



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

18 SEPTEMBER 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 Danny Kinahan
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: None

The meeting began at 10.10am.

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

2. Minutes of meetings held on Thursday 3 July 2014.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft minutes of 3 July 2014.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson welcomed Mr Danny Kinahan to the Committee.

Agreed: to send a letter of thanks to Ms Sandra Overend for her time on the Committee.

The Chairperson reminded members to declare any interests held by them which are relevant to the work of the Committee and informed members that a copy of the Register of Interests for Mr Kinahan was in the meeting papers.

Mitchel McLaughlin left the meeting at 10.13am

Agreed: to circulate the guidance available in relation to the declaration of Members' Interests.

The Chairperson reminded the Committee about information emailed to members on members' attendance at Committee meetings and asked them to advise the Committee Office by there are any inaccuracies.

The Committee discussed the presentation received on the Titanic Quarter project and tour of the Titanic Studios last Thursday.

Agreed: to write to David Gavaghan, Titanic Quarter Ltd Chief Executive, to thank him and Michael Graham, Director of Corporate Real Estate, for arranging the visit.

Mitchel McLaughlin returned to the meeting at 10.15am

The Chairperson reminded members that Damien English, former Chairperson of the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation was appointed as Minister of State for Skills, Research and Innovation on 15 July 2014.

Agreed: to write to Mr English to congratulate him on his new position and to thank him for his input into the Committee's visit to the Oireachtas last December.

Members considered an updated DETI senior management chart and noted that a meeting with Dr McCormick, the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson is expected to take place in early October.

Agreed: to ask the Department if they have given any consideration to moving GSNI to Energy Division.

Members noted a copy of a presentation by Energia providing an overview of the business. The Chairperson noted that the visit to Energia on 5th August 2014 had been very informative for members.

The Committee noted an invitation from the Northern Ireland Assembly and Business Trust offering MLAs the opportunity to participate in an educational visit to Brussels which will take place from Monday 17 to Wednesday 19 November 2014.

Members noted information on the Northern Ireland Economic Conference 2014.

Members considered an invitation to the Committee from Action Renewables to an Innovation Technologies Seminar the organisation is hosting in partnership with Belfast Health and Social Care Trust on Thursday 9 October 2014 at Knockbracken Healthcare Park.

Agreed: that Assembly Research attends the Seminar on behalf of the Committee.

4. Oral briefing from the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action – The Report – ‘A Commentary on Economic Data in Northern Ireland’

The representatives joined the meeting at 10.24am.

Members received an oral briefing from Mr Seamus McAleavey, Chief Executive, NICVA and Mr Michael Burke, Economic Consultant and author of the report.

Key issues discussed included: the collection and availability of economic data in Northern Ireland and how this impacts on policy decision making; accurate statement of revenue for Northern Ireland; the Scottish model; treasury reports; lateness and absence of data; corporation tax; economic, fiscal and GDP data; micro and macro data needs; Invest NI; cost of data.

Agreed: to forward the Report to NICEP and the Committee’s Specialist Advisor, Dr Budd for comment.

Agreed: to contact the Office of National Statistics in relation to the issues raised.

Agreed: to ask Assembly Research to research appropriate contacts in the Scottish Executive in relation to collecting economic data.

Agreed: ask the Office of the Official Report for a retrospective transcript of the briefing.

Agreed: to forward the report to Invest NI for its views.

The representatives left the meeting at 11.54am.

Megan Fearon left the meeting at 12.00pm

5. Matters Arising

The Chairperson informed members that Leslie Budd, Committee Specialist Advisor on economic policy will meet the Committee on Tuesday 30 September 2014 and the Committee Office will be in touch to confirm members' attendance.

Members considered a response from the Department on the Economic Advisory Group.

Agreed: to receive an oral briefing from the Economic Advisory Group.

Members considered a response from the Department regarding the Committee's queries in respect of the draft 2014 – 2020 ERDF Growth and Jobs Programme.

Agreed: to receive a written update from the Department on the implementation of the R&D Inquiry Report recommendations.

Members noted a response from the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister informing the Committee that it forwarded to DETI the Committee's request for a written briefing on the actions being taken to address points raised within the report 'Opportunities and Key Policies for Social Enterprises in Northern Ireland 2014-2020' produced by the Competitiveness and Employment Desk Officer in the Barroso Taskforce Working Group.

Members considered a response from the Department regarding the Committee's request for an update on EU matters and for details of how the European Liaison Officers will ensure the Committee is kept informed.

