



**Northern Ireland  
Assembly**

**ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT**

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**5 JUNE 2014**

**ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, 10.00AM**

- Present: 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  
Ms Sandra Overend
- In Attendance: Mr Jim McManus (Assembly Clerk)  
Ms Angela McParland (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Nathan McVeigh (Clerical Supervisor)  
Ms Jacqueline Holt (Clerical Officer)
- Apologies: Mr Patsy McGlone (Chairperson)  
Mr Mitchel McLaughlin

*The meeting began at 10.10am.*

**1. Apologies**

Apologies were noted, as listed above.

## **2. Minutes of meetings held on Thursday 29 May 2014.**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the draft minutes of 29 May 2014.

## **3. Chairperson's Business**

The Chairperson informed members that the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson received an invitation from the Department to attend a public stakeholder event on Wednesday 11 June 2014 to discuss a DETI led review of agri-food marketing and promotion.

The Chairperson informed members that both the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson are available to attend the morning session.

*Agreed:* the Committee is content for the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson to attend this event.

Members considered the amended Terms of Reference for the Specialist Advisor on economic policy.

*Agreed:* the Committee is content with the amended Terms of Reference.

*Megan Fearon joined the meeting at 10.12am*

Members considered an agenda for the Energy Efficiency Workshop which the Committee is to host with Green Investment Bank on Tuesday 10 June 2014.

*Agreed:* that members let the Committee Office know if they will be attending.

## **4. Electricity Policy Review Part III Grid Connections - Oral briefing from SONI**

*The representatives joined the meeting at 10.14am.*

*Fearghal McKinney joined the meeting at 10.17am*

Members received an oral briefing from Mr Michael Walsh, Director of Future Grids, EirGrid, Mr Dick Lewis, Manager, Transmission Access Planning, SONI and Mr Robin McCormick, General Manager, SONI Ltd/SEMO.

Key issues discussed included: costs and timescales of grid connection, delays in connection and access to the geographical information system (GOS), transmission grid, transmission network, Utility Regulator, role as market operator, transfer of investment planning, security of supply, infrastructure

investment, investment decisions, planning permission requirement, innovation, contestability, Sustainable Energy Interdepartmental Working Group (SEIDWG), First Flight Wind offshore wind farm, North/South interconnector.

*Agreed:* to commission research regarding access to the geographical information system and also the permission and cost of providing information on third party ordinance survey maps. The Committee Office to inform the Utility Regulator that members will raise some issues discussed at this session with the Regulator at the briefing on 3 July 2014.

*Fearghal McKinney left the meeting at 11.48am*

*The representatives left the meeting at 11.50am.*

## **5. Electricity Policy Review Part III Grid Connections - Oral briefing from DETI**

*The representatives joined the meeting at 11.52am.*

Members received an oral briefing from Mr John Mills, Head of Energy Division and Mr Michael Harris, Head of Renewable Electricity Policy Branch.

Key issues discussed included: costs and timescales of grid connection, delays in connection and access to the geographical information system (GOS), contestability, Utility Regulator, clustering, Programme for Government target, ROCs, Sustainable Energy Interdepartmental Working Group (SEIDWG).

*Sandra Overend left the meeting at 12.24pm*

*Agreed:* to forward additional questions to the Department on this matter.

*Agreed:* to write to the Department of Finance and Personnel for information on the Business Tenancy Bill in regards to perceived barriers to PV panels being installed on houses.

*Agreed:* the Department to provide the unpublished report which details the work done by the Department in order to reach a target of 40% in renewable energy for the Programme for Government.

*The representatives left the meeting at 12.44pm.*

## **6. Matters Arising**

Members considered a request from the Ulster Farmers' Union to give oral evidence to the Committee regarding the Electricity Policy Review Part III Grid Connections.

*Agreed:* to advise the Ulster Farmers' Union that, although the Committee has a full schedule of evidence sessions between now and summer, members would welcome individual case studies where there have been major problems to help inform the Committee's deliberations.

