



**Northern Ireland  
Assembly**

**COMMITTEE FOR EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING  
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**WEDNESDAY, 28 MAY 2014**

**TULLYGLASS HOUSE HOTEL, BALLYMENA**

Present: Mr Robin Swann MLA (Chairperson)  
Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Mr Sammy Douglas MLA  
Mr David Hilditch MLA  
Mr Fra McCann MLA  
Ms Bronwyn McGahan MLA  
Mr Pat Ramsey MLA  
Ms Claire Sugden MLA

In Attendance: Mrs Cathie White (Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Vincent Gribbin (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Johnny Lawless (Clerical Supervisor)  
Ms Noreen Hayward (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Phil Flanagan MLA  
Mr Alastair Ross MLA

*10:03 am The meeting opened public session.*

**1. Apologies**

Apologies are detailed above.

**2. Chairpersons Business**

- The Chairperson welcomed Ms Claire Sugden MLA to the Committee as a Committee Member.

Ms Sugden declared an interest as a student at the University of Ulster and that her partner works at the Northern Regional College.

- The Committee considered a motion to extend the Committee stage of the Work and Families Bill until 30 November 2014.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the motion.

- The Committee noted a timetable for the Committee stage of the Work and Families Bill.
- The Committee noted that an electronic folder has been established for accessing documents relating to the Work and Families Bill.
- The Committee noted that a written submission on the Bill from the Labour Relations Agency has been added to the Bill folder.
- The Committee considered visits report for its visits to the Appleby Trust, Sperrinview Special School and Oakridge Social Education Centre on 14 May 2014.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to include the reports in the Committee Inquiry report into Post School Special Educational Need Provision in Northern Ireland.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to schedule a visit to a day care centre in West Belfast as part of its Inquiry into Special Educational Need provision.

### **3. Minutes of the meeting held on 7 May 2014**

*Agreed:* The minutes of the meeting on 7 May 2014 were agreed.

### **4. Matters arising**

- The Committee noted a list of matters arising from the meeting on 7 May 2014.

### **5. Correspondence**

The Committee considered the following items of correspondence:

- Correspondence from the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment regarding the shortage of trained analytical chemists in Northern Ireland.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence and forward it to the Department for comment.

- Departmental correspondence providing a research report into Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Services Skill Needs.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Departmental correspondence providing the Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Services Action Plan.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from the Committee for the Office of First Minister and deputy First Minister providing the Invest NI European Union Research and Development Liaison Services Bulletin.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from the Committee for Education regarding a briefing on support for children with learning difficulties.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence and include in the Committee Inquiry pack.

- Correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel regarding Post Project Evaluations (PPE's).

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence and forward it to the Department for comment.

- Assembly Research and Information Service briefing paper on Post-Secondary Support for People with Intellectual Disabilities in the Republic of Ireland.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the briefing paper and include in the Committee Inquiry pack.

- Departmental correspondence regarding the revision to the Department's retention and disposal of documents schedule.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Departmental correspondence providing a copy of the Open University's submission to the Review of the Teacher Education Infrastructure.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Response from Colleges NI regarding the Matrix Accreditation for Further Education Colleges.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the North West Regional College requesting clarification on it is seeking to attain Matrix Accreditation.

- Correspondence from the Department of Justice regarding proposed subordinate legislation for Judicial Pensions.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Departmental response regarding redundancy payments for Mivan Employees.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the response and forward it to Mr David McCann for information.

- Correspondence from the Open University requesting to brief the Committee and host a Committee meeting at its offices in Belfast.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to schedule the briefing in its forward work programme.

- Departmental response regarding engagement with national agencies on European Union matters.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the response.

- Departmental response regarding transport issues for people with learning difficulties accessing further education.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the response and include in the Committee Inquiry pack.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence to Sperrinview Special School for comment and to request examples of the transport barriers faced by its students for forwarding to the Department for comment.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to engage with parents of those with learning disabilities as part of its Inquiry.

- Correspondence from Assembly Research and Information Service regarding a European Union proposal on establishing a platform to enhance cooperation in the prevention and deterrence of undeclared work.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from the GL Assessment Group providing a case study on how their assessments are successfully used.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Departmental response regarding student loan repayments.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the response and forward it to Mr Ian Livie for his information.