Agreed: to ask the Department to clarify how it will ensure that the Committee will receive appropriate information provided to the Executive

Agreed: to ask the Department to clarify a number of points regarding the table 'European Priorities 2013-14'.

Members considered a response from the Department regarding the Committees' queries on EU R&D funding and cross border initiatives.

Agreed: to ask the Department to specify how much money actually came from EU funding for the collaborative North/South projects; what value, in monetary terms, came to Northern Ireland; and in regards to FP7, has there been any evaluation carried out as to if and why the success rate is considered low.

Members noted a response from the Department to the Committee's request for further information following its review of the answer to AQW 34330/11-15 which asked the Minister how many applicants supported by Invest NI has sought funding from the Technology Strategy Board/Small Business Research Initiative; and FP7/Horizon 2020, in each of the last six financial years and the current financial year.

Members considered a response from Invest NI regarding the Print Industry.

Agreed: to forward the response to the print industry representatives for information.

Agreed: to ask Invest NI if there was a change in policy over the last number of years on the inclusion of the print industry under manufacturing.

Megan Fearon returned to the meeting at 12.16pm

The Chairperson informed members that an invitation had been received from Independent News and Media Ltd inviting the Committee to visit the offices of the Belfast Telegraph to meet with the senior editorial and commercial staff of the business and that it is expected the Committee will visit in October.

Patsy McGlone left the meeting at 12.17pm

Phil Flanagan took the Chair at 12.17pm

Members noted correspondence from the Department of Finance and Personnel in response to the Committee's query on the publishing of tourism statistics.

Members considered correspondence from the Department regarding the Committee's request for a copy of all correspondence between them and Tamboran, as far back as the first item of correspondence.

Agreed: to ask the Department to (i) forward the papers it is prepared to release (ii) provide clarification as to whether the other documents it considers exempt from disclosure should be excluded in whole or whether, under EU law, redacted versions can be provided.

Members noted a response from the Department to the Committee's request for information on why CHx Capital LLC had withdrawn its application for a Petroleum Licence.

Members noted a response from the Department providing an update on the current activities relating to Petroleum Licences presently with the Department, as requested by the Committee.

Members considered a response from the Department informing the Committee that Providence Resources UK Ltd formally notified the

Department on 12 August 2014 that the Company has decided to relinquish its Petroleum Licence, PL5/10, which covers Rathlin Island in the Rathlin Basin.

Members noted a response from the Department of the Environment to the Committee's request for information on the current activities of the companies granted petroleum licences.

Members noted a response from the Department regarding the Committee's queries to the SL1 on the Renewable Heat Incentive.

Members considered an answer to a written question on the Renewable Heat Incentive.

Agreed: to ask whether the Minister has detected any problems or bottlenecks relating to measurement of odour and ammonia in boiler houses for district heating systems.

Members noted correspondence to Activation Energy from the Utility Regulator regarding demand side participation within Northern Ireland.

Members considered responses from DETI, the Department for Regional Development, the Department of Education, the Department for Social Development and the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety to the Committee's request for written briefings following the Energy Efficiency Workshop with the Green Investment Bank that the Committee held on 10 June 2014.

Agreed: to forward the responses to the Green Investment Bank asking that the Committee is kept informed of anything arising from this issue.

Members noted a copy of the letter sent from the Department to the individuals involved in the Lowlands Health and Energy Ltd Connaught Carbon Neutral CHP and Balneotherapy project.

Members considered a table showing all outstanding issues that the Committee is currently waiting on from the Department.

Agreed: that the Committee Office keep an up to date table on the ECP system for members' information.

The Chairperson reminded members the Committee had asked Invest NI for a copy of the report regarding the availability of grade A office accommodation and the Department has informed the Committee that the report has not yet been finalised.

Mitchel McLaughlin left the meeting at 12.26pm

6. Legislation: SR 2014/198 The Energy Efficiency Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014

Members considered SR 2014/198 The Energy Efficiency Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014.

Agreed: that the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment has considered SR 2014/198 The Energy Efficiency Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014 and has no objection to the rule.

7. Written Briefing from DETI: Implementation of EU Directive (2013/11) on Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes

Members considered a written briefing from the Department regarding Implementation of EU Directive (2013/11) on Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes.

Agreed: write to DFP asking why it has the lead given that it is a consumer issue and to ask for its views on the concerns of the Consumer Council.

Agreed: to forward the briefing to the Consumer Council for comment and to inform them of the Committee's actions.

