



COMMITTEE FOR ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

30 JUNE 2015

ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, 10.00AM

Present:

Mr Patsy McGlone (Chairperson)
Mr Phil Flanagan (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Steven Agnew
Mr Adrian Cochrane-Watson
Mr Gordon Dunne
Ms Megan Fearon
Mr Paul Frew
Mr Paul Givan
Mr William Humphrey
Mr Fearghal McKinney
Mr Máirtín Ó Muilleoir

In Attendance:

Mr Jim McManus (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Angela McParland (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Nathan McVeigh (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Christopher Jeffrey (Clerical Officer)

Apologies:

None

The meeting began at 10:20am

The Committee agreed to move to Agenda item 4.

4. Oral Briefing from the Irish League of Credit Unions: Credit Unions and Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Bill

The representatives joined the meeting at 10:20am

Phil Flanagan declared an interest as a member of a credit union

Patsy McGlone declared an interest as a member of a credit union

Steven Agnew declared an interest as a member of a credit union

Members received a briefing from Mr Brian McCrory, President, ILCU, Ms Breege-Anne Murphy, Interim Head of Legal and HR, ILCU and Mr Martin Fisher, Regulatory and Legal Officer, ILCU.

Key issues discussed included: the content of the legislation.

Máirtín Ó Muilleoir joined the meeting at 10.36am

Máirtín Ó Muilleoir declared an interest as a member of a credit union

Megan Fearon joined the meeting at 10.46am

William Humphrey declared an interest as a member of a credit union

The representatives left the meeting at 10:49am

Agreed: Members were content with the suggested list of stakeholder groups for the Committee's call for evidence for the Bill and to include on the list: NI Co-operative Forum/Co-operative Alternatives, United Dairy Farmers, Fane Valley Co-operative and Northern Ireland Federation of Housing Associations.

Agreed: Members were content with the draft Public Notice.

The Chairperson informed Members that a folder has now been set up on Sharepoint for Members' information and all associated papers will be added as they become available.

5. Oral Briefing from the Ulster Federation of Credit Unions: Credit Unions and Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Bill

The representatives joined the meeting at 10:50am

Members received a briefing from Mr David Dowey, Chairman, UFCU and Mr Gordon Smyth, Business Development Manager, UFCU.

Key issues discussed included: the content of the legislation.

Paul Frew joined the meeting at 11.00am

William Humphrey left the meeting at 11.14am

The representatives left the meeting at 11:17am

Agreed: to write to the Department asking for information on why credit unions are not able to invest as banks are, for a detailed explanation of why, in regards to Clause 1, it decided not to allow corporate bodies to hold membership and what instruction, guidance and/or advice it received from Treasury on the issue, and on what aspect did the Department seek legal advice regarding unincorporated bodies and did the legal advice come from within the Department or the Treasury.

Agreed: to forward the Hansard of the DETI briefing to the ILCU and UFCU for information.

Agreed: to arrange an oral briefing from the Treasury on this issue.

The Committee agreed to move to Agenda item 1.

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted as above.

2. Draft Minutes of Meeting of 23 June 2015

Agreed: the Committee agreed the draft minutes of 23 June 2015.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson informed Members that it was agreed at the Chairpersons' Liaison Group that, from September, Committee packs will be issued in electronic format only and that Members wishing to avail of paper copies of Committee packs will be responsible for printing the packs themselves.

The Chairperson informed members that refresher training on electronic Committee packs will be held in early September for those who wish to avail of it.

Agreed: Members to contact the Committee Office if they wish to receive

training.

Members discussed holding a planning meeting after summer recess.

Agreed: the Committee to hold a planning meeting for the 2015-16 session on Tuesday 8 September at 10.00am.

The Chairperson informed Members that it is normal practice for committees to delegate authority to the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson during periods of recess to submit views on the releasing or withholding of information in any non-routine/contentious Freedom of Information requests received.

Agreed: the Committee is content to delegate the authority to respond to Freedom of Information issues during summer recess to the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson.

William Humphrey returned to the meeting at 11.25am

Members considered a response from the Deputy Head of Office at the Office of the Northern Ireland Executive in Brussels (ONIEB) to the Committee's request for a short report following the Committee's visit to Stuttgart.

Agreed: to write to the Deputy Head of Office asking that he keeps the Committee updated regarding a return visit to Northern Ireland by officials from the Stuttgart Region.

Members noted a thank you letter from the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Transport and Communications.

The Chairperson informed members that Mr Kinahan has written to the Speaker to resign his position as a Member of the Assembly with effect from Saturday 27 June.

Agreed: to write to Mr Kinahan to thank him for his contribution to the work of the Committee and wish him well.

The Committee agreed to move to Agenda item 7.

7. Matters Arising

Members considered a response from the Department to the Committee's query regarding Business Debtline.

