



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

20 FEBRUARY 2014

ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS 10.00AM.

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

The meeting began at 10.11am in public session.

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted, as listed above.

2. Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 13 February 2014.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft minutes of 13 February 2014.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson informed members that an email was issued earlier in the week regarding training in Microsoft OneNote and electronic committee pack update training for members.

Agreed: the Committee is content for the Committee Office to arrange update training for members.

Members considered a press article regarding concerns over the possibility of job losses at Teleperformance in Newry.

Agreed: to arrange an informal meeting with the Minister and the Chief Executive of Invest NI to discuss Teleperformance.

Members considered correspondence to the Chairperson from BNRG Northern Power Ltd regarding the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation.

Agreed: to arrange an informal meeting with BNRG to discuss the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation.

4. Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce Report on Export Opportunities – Oral Briefing from DETI and Invest NI

The officials joined the meeting at 10.16am

Members received an oral briefing from Dr Vicky Kell, International Trade Director, Invest NI, Nigel Sands, Head of International Trade Divisional Services, Invest NI, Shane Murphy, Head of DETI Economic Policy Division and Phil Rodgers, head of DETI Economic Policy Unit.

Key issues discussed included: export statistics, challenges and successes.

Paul Frew joined the meeting at 10.26am

Phil Flanagan joined the meeting at 10.36am

The officials left the meeting at 11.51am

Sammy Douglas left the meeting at 11.51am

Agreed: to forward the Hansard Transcript of the meeting to the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce when available, suggesting it seeks a meeting with the Department to discuss the matter.

Agreed: to receive an update from the Department on progress with the development of the Export Strategy

Agreed: that the Department is to consider how elected representatives can be briefed by the Department/Invest NI in order to keep them up to date.

Agreed: to ask the Department what consideration has been given to the effect of high energy costs on large industrial and commercial business users and how to mitigate or resolve issues in this area.

Agreed: that Invest NI to keep the Committee informed of key export area data.

5. Consumer Rights Bill Legislative Consent Motion – Oral Briefing from DETI

The officials joined the meeting at 11.52am

Sammy Douglas returned to the meeting at 11.55am

Members received an oral briefing from Dennis Cunningham, Head of Consumer Affairs Branch and Jimmy Hughes, Deputy Chief Trading Standards Officer.

Key issues discussed included: the purpose of the consent motion and the benefits it will bring to consumers.

Agreed: to ask the Consumer Council for a written briefing outlining its views of the Consumer Rights Bill

The officials left the meeting at 12.23pm

The Chairperson left the meeting at 12.24pm

The Deputy Chairperson took the chair at 12.24pm

6. Matters Arising

Members noted a letter of thanks to the Committee from the Irish League of Credit Unions for tabling the motion of support for financial assistance to credit unions.

Members noted a letter from the Ulster Federation of Credit unions endorsing the Committee's motion and the ILCU position.

Members considered a draft press release relating to the Committee motion on credit unions.

Agreed: the Committee is content with the draft press release.

Members considered the Financial Capability Strategy and Action Plan.

Agreed: the Committee is content with the Financial Capability Strategy.

Members noted a response from the Department to a Committee query on collaborative R&D programmes.

Members noted topics to be discussed at the meeting with the Joint Committee on Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation as previously agreed.

The Chairperson informed members that the Minister is meeting with Ulster Bank Representatives today and the First Minister, Deputy First Minister and the Minister for Finance and Personnel met with the RBS Chair and Ulster Bank Chief Executive, Jim Brown to focus on the RBS review of the Ulster Bank.

Agreed: to ask the Department for a written briefing regarding the Minister's meeting with Ulster Bank representatives.

Agreed: to write to OFMDFM asking for a written briefing on its meeting with RBS and the Ulster Bank on the RBS review of the Ulster Bank.

7. Provisions Contained in the EU Tobacco Products Directive – Written Briefing from Assembly Research

Members noted an Assembly Research paper regarding Provisions Contained in the EU Tobacco Products Directive.

8. Barosso Task Force Desk Officer's Report: October – December 2013

Members noted quarterly reports from the four Desk Officers, two briefing documents produced by the Social Cohesion Desk Officer and a timeline for its request for information on the Desk Officers activity.

9. Correspondence

Members noted the following items of correspondence for action;

- i. From the Department inviting members to attend a public consultation event on ‘Enabling Success’, the new strategic framework to tackle economic inactivity.
Agreed: that members contact the Committee Office if they wish to attend.
- ii. From the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development regarding the Agri-food Loan Scheme.
Agreed: to ask the Department to copy its response to this Committee.
- iii. From the Committee for OFMDFM regarding the drawdown of EU funds for the last three years.
Agreed: to ask the Department for a breakdown of how this funding was used in each of the three years.
- iv. Members noted correspondence from the Minister regarding consultation on EU Regulation on the rights of passengers in bus and coach transport.
- v. Members noted a response from the Minister to the Committee for Employment and Learning regarding its Inquiry into post special education provision.
- vi. From the Committee for Finance and Personnel regarding sickness absence in the public sector.
Agreed: to ask the Department for its views on the parts of the report relating to DETI.
- vii. From the NI Assembly and Business Trust inviting members to an event in the Long Gallery.
Agreed: that members contact the Committee Office if they wish to attend.

10. Any other business

Members considered a proposal to strengthen links between the Committee and Invest NI.

Agreed: to arrange an informal meeting with Invest NI.

11. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on **27 February 2014** at **10.00am** in **Room 30, Parliament Buildings.**

The meeting was suspended at 12.38pm

The meeting recommenced in closed session at 12.45pm with the following members present:

*Phil Flanagan (Deputy Chairperson)
Steven Agnew
Sydney Anderson
Gordon Dunne
Sammy Douglas
Paul Frew
Sandra Overend*

12. Electricity Policy Review – Closed Session

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

Agreed: the Committee is content that the list of Abbreviations and Table of Contents stands part of the report.

Agreed: the Committee is content that the Executive Summary stands part of the report.

Agreed: the Committee is content that the Summary of Recommendations at paragraphs stands part of the report.

Agreed: the Committee is content that the Introduction at paragraphs - stands part of the report.

Agreed: the Committee is content that the Key Issues and Findings at paragraphs - stands part of the report.

Agreed: the Committee is content that the Conclusions and Recommendations at paragraphs - stands part of the report.

Agreed: the Committee is content that the extract of the Minutes of Proceedings at Appendix 1 stands part of the report.

Agreed: the Committee is content that the Minutes of Evidence (Hansards) at Appendix 2 stands part of the report.

Agreed: the Committee is content that the Written Submissions at Appendix 3 stands part of the report.

Agreed: the Committee is content that the Assembly Research Papers at Appendix 4 stands part of the report.

Agreed: the Committee is content for the Chairperson to approve an extract from today's minutes which reflect the read-through of the Report.

Members considered a copy of the draft motion for the debate.

Agreed: the Committee is content with the draft motion.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 12.49pm

Mr Patsy McGlone
Chairperson
Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

27 February 2014