



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

WEDNESDAY, 15 OCTOBER 2014

ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Mr Phil Flanagan MLA
Mr David Hilditch MLA
Mr William Irwin MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA
Ms Bronwyn McGahan MLA
Mr Pat Ramsey MLA
Mr Alastair Ross 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 Robin Swann MLA (Chairperson)
Ms Anna Lo MLA

The meeting opened in public session at 10:04 am.

1. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

2. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson advised the Committee that he attended the dinner hosted for the delegates from Belfast Met College RC-2020 Conference on 10 October 2014 in the Member's Dining Room.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2014

Agreed: The minutes of the meeting on 8 October 2014 were agreed.

4. Matters arising

- The Committee noted a list of matters arising from the meeting on 8 October 2014.

5. Correspondence

The Committee considered the following items of correspondence:

- Correspondence from Weber Shadwick offering for its client Firstsource Solutions to host a Committee meeting in the New Year.

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

- Correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel providing the terms of reference for its review of the operation of the Barnett Formula.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward to Ms McGahan, the link to the document referred to in the correspondence.

- Departmental response regarding the October Monitoring Round.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response.

- Departmental response regarding the Year-End Surges in Northern Ireland Departmental expenditure.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from Assembly Research and Information Service providing a European Explanatory Memorandum regarding an EU Communication on its Green Employment Initiative.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Stranmillis University College response regarding the consultation with staff on the Review of the Initial Teacher Education Infrastructure.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Stranmillis University College asking if it had received a formal consultation response from senior management on the options in the Review Report.

- University and College Union response regarding submitting its views to Stranmillis University College on the Review of the Initial Teacher Education Infrastructure.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response.

- Invitation from the Education and Training Inspectorate to the Launch of the Chief Inspectors Report on 6 November 2014 at 10:00 am in the Belfast Metropolitan College, Titanic Quarter Campus.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

6. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted the draft Forward Work Programme to 10 December 2014.

7. Briefing from Colleges NI - Hardship Funds and Further Education Budget Cuts

10:11 am The representatives joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Mr Gerard Campbell, Chief Executive, Colleges NI, Ms Karen Lennon, Policy and Public Affairs Manager, Colleges NI and Mr Jasper McKinney OBE, Assistant Director of Student Services, Southern Regional College.

10:14 am Mr Phil Flanagan joined the meeting.

10:15 am Mr David Hilditch joined the meeting.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

10:21 am Mr Fra McCann left the meeting.

10:24 am Mr William Irwin joined the meeting.

Agreed: The representatives agreed to provide the Committee with information on how Northern Ireland Colleges compare with the rest of the UK regarding funding per student.

10:26 am Mr Fra McCann re-joined the meeting.

Agreed: The representatives agreed to provide the Committee with statistics on the number of students who obtained emergency Hardship funds and the length of time from application to receipt of the funding.

Agreed: The representatives agreed to provide the Committee with statistics on the percentage of students aged over 18 who had applied for Hardship Funds.

Agreed: The representatives agreed to provide a breakdown, by college, of the students studying at entry level 1 and at level 2.

10:56 am The representatives left the meeting.

8. Briefing from NUS-USI - Hardship Funds

10:57 am The representatives joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Ms Rebecca Hall, President, Mr Fergal McFerran, Deputy President, Ms Hannah McNamara, Further Education Officer and Mr Matthew Carroll, Welfare Officer.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward details on the Open University 'Managing Your Money Programme' to NUS-USI for its information.

11:35 am The representatives left the meeting.

9. Departmental Briefing - Disability Employment Strategy

11:36 am The Departmental officials joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Mr David Sales, Director of Employment Service and Mr Terry Park, Head of Disability Employment Service.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

12:00 pm The Departmental officials left the meeting.

12:00 pm Mr Alastair Ross left the meeting.

10. Briefing from Steps 2 Success Contractor - Reed in Partnership

12:01 pm The representatives joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Mr Martin Fallon, Managing Director, Mr Rhodri Thomas, Director of Business Development and Ms Christine Shaw, Supply Chain Manager.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

12:13 pm Mr William Irwin left the meeting.

Ms McGahan declared her an interest as a Board Member of the Dungannon Enterprise Centre.

Agreed: The representatives agreed to provide the Committee with details of the 92 targets set by the Department for the Steps 2 Success contractors.

Agreed: The representatives agreed to provide the Committee with details of how they intend to engage with the Disability Sector.

12:20 pm Ms Bronwyn McGahan left the meeting.

12:33 pm Mr Phil Flanagan left the meeting.

The representatives agreed to provide the Committee with update figures on their clients remaining in employment after 12 months from the Work Programme in Great Britain.

12:38 am The representatives left the meeting.

11. Any other business

None.

12. Date, time and place of next meeting

The Committee noted that the next meeting should be held on Wednesday 22 October 2014 at 10.00 am in Parkanaur Manor House, Dungannon.

12:38 pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Mr Robin Swann MLA
Chairperson, Committee for Employment & Learning

22 October 2014