



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

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

WEDNESDAY, 10 FEBRUARY 2016

ROOM 29, PARLAIMENT BUILDINGS

- Present: Mr Robin Swann (Chairperson)
- Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Sydney Anderson MLA
Mr Gerard Diver MLA
Mr Alex Easton MLA
Mr Phil Flanagan MLA
Mr David Hilditch MLA
Ms Anna Lo MLA
Ms Bronwyn McGahan MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA
Ms Claire Sugden MLA
- In Attendance: Mrs Cathie White (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Vincent Gribbin (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Johnny Lawless (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Briege Mullan (Clerical Officer)
Ms Amy Barr (Legislative Studies & Practice Student)
- Apologies: None

10:10 am The meeting opened in public session.

1. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

2. Chairperson's Business

None

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2016

Agreed: The minutes of the meeting on 3 February 2016 were agreed.

4. Matters arising

- The Committee noted a list of matters arising from the meeting on 3 February 2016.

10:17 am Mr David Hilditch joined the meeting.

10:17 am Ms Stephanie Mallon joined the meeting

- The Committee considered drafted amendments to be tabled to the Employment Bill for Further Consideration Stage.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to table the amendments in the Bill Office

5. Correspondence

The Committee considered the following items of correspondence:

- Correspondence from the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister regarding the report on its Inquiry into Together: Building a United Community.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Copy correspondence from the Committee for Education to the Department for Employment and Learning regarding Essential Skills Qualifications.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Departmental response to Committee correspondence asking what the financial burden would be to the Department if maintenance loans and grants were to be increased by the rate of inflation.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response.

- Correspondence from Investment Strategy for Northern Ireland providing the Department for Employment and Learning Investing Activity Report for January 2016.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Departmental response to concerns raised by the Committee regarding the numbers of claimants at Industrial or Fair Employment tribunals who do not have legal representation.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response.

- Departmental response to Committee correspondence regarding the RaISe Paper on T:BUC.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response.

- Correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel regarding the Budget Bill (Northern Ireland) 2016 and accompanying Spring Supplementary Estimates (SSEs).

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Assembly Research and Information Service Paper on Benefits of Extending SEN Support to ages 16-25.

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

- NISRA Briefing paper on the latest Labour Force Survey Statistics.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the paper.

- Correspondence from the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People on Fund-Mapping: The Investment of Public Resources in The Wellbeing of Children and Young People in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

6. Forward Work Programme

- The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme to 16 March 2016.
- The Committee considered a request from the Minister for Employment and Learning to reschedule the Legacy briefing from 16 March 2016 to 9 March 2016.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to reschedule the briefing.

7. SL1 - Employment Rights (Increase of Limits) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016

The Committee considered SL1 - Employment Rights (Increase of Limits) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016.

Agreed: The Committee was content with the proposal.

8. SR 2016-021 The Education (Student Support) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland)

The Committee considered SR 2016-021 The Education (Student Support) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland)

Agreed: The Committee has considered the SR 2016-021 The Education (Student Support) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016 and has no objection to the rule.

9. Departmental Briefing – Budget & January Monitoring Round

10:29 am The Departmental officials joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Mr Stephen McMurray, Director of Finance, Ms Yvonne Croskery, Director of Youth Policy and Strategy Division, Mr Michael Camplisson, Head of Further Education Finance and Funding and Mr Philip Cromie, Head of Higher Education Finance

10:30 am Mr Phil Flanagan joined the meeting.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

10:39 am Mr Fra McCann left the meeting.

10:43 am Mr Sydney Anderson joined the meeting.

10:46 am Mr Thomas Buchanan joined the meeting.

Agreed: The officials agreed to seek clarification from the Minister if they could provide the Committee with a copy of the Capital Projects priority list.

11:00 am Mr Phil Flanagan left the meeting.

11:05 am The Departmental officials left the meeting.

10. Departmental Briefing - Implementation of Securing Our Success - The NI Apprenticeship Strategy

11:05 am The Departmental officials joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Ms Yvonne Croskery, Director of Youth Policy and Strategy Division, Mr Clement Athanasiou, Head of Curriculum Development and Delivery Model Branch, and Mr Philip Rodgers, Head of Apprenticeship Reform Implementation Team.

11:16 am Mr Fra McCann re-joined the meeting.

11:20 am Ms Claire Sugden joined the meeting.

11:23 am Mr Alex Easton joined the meeting.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with details of the commencement date and duration of the Apprenticeships NI and Training for Success contracts.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with a copy of the interim evaluation report on higher level apprenticeships when published.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with information on apprenticeship programmes run by BT and NIE.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with details of any differences in an apprenticeship in accountancy offered by PWC in comparison to the one offered by the Further Education Colleges.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with statistical information on the number of people undertaking apprenticeships who have a disability and number of apprenticeships by gender breakdown.

11:55 am Ms Bronwyn McGahan left the meeting.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with the names of schools providing apprenticeships and the number of young people attracted into apprenticeships as a result of this, broken down by geographical area.

12:01 pm Ms Bronwyn McGahan joined the meeting.

12:14 pm Mr Sydney Anderson left the meeting.

12: 16 pm The Departmental officials 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, 17 February 2016 at 10.00 am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

12:18 am The Committee moved into closed session.

13. Committee Inquiry into post Special Educational Need Provision in education, employment and training for those with Learning Disabilities - Consideration of Draft Report

The Committee considered the draft inquiry report.

The Committee was suspended at 12:27 pm.

The meeting resumed at 1:01 pm with the following Members present:

Mr Robin Swann (Chairperson)

Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Mr Sydney Anderson MLA

Mr Gerard Diver MLA

Mr Phil Flanagan MLA

Mr David Hilditch MLA

Ms Anna Lo MLA

Ms Bronwyn McGahan MLA

Mr Fra McCann MLA

Ms Claire Sugden MLA

Agreed: The Committee agreed the motion for debate in Plenary on the Inquiry and to table it in the Business Office.

1:52 pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

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

17 February 2016