



**Northern Ireland  
Assembly**

**COMMITTEE FOR THE ECONOMY**

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**26 OCTOBER 2016**

**Radox science park, Antrim**

**10:00am**

**Present:**

Mr Steve Aiken OBE (Deputy Chairperson)  
Ms Caoimhe Archibald  
Ms Sinead Bradley  
Mr Alan Chambers  
Mr Gordon Dunne MBE  
Dr Stephen Farry  
Mr Gordon Lyons  
Mr Alex Maskey  
Mr Mervyn Storey

**In Attendance:**

Mr Peter Hall (Assembly Clerk)  
Ms Angela McParland (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Ms Sinead Kelly (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Michael Greer (Clerical Supervisor)  
Mr Craig Mealey (Clerical Officer)  
Mr Brendan Corr (Bursary Student)

**Apologies:**

Mr Conor Murphy (Chairperson)  
Mr Tom Buchanan

*The meeting began at 10:07am in open session  
The Deputy Chairperson took the Chair*

### **1. Apologies**

As noted above.

### **2. Draft Minutes**

*Agreed:* the Committee agreed the draft minutes of the meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> October 2016.

### **3. Chairpersons Business**

Members welcomed Mr. Christopher Dunne, who was on work experience with Ms Bradley.

The Chairperson advised Members of correspondence from NIPSA thanking the Chairperson for addressing the 2016 Health and Safety Conference.

*Agreed:* to schedule a briefing from NIPSA, to be held in the New Year.

The Chairperson advised Members that the Clerk is currently liaising with the Department to schedule an evidence session with the Northern Ireland Health and Safety Executive.

*Caoimhe Archibald joined the meeting at 10:12am  
Alan Chambers joined the meeting at 10:12am*

### **4. Evidence Session with Randox**

*The representative joined the meeting at 10:13am*

Members received a briefing from Mr. John Campbell, Senior Manager, Randox.

The key issues discussed included research and development, need for skilled graduates in mechanical and electrical engineering, developing innovation, regulatory quality control, potential of expansion of pathology within Northern Ireland and need for new NHS strategies in pathology.

*The representative left the meeting at 11:32am*

### **5. Evidence Session with the Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry for Northern Ireland (ABPI NI)**

*The representative joined the meeting at 11:34am*

Members received a briefing from Ms Colette Goldrick, Director, Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry for Northern Ireland.

The key issues discussed included research funding and international research partnerships, the potential of Northern Ireland as a world class hub for Life Sciences, Life Sciences as a key economic driver, investment strategy, cross border trade, securing a skilled workforce, inflexibility of NHS systems and EU standard regulations.

*Agreed:* to include, when writing to the Secretary of State, issues related to the Life Sciences sector.

*Agreed:* to write to the Department regarding Life Sciences and the Economic Strategy.

*The representative left the meeting at 12:14pm*

## **6. Departmental Written Evidence on 2016/17 Budget and October monitoring Round**

The Chairperson advised Members that no paper had been received from the Department for this Item.

*Agreed:* to write to the Minister highlighting the disappointment of the Committee that no paper was provided, as had been agreed earlier by the Minister and the Chairperson. To also ask the Minister for further information on specific funding issues around the Renewable Heat Incentive Scheme.

## **7. Matters Arising**

The Chairperson referred members to correspondence received from the Secretary of State in response to the Committee's letter on discussions he has held with local representatives.

*Agreed:* to forward a copy of the correspondence to the Committee for the Executive for information.

*Agreed:* to write to the Secretary of State asking for further information on the Business Advisory Group in particular for information on which sectors are involved and for detail of membership of the group.

The Chairperson referred Members to a Ministerial response to the Committee's request for information on NI-CO's relationship to the Department and Invest NI, and NI-CO's work in Bahrain.

*Agreed:* to write to the Minister to request further information regarding whether there will be Departmental guidance on ethics and standards applied to NI-CO beyond that applied by the Foreign and Commonwealth office.

## **8. Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland Annual Reports and Accounts 2015-2016**

The Chairperson referred Members to the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland Annual Reports and Accounts 2015-2016.

*Noted:* that Comptroller and Auditor General has not raised any issue with the Accounts.

## **9. Correspondence**

*Agreed:* the Committee considered a draft response to the Executive Committee regarding the draft Programme for Government and agreed that the response be forwarded to the Executive Committee.

*Agreed:* the Committee considered correspondence from the Executive Committee regarding Together: Building a United Community and agreed that the Committee will respond to the Executive Committee, seeking further information on Good Relations.

*Noted:* the Committee noted correspondence from the Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee regarding that Committee's request for a briefing from the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland (HSENI) on farm fatalities.

*Noted:* that, as stated earlier in the meeting, the Committee clerk was liaising with the Department regarding this Committee receiving an evidence session with HSENI.

*Noted:* the committee noted a report by the Royal Academy of Engineering entitled 'Engineering a Future Outside the EU'.

## **10. Any Other Business**

There were no additional items of business.

## **11. Date, Time and Place of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee for the economy will be at 10:00am on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2016 in Rom 29, Parliament buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12:36pm

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**Mr Conor Murphy**  
**Chairperson**  
**Committee for the Economy**

**9<sup>th</sup> November 2016**