



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

WEDNESDAY, 14 JANUARY 2015

ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

- Present: Mr Robin Swann MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Sydney Anderson MLA
Mr William Irwin MLA
Ms Anna Lo MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA
Ms Bronwyn McGahan MLA
- In Attendance: Mrs Cathie White (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Vincent Gribbin (Assistant Clerk)
Mr Johnny Lawless (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Noreen Hayward (Clerical Officer)
- Apologies: Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Phil Flanagan MLA
Mr David Hilditch MLA
Mr Pat Ramsey MLA
Ms Claire Sugden MLA

The meeting opened in public session at 10:12 am.

1. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

2. Chairperson's Business

- The Committee considered a draft Committee Motion, supporting the Higher Education and Further Education sectors in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Committee motion.

- The Chairperson advised the Committee that in the New Year's Honours list a number of individuals were honoured for their work in Employment and Learning and that letters from the Committee has been issued to the specific individuals congratulating them on this acknowledgement of their work.
- The Chairperson advised the Committee that at its meeting on 22 October, the Committee agreed to visit the Seashell Trust as part of its Inquiry into post school Special Educational Need Provision.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the visit should be scheduled for Wednesday 11 to Thursday 12 March 2015.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2014

Agreed: The minutes of the meeting on 10 December 2014 were agreed.

4. Matters arising

- The Committee noted a list of matters arising from the meeting on 10 December 2014.

5. Correspondence

The Committee considered the following items of correspondence:

- Correspondence from the Chairperson's Liaison Group regarding key issues of its meeting on 9 December 2014.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from Action on Hearing Loss seeking to brief the Committee on Research into Transitions Experiences of Young People with Hearing Loss.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing in the Forward Work Programme.

- Correspondence from The Open University regarding the appointment of the new Vice-Chancellor.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Departmental update on progress on the Employment Law Review.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the update.

- Correspondence from Committee for Finance and Personnel providing the Post Project Evaluations for the Quarter ending 30 Sep 2014.

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

- Correspondence from the Strategic Investment Board providing an amended version of the ISNI tracking system report in response to some criticisms of the format.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that it was content to adopt the new format.

- Correspondence from the University and College Union regarding proposed Budget cuts to higher education.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Departmental response regarding Financial Transactions Capital Budget.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel providing the Report on the Executive's Draft Budget 2015-16.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to the Minister for Employment and Learning regarding the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsperson Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Department for Employment and Learning Investing Activity Report - December 2014.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Departmental response to Committee correspondence regarding the Teachers' Pension Scheme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response and to forward it to the Committee for Education for information.

- Departmental correspondence regarding an at a guide glance to the Working Time Regulations.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Departmental correspondence regarding Students from the Republic of Ireland attending FE colleges in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Departmental correspondence regarding The Rowntree Report on economic mobility.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Departmental correspondence regarding query on European Social Fund Funding.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department requesting an oral briefing on the matter.

- Departmental response to the Committee's request for list of DEL capital projects.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from Stranmillis University College seeking a postponement of the joint showcase event with St. Mary's University College.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to both Colleges asking them to write to the Committee when they are content for the Committee to host a joint showcase event.

- Correspondence from VOYPIC providing the report - Our Life in Care -VOYPIC's third survey of the views and experiences of children and young people in care.

Agreed: The Committee agreed schedule a briefing in the Forward Work Programme.

- Ulster University response to Consultation on Draft Budget 2015-16.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from the Principal of St Mary's University College on the Report on the Executive's Draft Budget 2015-16 by the Committee for Finance and Personnel and the response from the Committee staff.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence and the response.

- Stranmillis University College's response to the Consultation on the Draft Budget 2015-16.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Colleges NI response to the Consultation on the Draft Budget 2015-16.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- The Open University response to the Consultation on the Draft Budget 2015-16.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Queen's University Belfast response to the Consultation on the Draft Budget 2015-16.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- St. Mary's University College response to the Consultation on the Draft Budget 2015-16.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from St. Mary's University College regarding the withdrawal of Premia Funding

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from Colleges NI regarding an event to showcase Colleges economic support to NI businesses.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to host the event in the Long Gallery.

- Correspondence from Unite the Union regarding Higher Education – Universities.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Invitation to the Westminster Higher Education Forum Keynote Seminar - Addressing the STEM skills gap.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from the Northern Ireland Chairs' Forum - Dinner with the Minister for the Environment – Topic: Opportunities of Local Government Reorganisation and Community Planning.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from CollaborationNI to Community Led Collaboration Event.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from Assembly Community Connect Invitation to CO3 Dinner.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from The Northern Ireland Science Festival and the Institute of Physics in Ireland to the preview of The Incredible Power of Light.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from Business in the Community to The Responsible Business Awards in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

6. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted the draft Forward Work Programme to 25 March 2015.

7. SR 2014-309 The Education (Student Support) (No.2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 (Amendment) (No.2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014

Agreed: That the Committee for Employment and Learning has considered the SR 2014-309 The Education (Student Support) (No.2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2009 (Amendment) (No.2) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014, and has agreed that it is content for the Department to make the rule.

8. Briefing from The Open University

10:25 am The representatives joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Mr John D'Arcy, Director and Mr Michael Bower, Policy & Public Affairs Manager.

The Chairperson declared an interest as an Open University Graduate and Alumni.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

11:05 am Mr William Irwin joined the meeting.

11:16 am The representatives left the meeting.

9. Briefing from Include Youth and Business in the Community - Aiming Higher Project

11:17 am The representatives joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Ms Emma Morrison, Programme Manager, Business in the Community Northern Ireland, Ms Lorraine Devlin, Mentoring Worker, Include Youth, Ms Lesley Johnston, Business Development & East Belfast Social Enterprise Hub Manager, East Belfast Mission and Ms Tanya McCallen, Programme Participant, Include Youth.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to support the three recommendations of the Aiming Higher Project and to sponsor the holding of a Care Leavers Week event in October 2015 in Parliament Buildings.

12:10 pm The representatives left the meeting.

10. Any other business

None.

11. Date, time and place of next meeting

The Committee noted that the next meeting should be held on Wednesday, 21 January 2015 at 10:00 pm in Room 29 Parliament Buildings, Belfast.

12:11 pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Mr Robin Swann MLA
Chairperson, Committee for Employment & Learning

21 January 2015