



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

01 MAY 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
Ms Megan Fearon
Mr Paul Frew
Mr Fearghal McKinney
Mr Mitchel McLaughlin
- In Attendance: Mr Jim McManus (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Angela McParland (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Nathan McVeigh (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Jacqueline Holt (Clerical Officer)
- Apologies: Ms Sandra Overend

The meeting began at 10.21am in public session.

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 9.

9. Forward Work Programme

Members considered a letter from the Department inviting members of the Committee to join an Invest NI Trade Mission to a major Life Sciences

exhibition in late June in San Diego, California, USA.

Agreed: that a small representative group of the Committee will attend the Trade Mission.

Agreed: that Assembly Research liaises with Invest NI to explore the possibility of broadening the scope of the visit for the Committee.

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 1.

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted, as listed above.

2. Minutes of meetings held on Thursday 10 April 2014.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft minutes of 10 April 2014.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Committee considered a draft letter to the RBS following the Ulster Bank briefing on 10 April.

Agreed: to send the letter to RBS.

Agreed: to forward the letter to the IBOA and ask that the Committee is copied into any subsequent correspondence on this matter.

The Chairperson informed members that Legal Services have requested a short extension to the deadline for legal advice it is providing to the Committee regarding the decision by the Department to grant Tamboran Resources Pty LTD a 6-month extension to Part 1 of the Work Programme under Petroleum Licence PL2/10.

Agreed: the legal advice to be made available for the Committee's next meeting.

The Chairperson informed members that a member of the public has requested a copy of the slides presented by Tamboran Resources Pty Ltd when it briefed the Committee on 28 June 2012.

Agreed: to forward the slides to the member of the public.

Agreed: to forward a copy of the request to members for information.

The Chairperson informed members that the Utility Regulator has issued a consultation on the Implementation of Energy Supplier Codes of Practice.

Agreed: to ask the Utility Regulator to provide a summary of responses to the Committee following the consultation and to confirm that the Committee will receive an invitation to the workshop on this matter.

The Chairperson informed members that he has been invited to attend a lunch hosted by Ulster Bank at the Balmoral Show on Thursday 15 May 2014 and that both he and the Deputy Chairperson received invitations to attend a reception hosted by Sainsbury's, also at the Balmoral Show on Thursday 15 May 2014.

Agreed: that the Chairperson attends the Ulster Bank lunch and that, as the Chairperson is unable to attend, members inform the Committee Office if they are able to attend the Sainsbury's reception.

The Chairperson informed members that the Department has requested an extension to the end of June to respond to the Committee's request to consider how information it receives from the European Liaison Officers (previously known as Barroso Desk Officers) can best be passed to the Committee.

Agreed: to agree to extend the deadline for the submission to no later than the meeting of 19 June 2014.

Agreed: to write to the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to ask for an update on the communication strategy they have in place that ensures the dissemination of information from Brussels to the Committee as well as businesses and the wider public.

The Chairperson informed members that the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister was to hold a European Advisory Panel on Horizon 2020 on Tuesday 6 May 2014 in the Senate but this has been postponed at the Department's request.

Agreed: to ask the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to inform the Committee when the event will be happening in the future.

4. Electricity Policy Review Part III Grid Connections – Oral briefing from the Northern Ireland Renewables Industry Group (NIRIG)

The representatives joined the meeting at 10.31am.

Steven Agnew joined the meeting at 10.39am

Sammy Douglas left the meeting at 10.44am

Megan Fearon joined the meeting at 10.45am

Members received an oral briefing from Patrick McClughan, Chairperson, Seamus Hegarty, Vice-Chairperson, Mervyn Adams, Grid Group

Chairperson and Meabh Cormacain, Policy and Communications Co-ordinator.

Key issues discussed included: grid connection policy, the importance of the grid to renewables, the Strategic Energy Framework, SEDWIG, co-ordinated planning and development, costs, contestability, planning permission, NIE resources, the NIE graphical information system, regulatory policies, grid investment, smart grid development.

Paul Frew left the meeting at 10.58am

Fearghal McKinney joined the meeting at 11.00am

Megan Fearon left the meeting at 11.41am

Fearghal McKinney left the meeting at 11.50am

Mitchel McLaughlin left the meeting at 11.55am

The representatives left the meeting at 11.59am.

Agreed: to forward additional questions to NIRIG for a written response.

The meeting was suspended at 12.00pm

The meeting recommenced in public session at 12.07pm

5. Electricity Policy Review Part III Grid Connections – Oral briefing from Action Renewables

The representatives joined the meeting at 12.07pm.

Members received an oral briefing from Michael Doran, Executive Director and Jonathan Buick, Head of Projects.

Key issues discussed included: issues within 50-500kW range, current length of time and process for a quote and grid connection, cost of grid connection, small scale renewables and generation and export of renewable electricity onto the grid, planning permission, comparisons to within GB.

The representatives left the meeting at 12.59pm.

Agreed: to forward additional questions to Action Renewables for a written response and members to inform the Clerk by next day of any additional questions they wish to be forwarded to NIRIG and Action Renewables.

Agreed: Action Renewables to forward, to the Committee, information from a comparative study carried out with Airtricity in Scotland and its findings as to which regulatory body is responsible for ensuring consistency of standards with GB and the EU.

6. Matters Arising

Members discussed the publication, onto the Assembly website, of written briefings it has received for the Electricity Policy Review Part III Grid Connection.