Agreed: to write to the Department asking if it considers it worthwhile to provide funding for a scheme such as Advice NI Debtline.

Members considered correspondence from SONI in regards to the Committee's request for notification of SONI Board minutes.

Agreed: to write to SONI stating that the Committee considers the response provided to the Committee as inadequate and ask that SONI provide an explanation as to how it ensures transparency and allows for adequate scrutiny of its work.

Agreed: to write to the Utility Regulator asking for its view on SONI publishing its minutes.

Agreed: to write to the Department asking if it considers it acceptable that SONI does not publish its Minutes of Board meetings, given the level of public money involved.

Members noted correspondence from Ofcom regarding the availability in Northern Ireland of the online player services of RTÉ and TG4.

Agreed: to write to Ofcom to seek its views on the feasibility of Northern Ireland being allocated NI-specific IP addresses by the European Regional Internet Registry (RIPE).

Members noted a response from the Consumer Council to the Committee's request for information regarding its research into online parcel deliveries.

Members considered a response from DETI to Committee queries regarding Horizon 2020.

Agreed: to ask the Department if it is aware of any applicants from Northern Ireland to the Horizon 2020 SME Instrument Phase 1.

Members noted a response from DETI to Committee queries regarding Insolvency Practitioners.

Members noted a response from DETI to Committee queries regarding the Innovation Strategy.

Members noted a response from DETI to Committee queries regarding electricity policy.

Members noted a response from Tourism NI to Committee queries regarding Sports Personality of the Year 2015.

Members noted correspondence from DFP providing further information to the Committee following NISRA's briefing.

8. Legislation: SL1 The Debt Relief Act (Northern Ireland) 2010 (Consequential Amendments) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015

Members discussed SL1 The Debt Relief Act (Northern Ireland) 2010 (Consequential Amendments) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Agreed: that the Committee is content with the policy proposals.

9. Consultation: Draft Storage of Carbon Dioxide (Access to Infrastructure) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and the Draft Storage of Carbon Dioxide (Licensing etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

Members considered a consultation document in relation to the Draft Storage of Carbon Dioxide (Access to Infrastructure) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and the Draft Storage of Carbon Dioxide (Licensing etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Agreed: to ask the Department for a summary of responses following consultation.

Megan Fearon left the meeting at 11.46am

10. Written Briefing from DETI: DETI Research Agenda update

Members noted a written briefing from the Department in relation to the DETI Research Agenda update.

11. Written Briefing from DETI: DETI Export Strategy – Enabling the conditions for increasing external sales and exports in Northern Ireland

Members considered a written briefing from the Department in relation to DETI Export Strategy – Enabling the conditions for increasing external sales and exports in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: to receive an oral briefing from the Department on the Export Strategy.

12. EU Matters

Members considered the EU Matters Newsletter.

Agreed: to write to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister asking why there has been no further updates from the ONIEB.

13. Correspondence

Members noted the following items of correspondence;

- i. Correspondence from Becon Consortium inviting the Committee to visit the Indaver Energy from Waste plant.

Agreed: to consider this again at the Committee's planning meeting in September.

14. Any Other Business

There were no additional items of business.

The Committee agreed to move to Agenda item 6.

6. Oral Briefing from DETI: SL1 Proposed Renewables Obligation Closure Order (Northern Ireland) 2015

The officials joined the meeting at 11:50am

Fearghal McKinney joined the meeting at 11.21am

Paul Givan joined the meeting at 12.11pm

Máirtín Ó Muilleoir left the meeting at 12.17pm

Paul Givan left the meeting at 12.31pm

Members received a briefing from Mr John Mills, Head of Energy Division, DETI, Mr Michael Harris, Deputy Principal, Renewable Energy Branch, DETI and Ms Alison Clydesdale, Principal Officer, Renewable Energy Branch, DETI

Key issues discussed included: the content of the legislation.

The officials left the meeting at 1:15pm

Paul Frew left the meeting at 1.21pm

Agreed: to write to the Department asking it to provide full details of any cost benefit analysis that was undertaken by the Department to inform the development of the proposals for supporting onshore wind in Northern Ireland for an additional year, and requesting if this hasn't been completed that this is

done in order to inform a Committee decision on the SL1.

Agreed: to write to the Department asking that this information is provided to the Committee before the end of July 2015 in order that it may inform the informal meetings that the Committee is intending to hold with the Utility Regulator and the Ulster University Economic Policy Centre.

Agreed: to ask the Utility Regulator and the Ulster University Economic Policy Centre to brief the Committee on the matter.

Paul Frew returned to the meeting at 1.23pm

Fearghal McKinney left the meeting at 1.25pm

Paul Givan returned to the meeting at 1.25pm

Paul Frew left the meeting at 1.30pm

15. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on **Tuesday 15 September 2015 at 10.00am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.**

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 1.32pm

Mr Patsy McGlone
Chairperson
Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

15 September 2015