



**Northern Ireland  
Assembly**

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

**WEDNESDAY, 16 MARCH 2016**

**ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr Robin Swann (Chairperson)

Mr Gerard Diver MLA  
Mr Phil Flanagan MLA  
Mr David Hilditch 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 Vincent Gribbin (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Johnny Lawless (Clerical Supervisor)  
Ms Briege Mullan (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Sydney Anderson MLA.

*The meeting opened in public session at 10:05 am*

**1. Apologies**

Apologies are detailed above.

**2. Chairperson's Business**

- The Chairperson advised Members that he and the Clerk met with NICVA on 10 March 2016 to discuss the work of the Committee.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the Chairperson should sign the Minutes of today's meeting when completed.

### **3. Minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2016**

*Agreed:* The minutes of the meeting on 9 March 2016 were agreed.

### **4. Matters arising**

- The Committee noted a list of matters arising from the meeting on 9 March 2016.

### **5. Correspondence**

The Committee considered the following items of correspondence:

- Departmental correspondence regarding the removal of Ofqual as a regulator for vocational qualifications..

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

- Copy correspondence from the Committee for Justice regarding and employment law query.

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

- Departmental response to Committee correspondence regarding the Bombardier Supplier Linkages.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to forward the response to Invest NI for comment.

- Departmental response to Committee correspondence regarding the Comparison of UK Commission's Employer Skills Survey.

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

- Copy correspondence from the Minister for Employment and Learning to the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure regarding Libraries NI.

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

- Department for Education response to Committee correspondence regarding CPD for teachers.

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

- Departmental correspondence regarding the Further Education Strategy - Programme for Implementation.

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

- Invitation from the Northern Ireland Human Rights Consortium to a Human Rights Action Plan Conference.

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

- Invitation from Queen's University Belfast, Centre for Irish Business and Economic Performance to a lecture on the Changing Nature of Irish Exports.

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

## **6. SL1 - Student Fees (Amounts) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016**

The Committee considered SL1 - Student Fees (Amounts) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016 and agreed that it was not content with the proposal.

Mr Phil Flanagan proposed the following motion:

*'That the Committee for Employment and Learning has considered SL 1 – Student Fees (Amounts) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016 be deferred until after the election when it can be considered by the new Committee.'*

The question was put on Mr Flanagan's proposal.

The Committee divided: Ayes 4; Noes 0; Abstentions 2

*AYES*

*Mr Gerard Diver  
Mr Phil Flanagan  
Mr Fra McCann  
Ms Bronwyn McGahan  
Mr Robin Swann*

*NOES*

*ABSTAIN*

*Mr David Hilditch MLA  
Ms Anna Lo MLA*

## **7. SR 2016-133 The Statutory Paternity, Statutory Adoption Pay and Shared Parental Pay (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016**

The Committee considered SR 2016-133 The Statutory Paternity, Statutory Adoption Pay and Shared Parental Pay (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016.

*Agreed:* That the Committee for Employment and Learning has considered SR 2016-133 The Statutory Paternity, Statutory Adoption Pay and Shared Parental Pay (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016, and subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules Report has no objection to the rule

## **8. Departmental Briefing - Annual Quality and Performance Reports**

*10:15 am The Departmental officials joined the meeting.*

The Committee was briefed by Mr Bobby Clulow, Senior Principal Economist, Dr Stephen Donnelly, Senior Principal Statistician, Mrs Angela Whiteside, Quality Improvement Adviser and Mr Rodney McMaster, Inspection Manager, Education and Training Inspectorate.

*10:16 am Ms Claire Sugden joined the meeting.*

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

*Mr Gerard Diver declared an interest as a former employability trainer.*

*10:58 am Mr David Hilditch left the meeting.*

*11:03 am Mr Phil Flanagan left the meeting.*

*11:10 am The Departmental officials left the meeting.*

## **9. Departmental Briefing - Response to Committee Inquiry into Post SEN Provision**

*11:11 am The Departmental officials joined the meeting.*

The Committee was briefed by Mr Colin Jack, Director of Strategy, European and Employment Relations Division, Mr Terry Park, Head of Disability Employment Service, Mr Andy Cole, Head of Further Education Policy and Strategic Development and Ms Christina Kelly, Deputy Head of Careers and Guidance Services.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to provide the Department with clarification around a number of the Report's recommendations.

*11:34 am Mr Phil Flanagan rejoined the meeting.*

*Agreed:* The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with the composition of the inter Departmental Group on SEN provision.

*11:54 am The Departmental officials left the meeting.*

*11:56 am Ms Anna Lo left the meeting.*

## **10. Briefing from Assembly Research and Information Service -Economic impact of cuts to the Higher Education Sector**

*11:56 am The researcher joined the meeting.*

The Committee was briefed by Mr Eoin Murphy, Research Officer.

*11:57 am Mr David Hilditch re-joined the meeting.*

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

*12:12 pm The researcher left the meeting.*

## **11. Briefing from UCU on Redundancies at the Ulster University**

*12:12 pm The representatives joined the meeting.*

The Committee was briefed by Dr Anthea Irwin, President, University and College Union, Ulster University Branch, Dr Tracy Irwin, Vice-President, University and College Union, Ulster University Branch and Ms Katharine Clarke, Regional Official, University and College Union.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Ulster University expressing its concerns regarding the staffing issues at the University.

*Mr Phil Flanagan declared and interest as a student of the Ulster University.*

*12:36 pm The representatives left the meeting.*

## **12. Any other business**

*None.*

*12:39 pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.*

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

**16 March 2016**