Agreed: to publish each written briefing onto the Assembly website on receipt of the consent of the author.

Members considered responses from the Department and Enterprise NI, to the Committee, regarding the development of a co-ordinated approach to a programme for retail incubation.

Agreed: to write to the Department that the Committee suggests a collaborative approach to a programme for retail incubation between the Department, NIIRTA and the FSB. To write to Enterprise NI suggesting they contact NIIRTA, FSB and the Department to coordinate a collaborative approach regarding a programme for retail incubation.

Members noted correspondence from OFMDFM clarifying points raised by the Committee regarding the European Liaison Officer Reports.

Members noted a letter from the Department advising that the evaluation of the G8 Summit will be available in June.

Members considered a response from the Department outlining what Tourism Ireland is doing to promote the Giro d'Italia and the overall cost to the taxpayer for hosting the Giro.

Agreed: to ask the Department for clarification around the figure given of a global audience of 775 million people, whether this was actual audience and for a breakdown of the locations of the audience.

Members considered a response from the Department regarding the Investment Strategy Project Delivery Portal.

Agreed: to forward the response to the Committee for Finance and Personnel for information.

Members noted a response from the Department regarding interim targets for the ERDF Programme.

Members noted a response from the Department to the Committee's request for the names of banks that ex-ante consultants approached.

Members considered papers from Bryson House on the Strasbourg Declaration and 'A Proposed Social Value Framework for the Third Sector'.

Agreed: to forward the paper to the Department, subject to approval from Bryson, asking for its views on the papers.

Members considered the Department of Finance and Personnel's Office Estate Energy Efficiency and Carbon Reduction Plan and the latest Public Sector Energy Consumption Report.

Agreed: to ask Assembly Research for a briefing on this matter.

Agreed: to ask the Committee for Finance and Personnel if they are currently carrying out any work on this matter and if it is content that this Committee receives an oral briefing from Department of Finance and Personnel Officials on this matter.

Members considered a written briefing from ReNEW on its project to increase co-operation between research and business to create value from waste.

Agreed: to forward the briefing to the Committee for the Environment for information.

Members noted a Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI) Scoping Study to Develop a Set of Supply Use Tables.

Members noted that the Committee is hosting a workshop with Green Investment Bank on the morning of 10 June 2014 in the Long Gallery.

Agreed: to review the list of invitees at the next meeting.

7. Legislation: The Draft Renewables Obligation (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2014

Members considered SR 2014/00 The Draft Renewables Obligation (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Agreed: that the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment has considered The Draft Renewables Obligation (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2014 S.R. 2014/00 and, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules report, recommends that it be affirmed by the Assembly.

8. Correspondence

Members noted the following items of correspondence:

- i. From Simple Power submitting a response to the Committee's Electricity Policy Review on Grid Connections.

Agreed: to consider issues identified during NIE, Utility Regulator and DETI briefings on the Review.

Agreed: to ask Assembly Research for further information.

- ii. From the Ulster Farmers' Union submitting a response to the Committee's Electricity Policy Review on Grid Connections.

Agreed: to consider issues identified during NIE, Utility Regulator and DETI briefings on the Review.

- iii. From the Ulster Farmers' Union regarding Ground-Based Solar PV on Single Farm Payments.

Agreed: to forward the correspondence to the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development for information.

- iv. From the Northern Ireland Assembly and Business Trust inviting members to meet a delegation from the Federal State of Berlin on Tuesday 13 May.

Agreed: that the Committee Office will contact members regarding their attendance.

- v. From the Committee for Health, Social Services and Public Safety on its meeting with Bio Business.

Agreed: to forward a copy of the briefing to the Committee for Employment and Learning for information.

- vi. From Power NI requesting a meeting with the Chair on the Utility Regulator's consultation on the Possible Cancellation of the Generating Unit Agreements.

Agreed: to arrange a meeting with Power NI and the Chairperson and deputy Chairperson of the Committee.

Agreed: to ask Assembly Research for further information on this matter.

- vii. From First Flight Wind providing an update on the offshore scoping report and delays to a geophysical survey.

- viii. A copy of the Department's submission to the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure Inquiry into Inclusion in the Arts of Working Class Communities.

- ix. From the Committee for Regional Development enclosing correspondence on the proposed power station at Larne.

Agreed: to confirm if the Committee for the Environment have received this correspondence.

- x. From the Department for Regional Development regarding the Proposed Bus and Coach Passengers Rights and Obligations (Designation and Enforcement) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014.
- xi. From a member of the public regarding correspondence to the Minister regarding a planning application for an explosives store associated with a gold mining exploration site.

Agreed: to forward the correspondence to the Committee for Justice.

- xii. From National Museums Northern Ireland inviting the Committee to the 50th anniversary of the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum.

Agreed: that members notify the Committee Office if they wish to attend.

- xiii. From the RSPB to the First Minister and deputy First Minister regarding its concerns on the Rural Development Programme 2014-20.

Agreed: to forward the correspondence to the First Minister and deputy first Minister for comment.

9. Forward Work Programme

Members considered the draft Forward Work Programme for the Committee from 8 May to 3 July.

Agreed: that the Committee is content to visit SDC Trailers on 26 June.

Agreed: that the Committee is content with the Forward Work Programme.

10. Any other business

There was no additional items of business.

11. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on **8 May 2014** at **10.00am** in **Room 30, Parliament Buildings**.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 13.21pm.

Mr Patsy McGlone
Chairperson
Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

8 May 2014