



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

13 FEBRUARY 2014

SEMINAR 2, NORTHERN IRELAND SCIENCE PARK 10.00AM.

- Present: Mr Patsy McGlone (Chairperson)
Mr Phil Flanagan (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Sydney Anderson
Mr Sammy Douglas
Mr Gordon Dunne
Mr Paul Frew
Mr Fearghal McKinney
Mr Mitchel McLaughlin
Ms Sandra Overend
- In Attendance: Mr Jim McManus (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Nathan McVeigh (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Jonathan Lawless (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Jacqueline Holt (Clerical Officer)
- Apologies: Mr Steven Agnew
Ms Megan Fearon

The meeting began at 10.09am in public session.

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted, as listed above.

2. Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 06 February 2014.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft minutes of 06 February 2014.

3. Chairperson's Business

Members considered an invitation to the Chairperson to a briefing on the CBI Infrastructure Report.

Agreed: the Committee is content for the Chairperson to attend.

Members considered an invitation to the Chairperson to a drinks reception and dinner to celebrate the work of the Northern Ireland Assembly and Business Trust.

Agreed: the Committee is content for the Chairperson to attend.

Members considered a list of proposed additional attendees to be invited to the Community Energy Stakeholder event.

Agreed: to issue the invitations to those on the list.

The Chairperson informed members that as the Committee Review of Electricity Policy report will not be finalised in time to hold the debate on the motion on 25 February, this has been changed to a provisional date of 3 March and the Committee motion on financial support for credit unions has been scheduled for 25 February.

Agreed: the Committee is content with this approach.

The Chairperson informed members that the Clerk has contacted the OFMDFM DALO regarding Committee queries on Barosso Desk Officers and has been informed that OFMDFM is awaiting information from DETI before the response to the Committee's queries can be completed and that DETI has informed the Clerk the required information has now been forwarded.

Agreed: the Committee office to provide a timeline regarding correspondence with OFMDFM on this issue.

Members considered a briefing paper from the IBOA, the Union representing the finance sector, outlining its views on on-going issues relating to the Ulster Bank.

Agreed: to schedule oral briefings from the Chief Executive of the Royal Bank of Scotland and the IBOA and the on this issue.

Agreed: to receive a briefing from the Department following its meeting with the RBS.

4. The Work of the Northern Ireland Science Park – Oral Briefing from Northern Ireland Science Park

The representatives joined the meeting at 10.21am

Sandra Overend joined the meeting at 10.43am

Paul Frew joined the meeting at 11.12am

Members received an oral briefing from Norman Apsley, CEO, Northern Ireland Science Park and Steve Orr, Director of NISP CONNECT.

Key issues discussed included: the work of the Northern Ireland Science Park.

The representatives left the meeting at 11.27am

Agreed: to contact Education and Employment and Learning Committees to discuss a joint event relating to the Northern Ireland Science Park.

5. Innovation Strategy – update on consultation responses – Oral Briefing from DETI

The officials joined the meeting at 11.29am

Members received an oral briefing from Ciaran McGarrity, Head of Innovation Policy, DETI, Thomas Byrne, Deputy Economist, Analytical Services Unit and Eoin McFadden, Innovation Policy Unit, DETI.

Key issues discussed included: responses to the consultation document.

Sammy Douglas left the meeting at 11.33am

Mitchel McLaughlin left the meeting at 12.18pm

The officials left the meeting at 12.32pm

Agreed: to forward correspondence from the Open University to the Department for information.

6. Matters Arising

Members considered responses from the System Operator for Northern Ireland, Northern Ireland Electricity and the Department to Committee queries regarding the 110kV standby cross-border connections between Enniskillen-Coraclassy and Letterkenny-Strabane.

Agreed: to write to the Department stating, in the Department's response to the Committee on Intelligent Energy Systems they stated that these systems have a role to play and to ask the Department to provide further details of what that role is.

Members considered a response from the Department to Committee queries regarding Dr John Bradley's report into 'Cross Border Economic Renewal: Rethinking Regional Policy in Ireland'.

Agreed: to forward the response to Dr John Bradley for information.

Members considered a response from Assembly Research to comments from Dr Bradley.

Agreed: to forward the comments to Dr John Bradley for information.

Members considered a paper from Assembly Research regarding Sub-regional economic data published by the European Commission. Members also considered a briefing paper from the Open University regarding an initiative in Milton Keynes to curate key data to support forecast of growth in the City.

Agreed: to forward the Assembly Research paper to Dr John Bradley for information.

Agreed: to forward the correspondence from the Open University to Dr John Bradley to obtain his views on how a similar initiative could support the gathering and use of sub-regional data in Northern Ireland.