- Correspondence from the Chairpersons' Liaison Group providing a note of the key issues discussed and decisions taken at its meeting on 13 May 2014.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Invitation from Belfast Metropolitan College to its Supported Learning Open Day on 15 May 2014.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from the Committee for Education to attend the British Council “The World in Your Classroom” Event on 27 May 2014.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from Invest NI to attend the Invest NI Horizon 2020 Conference on accessing European funding for R&D and Innovation on 27 May 2014.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from the Centre for Economic Empowerment to attend its Conference on Working Poverty/Generation X on 28 May 2014.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from BT to attend the launch of the BT Young Scientist of the Year 2015 on 4 June 2014.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from the UK Commission for Employment and Skills to attend the launch of the findings of the UK Employer Skills Survey 2013 on 6 June 2014.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from Queen’s University Belfast to attend the Students Union Volunteering Excellency Awards.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment to attend the Energy Efficiency Workshop with Green Investment Bank on 10 June 2014.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation to the Queen’s University Belfast “Cancer Research Advancing Patient Care” Event on 11 June 2014.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from the General Medical Council Northern Ireland to attend the UK & Northern Ireland Health and Social Care Regulators Event on 11 June 2014.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation to the launch of the book on Industrial rates Campaign Run by Manufacturing Northern Ireland by John Manly on 12 June 2014.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from the Southern Health and Social Services Trust to attend the “Southern Trust does Makaton” Event on 18 June 2014.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from the Minister for Employment and Learning to attend the Celebrating Vocational Achievement Event on 4 June 2014.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

## **6. Forward Work Programme**

The Committee noted the draft Forward Work Programme to 2 July 2014.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to reschedule the briefings from St Mary’s University College and Stranmillis University College on the Review of the Teacher Training Infrastructure to 17 September 2014.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to invite the Open University, Queen’s University Belfast and the University of Ulster to brief the Committee on the Review of the Teacher Training Infrastructure on 17 September 2014.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing from Queen’s University Belfast on the Vice-Chancellor’s vision for the University on 2 July 2014.

*10:16 am Mr Thomas Buchanan joined the meeting.*

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to schedule the Committee strategic planning day on 3 September 2014 at Loughry College, Cookstown.

## **7. Departmental Briefing - Review of Youth Training**

*The Committee agreed to move to agenda item number 9.*

*10:18 am The Departmental officials joined the meeting.*

The Committee was briefed by Ms Yvonne Croskery, Director of Youth Policy and Strategy Division, Mr Jim Russell, Deputy Director Youth Policy and Strategy Division and Mr David Broadhurst, Head of Review of Youth Training.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Minister requesting that the level one programmes of Skills for Work and Skills for Life are included in the Terms of Reference for the Review of Youth Training.

*Agreed:* The officials agreed to contact Invest NI regarding the success of its Jobs Fund and provide that information to the Committee.

*Agreed:* The officials agreed to provide information to the Committee on whether there is a disparity in terms of Skills Solutions and the occupations that are sought by clients at Jobs and Benefits offices and the actual occupations that are on offer.

*Agreed:* The officials agreed to provide clarification to the Committee on the protocol for how the Department responds to requests for information which fall within the remit of another Department.

*Agreed:* The officials agreed to provide further oral briefing on the Review of Youth Training to the Committee in September 2014.

*11:30 am Mr Broadhurst left the meeting.*

## **8. Departmental Briefing - Summary of Responses on the Review of Apprenticeships**

*The Committee agreed to move to agenda item number 8.*

*11:31 am Mr Jeff Ard, Head of Review of Apprenticeships joined the meeting.*

The Committee was briefed by Ms Croskery, Mr Russell and Mr Ard on the Summary of Responses on the Review of Apprenticeships.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

*11:45 am Mr Sammy Douglas left the meeting.*

*Agreed:* The officials agreed to provide the Committee with information on whether professions such as Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language Therapy would be suitable for apprenticeship schemes.

*11:48 am Mr Sammy Douglas re-joined the meeting.*

*11:48 am Ms Claire Sugden left the meeting.*

*Agreed:* The officials agreed to provide the Committee with information on the Department's engagement with other Departments on developing Apprenticeship Schemes.

*11:51 am Ms Claire Sugden re-joined the meeting.*

*11:52 am Mr Ard left the meeting.*

## **9. Departmental Briefing - Summary of responses on the Economic Inactivity Consultation**

*The Committee agreed to move to agenda item number 7.*

*11:52 am Mr Fra McCann left the meeting.*

*11:52 am Ms Bronwyn McGahan left the meeting.*

*11:52 am Mr Rory Muldrew, Economic Inactivity Strategy Team joined the meeting.*

The Committee was briefed by Ms Croskery, Mr Russell and Mr Muldrew on the Summary of Responses on the Economic Inactivity Consultation.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

*12:33 pm Mr Thomas Buchanan left the meeting.*

*12:33 pm The Department officials left the meeting.*

## **10. Any other business**

None.

## **11. Date, time and place of next meeting**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the next meeting should be held on Wednesday 4 June 2014 at 10.00 am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

*12:34 pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.*

**Mr Robin Swann MLA**  
**Chairperson, Committee for Employment & Learning**

**4 June 2014**