The Chairperson reminded members that the Committee has heard evidence from stakeholders who are concerned that, should applications for planning and grid connection be allowed to be in parallel rather than in series, there may be a hoarding of capacity to developers.

*Agreed:* to commission research to ascertain the extent to which current policies in the South and GB are leading to the hoarding of capacity to developers.

Members noted further information provided by the Utility Regulator which the Committee requested at the oral briefing on 8 May 2014.

Members noted a response from the Department to the Committee's query as to why there are differences in terms of office for Invest NI Board Members.

Members noted a response from the Department to the Committee's queries regarding the global audience of the Giro d'Italia.

Members noted a written submission from Invest NI giving up to date information on research and development expenditure and statistics as a follow up to the briefing by Invest NI on 15 May 2014 on its end of year outturn figures.

## **7. Legislation: Insolvency (Amendment) Bill**

Members considered briefing papers from the Department in relation to the proposed Insolvency (Amendment) Bill.

*Agreed:* to receive an oral briefing from the Department following the introduction of the Bill.

*Agreed:* to commission research to develop a list of stakeholders for consideration by the Committee and to determine how the proposed legislation compares to that introduced for England, Wales and Scotland.

## **8. Consultation: Proposed withdrawal of Approved Codes of Practice and Guidance on Rider Operated Lift Trucks, Management of Health and Safety at Work and Gas Pipelines.**

Members noted a consultation from DETI regarding the proposed withdrawal of Approved Codes of Practice and Guidance on Rider Operated Lift Trucks, Management of Health and Safety at Work and Gas Pipelines.

**9. Consultation: Genetically Modified Organisms (Continued Use) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015**

Members noted a consultation from DETI regarding Genetically Modified Organisms (Continued Use) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

**10. Written Briefing from DETI: Update on Renewable Heat Incentive**

Members noted a written briefing from DETI regarding an Update on Renewable Heat Incentive.

**11. Written Briefing from DETI: Programme for Government Commitments Progress Report to 31 March 2014**

Members considered a written briefing from DETI regarding Programme for Government Commitments Progress Report to 31 March 2014.

*Agreed:* to ask the Department for clarification on a number of issues arising from the written briefing.

**12. Written Briefing from Consumer Council NI: Raising Awareness of the New Consumer Rights Bill**

Members noted a written briefing from the Consumer Council regarding Programme for Government Commitments Progress Report to 31 March 2014.

**13. Main Estimates 2014-15 and Budget (No.2) Bill 2014**

Members considered correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel regarding Main Estimates 2014-15 and Budget (No.2) Bill 2014.

*Agreed:* the Committee is content for the Chairperson to speak in the plenary debate.

**14. Correspondence**

*Members noted the following items of correspondence:*

- i. Members noted correspondence from the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister regarding a briefing to that Committee from the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission.
- ii. From the Department, detailing the outcome of the consultation into the implementation of the EU Third Energy Package (IME 3): designations of provisions of the EU electricity and gas regulations as ‘relevant requirements’

*Agreed:* the Committee is content with the Department’s proposals.

- iii. From the Minister regarding an Agri-Food marketing review that the Department is to carry out as part of its ‘Going for Growth’ Action Plan, the strategic Action Plan developed by the Agri-Food Strategy Board.

*Agreed:* to forward the letter to the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development for information. To also write to the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development regarding the proposed pilot for the ‘Farm Business Improvement Scheme’, for details on the bid of £1.4m in the June Monitoring Round and what it will be used for.

#### **15. Any other business**

There were no additional items of business.

#### **16. Date, time and place of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on **12 June 2014** at **10.00am** in **The Board Room, Invest NI Headquarters.**

*The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12.54pm.*

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**Mr Phil Flanagan**  
**Deputy Chairperson**  
**Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment**

**12 June 2014**