chief Operating Officer.

The following official joined the meeting remotely:

Mr Kyle Bingham, Assembly Support Officer.

The Committee noted the September 2021 to March 2022 draft Forward Work Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule Ms Sara Long CE EA to give evidence in the New Year, regarding a follow up evidence session on PAC's SEN Report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to publish the draft Forward Work Programme.

The meeting remained in Closed Session at 4.50 pm

12. Any Other Business

None

13. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Public Accounts Committee will take place on Thursday 16 December, at 2.00 pm in The Senate, Parliament Buildings. The Committee noted its first meeting after Christmas Recess will be 13 January 2022.

The meeting adjourned at 4.50 pm

Mr William Humphrey MBE MLA
Chairperson



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