



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

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

WEDNESDAY, 13 MAY 2015

ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

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

Mr Sydney Anderson MLA
Mr William Irwin MLA
Ms Anna Lo MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA
Ms Bronwyn McGahan MLA
Ms Claire Sugden MLA

In Attendance: Mrs Cathie White (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Johnny Lawless (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mrs Marion Johnson (Clerical Officer)
Mr Christopher Jeffries (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Phil Flanagan MLA
Mr David Hilditch MLA
Mr Pat Ramsey MLA

The meeting opened in public session at 10:06 am.

1. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

2. Chairperson's Business

None.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2015

Agreed: The minutes of the meeting on 29 April 2015 were agreed.

4. Matters arising

- The Committee noted a list of matters arising from the meeting on 29 April 2015.
- The Committee considered a Clerks Memo regarding the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsperson Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Queen's University Belfast, Ulster University, Open University, Colleges NI, Queen's University Students Union, Ulster Univeristy Students Union and the NUS-USI to seek their views on the Bill.

- The Committee considered the issue of tabling an amendment to the Special Educational Needs and Disability Bill

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to seek its views regarding the option to statement young people up to 25 years old.

5. Correspondence

The Committee considered the following items of correspondence:

- Correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel regarding the monitoring of Savings Delivery Plans.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from the Law Centre NI providing a briefing paper on Forced Labour.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from the Mid and East Antrim Borough Council providing a response to the Committee Inquiry into Post Special Educational Need Provision.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence and include it in the Committee Inquiry Report.

- Assembly Research and Information Service Briefing Paper on Support for Looked After Children in Scotland.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the research paper and include in the Committee Inquiry Report.

- Correspondence from the Northern Ireland Impact Forum providing papers from its second meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Departmental response providing a summary of the feedback received during the stakeholder events on the Review of Youth Training.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response.

- Correspondence from Include Youth regarding the cut to the Educational Maintenance Allowance.

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

- Correspondence from the Training for Women Network regarding the European Social Fund appeal process.

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

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department to request an analysis and geographical spread throughout Northern Ireland of the women's groups who were unsuccessful in securing European Social Fund funding.

- Correspondence from the Bytes Project regarding match funding from the Department for Employment and Learning.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence and forward it to the Minister for Employment and Learning for immediate comment.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department requesting an explanation of why meetings promised by the Minister in regards to funding applications have not been held.

- Correspondence from the Ad-Hoc Committee for the Northern Ireland Public Service Ombudsperson Bill regarding a call for evidence.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Invitation to the Trans-Atlantic Technology and Training Alliance Conference 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that a Northern Ireland Assembly Research Officer would attend the conference.

- Invitation to the Wholeschool Stormont event.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation

- Invitation to a supported learning performance by Belfast Metropolitan College Students at Belfast Community Circus. .

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation

- Invitation to the Stranmillis University College Graduation Celebration.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation

6. Forward Work Programme

- The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme to 1 July 2015.

7. Departmental Briefing - Update on Savings Delivery Plans

10:13 am The Departmental officials joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Ms Heather Cousins, Deputy Secretary, Mr Stephen McMurray, Director of Finance, Mr Billy Lyttle, Head of Higher Education Finance and Mr Michael Camplisson, Head of Further Education Finance and Funding on Savings Delivery Plans B1, B2, B5, B6, B7, B8 and B9.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

10:37 am Ms Claire Sugden joined the meeting.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with statistics regarding retention rates and outcomes in further education colleges.

10:58 am Mr Billy Lyttle and Mr Michael Camplisson left the meeting.

10:58 am Mr Brendan McCann and Mr Michael Gould joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefing on Savings Delivery Plans B3, B4 and B10.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with statistical information in regards to Savings Delivery Plan B3.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide information on whether English as a foreign language will be part of the essential skills provision as part of the Steps 2 Success programme.

11:07 am Mr William Irwin joined the meeting.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with up to date figures of the number of apprenticeships being funded by the Department.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide further information in regards to apprenticeships within the agri-food industry.

11:21 am The Departmental officials left the meeting.

8. Departmental Briefing - Employment Bill

11:21 am The Departmental officials joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Mr John McKeown, Acting Assistant Director, Strategy, European & Employment Relations Division, Dr Alan Scott, Head of Employment Relations Policy and Legislation Branch and Ms Margaret O'Hare, Employment Relations Policy and Legislation Branch.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

11:37 am Mr Thomas Buchanan joined the meeting.

11:43 am The Departmental officials left the meeting.

9. Departmental Briefing - Review of Youth Training - The Way Forward

11:44 am The Departmental officials joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Ms Carol Magill, Head of New Initiatives Unit, Mr David Broadhurst, Review of Youth Training Branch and Mr Michael Armstrong, New Initiatives Unit.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

12:01 pm Ms Bronwyn McGahan left the meeting.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with further information on how pilot models are to be delivered.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with details of the existing financial assistance arrangements for young people in youth training programmes.

12:17 pm Mr William Irwin left the meeting.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with details of the make up of the expert panel and industries they represent.

12:24 pm The Departmental officials 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 20 May 2015 at 10.00 am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

12:25 pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

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

20 May 2015