



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

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

WEDNESDAY, 21 OCTOBER 2015

ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Mr Robin Swann MLA (Chairperson)

Mr Sydney Anderson MLA
Mr Alex Easton MLA
Mr Phil Flanagan MLA
Mr David Hilditch MLA
Ms Anna Lo MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA
Ms Bronwyn McGahan MLA
Mr Pat Ramsey MLA
Ms Claire Sugden MLA

In Attendance: Mrs Cathie White (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Vincent Gribbin (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Johnny Lawless (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Marion Johnson (Clerical Officer)
Ms Amy Barr (Legislative Studies & Practice Student)

Apologies: Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA (Deputy-Chairperson)

10:01 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 14 October 2015

Agreed: The minutes of the meeting on 14 October were agreed.

4. Matters arising

The Committee noted a list of matters arising from the meeting on 14 October 2015.

10:01 am Mr Phil Flanagan joined the meeting.

10:01 am Mr Fra McCann joined the meeting.

5. Correspondence

The Committee considered the following items of correspondence:

- Departmental response regarding the NICEM Voices for Change Report.

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

- Correspondence from FALNI providing the report from the 4th Impact Forum Meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from the Assembly and Executive Review Committee regarding a call for evidence for the Assembly and Executive Reform (Assembly Opposition) Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence and to forward a Nil Response to the Assembly and Executive Review Committee.

- Departmental response regarding the RaISe Briefing Paper on the CEL Forward Work Plan.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response.

- Departmental response regarding information on alternative A' Level offerings.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response.

- Departmental response to Committee for Education correspondence regarding the impact of changes to GCSE grading structures.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response.

- Correspondence from the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister regarding the Contested Space Interface Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister providing a copy of the Departmental response to the Together: Building a United Community Report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Departmental response to Committee correspondence which raised issues in regards to European Social Fund

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response.

- Correspondence from Solace NI providing clarity around the role of NILGA.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister regarding a briefing from the Carnegie UK Trust on Towards a Wellbeing Framework Report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from the Committee for Education regarding the Special Educational Needs and Disability Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from the Open University offering to host a Committee meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to accept the request and schedule a meeting in the forward work programme.

- Departmental correspondence regarding the rebranding of EOS NI.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Departmental correspondence providing the Provisional Outturn Figures for 2014-2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Invitation from the Prince' Trust to its Celebrating Success in Northern Ireland Awards Ceremony on 10 November 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from FALNI to a follow up meeting from Adult Learners Week on 2 November 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from the Joseph Rowntree Foundation to a Creating First Job Opportunities in Northern Ireland Conference

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from Queen's University Belfast and the Royal Irish Academy to the John Bell Day Lecture 2015

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

6. Forward Work Programme

- The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme to 9 December 2015.

7. Briefing from NISRA on the Labour Force Survey

10:05 am The representatives joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Dr James Gillan, Senior Principal Statistician and Dr David Marshall, Director of Sources.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

10:11 am Ms Claire Sugden joined the meeting.

10:12 am Mr Sydney Anderson left the meeting.

Agreed: The representatives agreed to provide the Committee with the following information:

- Economic Inactivity statistics by council area.
- A table version of the statistics regarding the Change in employees and self-employed from Jan-Mar 2008.
- Unemployment rates for those under 25 years of age and those 25 and over.
- Updated statistics on Immigration.
- Check statistical significance of the drop in youth unemployment.

10:43 am Mr David Hilditch joined the meeting.

10:47 am The representatives left the meeting.

8. Briefing from the Ulster University - Budget Cuts

10:48 am The representatives joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Professor Paddy Nixon, Vice-Chancellor & President, Professor Richard Millar, Pro Vice-Chancellor Academic Planning, Partnerships and International Affairs, and Mr Peter Hope, Chief Finance and Information Officer.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

Agreed: The representatives agreed to provide clarity on which language courses and levels are being provided by the Further Education Colleges.

Agreed: The representatives agreed to provide further information on the Housing Management Course and whether 100% of the students on the course had gained employment.

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

Ms Claire Sugden declared an interest as a student of the Ulster University.

11:52 am Mr Pat Ramsey left the meeting.

11:56 am Mr Fra McCann left the meeting.

12:05 pm The representatives left the meeting.

9. Briefing from Ulster University Students Union - Student Finance and Student Fees

12:05 am The representatives joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Mr Colum Mackey, President, Mr Michael Quigg, Vice-President Magee Campus, Ms Kellie Murnion, Vice-President Jordanstown Campus and Mr Elliot Lyness, Vice-President Campaigns and Communications.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

Mr Phil Flanagan declared an interest as a member of the Ulster University Student's Union.

Agreed: The representatives agreed to provide a breakdown of the widening participation statistics for the University of Ulster regarding gender and community background.

12:28 pm The representatives left the meeting.

12:28 pm Ms Anna Lo left the meeting.

10. Any other business

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider a motion for a plenary debate regarding the implementation of the European Social Fund programmes for 2007-2013 and for 2014-2020.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to consider a motion for a plenary debate regarding the work of the Higher Education and Further Education institutions in Northern Ireland.

11. Date, time and place of next meeting

The Committee noted that the next meeting should be held on Wednesday, 11 November 2015 at 10.00 am in the Firstsource Solutions, Londonderry.

12:38 pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Mr Robin Swann MLA
Chairperson, Committee for Employment & Learning

11 November 2015