8. Assembly Research: Year-End Surges in Northern Ireland Departmental Expenditure

Members noted an Assembly Research paper regarding Year-End Surges in Northern Ireland Departmental Expenditure.

9. Written Briefing from Utility Regulator: Possible Cancellation of Generating Unit Agreements (GUAs) in Northern Ireland – Market Update

Members considered a written briefing from the Utility Regulator regarding Possible Cancellation of Generating Unit Agreements (GUAs) in Northern Ireland – Market Update.

Agreed: to write to the Utility Regulator stating that the Committee is content that stakeholders have been given the opportunity to feed into the consultation. To ask the Utility Regulator that, given it had previously been content with the GUAs, what had occurred that changed its view.

10. Written Briefing from Utility Regulator: Analysis of the allocation of network and other related costs between grid customer groups and across jurisdictions.

Members considered a written briefing from the Utility Regulator regarding Analysis of the allocation of network and other related costs between grid customer groups and across jurisdictions.

Agreed: to write to the Utility Regulator asking what the next steps will be following the publication of the report.

11. Consultation: Superfast Rollout Programme Phase 2 Project

Members considered a consultation regarding Superfast Rollout Programme Phase 2 Project.

Agreed: to receive a summary of responses following consultation.

12. End of Session Report

Members considered the Committee End of Session Report.

Agreed: to publish the Report on the Committee pages of the Assembly website.

13. Correspondence

Members noted the following items of correspondence:

- i. Members noted an invitation from the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure to the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson to hear the BBC Director General, Lord Hall, speak at an event in Parliament Buildings. Members noted that both the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson have prior engagements and are unable to attend.
- ii. From the Committee for the Office of the First minister and deputy First Minister providing information on its Inquiry into Building a United Community.

Agreed: to ask the Department to comment on its role, particularly in relation to sectarianism and racism in the workplace.

- iii. Members noted correspondence from the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development providing a copy of the Official Report of its meeting on the Lough Neagh Cross-departmental Working Group Report.

- iv. Members noted correspondence from the Department informing the Committee of a consultation by the Department of Energy and Climate Change on a proposal to introduce criminal sanctions for insider dealing and market manipulation in energy markets.
- v. From the Minister informing the Committee of a forthcoming consultation by the Department of Energy and Climate Change on a proposal to revise the IME 3 legislation relating to the certification of Transmission System Owners, as complying with the IME 3 ownership 'unbundling' rules.

Agreed: that the Committee is content with the Minister's approach.

- vi. From the Department advising the Committee of the Minister's intention to seek a Legislative Consent Motion in respect of a number of measures in the UK Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Bill.

Agreed: that the Committee is content with the Department's approach.

- vii. Members noted correspondence from the Department concerning its response to an FoI request on the Presbyterian Mutual Society.
- viii. Members noted correspondence from the Committee for Education informing the Committee of the agreed Terms of Reference and timeline for its inquiry into Shared/Integrated Education.
- ix. Members noted correspondence from the Speaker apologising for an administrative oversight in which a petition by Steven Agnew MLA on hydraulic fracturing was not forwarded to the Chairperson or the Minister.
- x. Members noted correspondence from the Department providing the Committee with a copy of a letter from the Minister to the Chairperson of the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure on funding to expand the Dale Farm Milk Cup.

14. Forward Work Programme

Members considered the draft Committee Forward Work Programme up to 9 December 2014.

Agreed: that as of 7 October 2014 meetings will be held on Tuesday mornings in Room 29.

Patsy McGlone returned to the meeting at 12.40pm

Patsy McGlone resumed the Chair at 12.40pm

Phil Flanagan left the meeting at 12.40pm

Sammy Douglas left the meeting at 12.44pm

Gordon Dunne left the meeting at 12.44pm

Agreed: to schedule briefings from Action Renewables and the Ulster Farmers' union.

Agreed: to schedule a briefing from the Minister.

Paul Frew left the meeting at 12.45pm

Gordon Dunne returned to the meeting at 12.47pm

Paul Frew returned to the meeting at 12.47pm

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 **25 September 2014** at **10.00am** in **Room 30, Parliament Buildings.**

The meeting went into closed session at 12.48pm.

17. Report on the Committee visit to USA

Members considered a draft report on the Committee visit to USA.

Agreed: that the Clerk updates the report to reflect members views.

Danny Kinahan left the meeting at 1.03pm

Sydney Anderson left the meeting at 1.04pm

18. Electricity Policy Review

This item was deferred to the next meeting.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 1.17pm.

Mr Patsy McGlone
Chairperson
Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

25 September 2014