



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

29 MAY 2014

ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, 10.00AM

Present: Mr Patsy McGlone (Chairperson)

Mr Steven Agnew
Mr Sydney Anderson
Mr Sammy Douglas
Mr Gordon Dunne
Mr Paul Frew
Mr Fearghal McKinney

In Attendance: Mr Jim McManus (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Angela McParland (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Nathan McVeigh (Clerical Supervisor)

Apologies: Mr Phil Flanagan (Deputy Chairperson)
Ms Megan Fearon
Ms Sandra Overend

The meeting began at 10.15am.

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted, as listed above.

2. Minutes of meetings held on Thursday 15 May 2014.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft minutes of 15 May 2014.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson informed members that the 2014 Survey of Services is now underway and it is important that all Members and their staff reflect on the services provided by the Assembly Commission and respond to the survey.

The Chairperson informed members that he met with Power NI on Tuesday 27th May regarding the Utility Regulator consultation on the possible cancellation of generating unit agreements in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: the Committee is content to address the matter when the Utility Regulator briefs the Committee on 3 July 2014.

Sydney Anderson left the meeting at 10.24am

The Chairperson reminded members that the Committee agreed that the Deputy Chairperson and the Clerk would attend a Knowledge Exchange Seminar in the Long Gallery on Thursday 15th May in which Dr Budd was presenting.

The Chairperson informed members that the Deputy Chairperson and the Clerk attended the session which was on 'Sustainable Economy' and Dr Budd presented on the theme "Can the peace dividend and devolution transform business in Northern Ireland: lessons from the UK's fastest growing sub-region?".

Members considered information on Dr Budd provided by Assembly Research.

Sydney Anderson left the meeting at 10.25am

The meeting lost its decision-making quorum and was suspended at 10.25am

The meeting recommenced in public session at 10.26am

Agreed: that the Committee is content to proceed with the proposal to seek the appointment of Dr Budd as Specialist Advisor to the Committee.

4. Electricity Policy Review Part III Grid Connections - Oral briefing from SSE

The representatives joined the meeting at 10.28am.

Members received an oral briefing from Mr David Manning, Director of Corporate Affairs, Mr Iain Wright, Head of Regulation and Ms Bernice Doyle, Grid Manager.

Key issues discussed included: Slieve Kirk Wind Farm, Slieve Divena Wind Farm, timelines of projects, contestability, 'cluster' policy, costs and timescales involved to connect to the grid, general network upgrades and the North South interconnector, the issues involved should planning applications and grid connection applications be made in parallel as opposed to in series, loss of investment in Northern Ireland caused by delays in grid connection.

Sammy Douglas joined the meeting at 10.31am

Paul Frew joined the meeting at 10.36am

Fearghal McKinney left the meeting at 11.21am

Agreed: that SSE provide information to the Committee on the timescales and stages involved in previous wind farm projects.

The representatives left the meeting at 11.35am.

5. Electricity Policy Review Part III Grid Connections - Oral briefing from Northern Ireland Electricity

The representatives joined the meeting at 11.36am.

Members received an oral briefing from Mr Joe O'Mahony, Managing Director, Mr Robert Wasson, Asset Management Director, Mr Michael Atkinson, Head of Generation Connections and Mr Peter Ewing, Deputy Managing Director of Regulation.

Key issues discussed included: costs and timescales of grid connection, NIE resources, cost of grid reinforcement, cost of reinforcement of transmission system, transmission network reinforcement strategy, grid development planning and consent, large scale versus small scale generation on wind farms, micro generation activity, cluster substations, distribution network congestion, comparison with GB, access to geographical information system (GOS), heat maps on overlay of the network.

Fearghal McKinney returned to the meeting at 11.59am

Paul Frew left the meeting at 12.26pm

Sydney Anderson left the meeting at 12.37pm

Agreed: to write to Northern Ireland Electricity with further questions for written response.

The representatives left the meeting at 1.01pm.

6. Matters Arising

There were no papers for this item.

7. Legislation: SL1 Proposed Energy Efficiency (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2014

Members considered SL1 Proposed Energy Efficiency (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2014.

Gordon Dunne left the meeting at 1.02pm

Agreed: that the Committee is content with the policy implications of the proposed legislation.

8. Written Briefing from DETI: June 2014 Monitoring Round

Members noted a written briefing from DETI regarding June 2014 Monitoring Round.

9. Written Briefing: Website and On-line Presence Progress Report

Members noted a written briefing from DETI regarding Website and On-line Presence Progress Report.

10. Written Briefing: Response to the Committee on the consultation on an Equality Impact Assessment for extension of the natural gas network

Members noted a written briefing from DETI regarding its response to the Committee of the consultation on an Equality Impact Assessment for extension of the natural gas network.

11. Correspondence

Members noted the following items of correspondence:

- i. From the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) in response to the Committee's recent query on the Connaught Carbon Neutral CHP and Balneotherapy project.

Agreed: to receive a copy of the report from Invest NI for consideration by the Committee.

- ii. Members noted correspondence from the Financial Conduct Authority regarding its report into IT failures at Ulster Bank.
- iii. Members considered explanatory memoranda from Assembly Research regarding tourism issues.

Agreed: to receive this information by email in 'Member's Info' packs in future.

- iv. Members noted correspondence from the Department regarding the 2013-14 Provisional Outturn.
- v. From Stakeholder Communications on behalf of The Irish News Group, The Belfast Telegraph and The News Letter in regards to a possible future oral briefing to the Committee on the importance of the print industry to Northern Ireland.

Agreed: to schedule an oral briefing from the three newspapers.

- vi. Members noted correspondence from the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure regarding the Legacy Report for the 2013 World Police and Fire Games.
- vii. From the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development including a copy of a report by the LOCFOOD project.

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

- viii. Members considered an invitation to the launch of the forthcoming book "Campaign, Canvass, and Cavalcade" written by Irish News political correspondent John Manly to be held in Room 115 on Thursday 12 June at 12.10pm.

Agreed: the Committee Office to contact Members regarding their attendance at the event.

- ix. From Full Circle Power providing an introductory brochure to Full Circle Power Energy Park.

Agreed: to schedule a visit to the energy park on the forward work programme.

- x. From the Committee for Finance and Personnel forwarding correspondence it received from a member of the public who had experienced a delay in the Department responding to information they requested in regards to the Presbyterian Mutual Society.

Agreed: to ask the Department to inform the Committee of the reasons for the delay in providing the information and to copy its response to the Committee when it is being issued.

Agreed: to respond to the individual stating that this has been done.

- xi. Members noted correspondence from the Payments Council providing an update on the Current Account Switch Service.

12. Forward Work Programme

Members were content with the updated Forward Work Programme.

13. Any other business

There were no additional items of business.

14. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on **5 June 2014** at **10.00am** in **Room 30, Parliament Buildings.**

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 1.11pm.

Mr Patsy McGlone
Chairperson
Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

5 June 2014