Members noted a response from the Department to Committee queries regarding the proposed Assembly Consent Motion on the abolition of the National Consumer Council.

Members considered a response from the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister to Committee queries regarding the lack of uptake on a \$30 Pension Fund Investment by the New York State Comptroller's Office and other US Funds that are available and if any of these Funds have been drawn down.

Agreed: to write to the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister asking for details of any follow up that has been done with the relevant private equity investment companies which are employed by the City and State to identify suitable projects in Northern Ireland.

Members noted a response from the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister regarding the Renewable Energy Inquiry Recommendation 25.

Members considered a response from the Department to Committee queries regarding the Consultation on the Strategic Framework to tackle Economic Inactivity in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: to forward the response to the Committee for Education and the Committee for Employment and Learning for information.

Members considered a copy of the draft guidance protocol on community benefits derived from wind farms in West Tyrone.

Agreed: to forward the draft protocol to the Minister for the Environment and the Committee for the Environment for information.

Members considered a response from the Northern Ireland Tourist Board to Committee queries regarding the Giro d'Italia in the context of correspondence from the Regional Development Committee on its Inquiry into the Benefits of Cycling on the Northern Ireland Economy.

Agreed: to forward the response to the Committee for Regional Development for information.

Agreed: to write to the Department asking for a breakdown on what the £3million regarding the Giro d'Italia is being spent on.

Members considered a response from the joint Committee on Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation to the Committee's request for a meeting in Parliament Buildings.

Agreed: the Committee is content to await an update from the Committee on Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation.

Members noted a response from the Department to Committee queries regarding the briefing on DETI Website and Online Presence on 16 January 2014.

Members considered a response from the Department to Committee queries regarding its priorities in relation to the European Commission's Work Programme.

Agreed: to forward the response to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister for information.

The Chairperson informed members that Departmental officials are available to brief the Committee regarding the Consumer Rights Legislative Consent Motion at its next meeting.

Agreed: to receive an oral briefing from Department officials at the Committee meeting on 20th February.

Members considered a proposal from Gordon Dunne for a visit to North Down.

Agreed: that the Committee is content with the proposed visit.

7. Legislation: SL1 The Gas (individual Standards of Performance) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014

Members considered an SL1 regarding the Gas (Individual Standards of Performance) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014

Agreed: that the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment has considered the Department's proposal for subordinate legislation under the Gas (Individual Standards of Performance) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014 and has no objection to the policy implications of the proposed legislation at this stage.

8. Written Briefing from DETI – PfG Commitments Progress Report to 30 September 2013.

Members considered a Written Briefing from DETI regarding PfG Commitments Progress Report to 30 September 2013.

Agreed: to write to the Department asking for an update on the process used to calculate the jobs created what stage this process is at and to provide figures to the Committee of jobs created if these are available.

9. Correspondence

Members noted the following items of correspondence:

- i. From the Committee for the OFMDFM regarding a departmental summary of discussion at the Joint Ministerial Council (Europe) meeting of 7 October 2013
- ii. From the Green Investment Bank regarding low energy street lighting

Agreed: to forward the correspondence to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment, Department for Regional Development, Committee for Regional Development and Strategic Investment Board for information.

- iii. Members noted correspondence from the Northern Ireland Fish Producers Organisation regarding wind farm impacts on the fishing industry.
- iv. From the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure regarding the proposed closure of Exploris Aquarium.

Agreed: to write to the Department of the Environment asking if the business case for Exploris Aquarium has been sent to other Departments for information.

- v. From the Committee for Finance and Personnel regarding Spring Supplementary Estimates 2013-14.
- vi. From the Minister regarding Electricity Market Reform progress.

Agreed: to write to the Department asking for clarification on how the proposal in the Electricity market Reform is linked with the proposed level of ROCs for ground based solar PV in the NIRO.

- vii. From the Minister to the Chair of the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure regarding the development of Tourism Signature Projects.
- viii. From the Minister to the Speaker informing the Speaker of her intention to make statements to the Assembly on 18 February regarding the outcome of the North South Ministerial Council meeting held in Trade and Business Development and in Tourism Sectoral format on 22 January.

10. Any other business

There were no additional items of business.

11. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on **20 February 2014** at **10.00am** in **Room 30, Parliament Buildings.**

The meeting was suspended at 1.01pm

The meeting recommenced in closed session at 1.14pm with the following members present:

Phil Flanagan (Deputy Chairperson)
Patsy McGlone (Chairperson)
Sydney Anderson
Paul Frew
Sandra Overend

12. Electricity Policy Review – Closed Session

Members considered the draft report for the Committee's Electricity Policy Review.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 1.38pm

Mr Patsy McGlone
Chairperson
Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

13 February 2014