



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

21 OCTOBER 2014

ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, 10.00AM

Present: Mr Patsy McGlone (Chairperson)
Mr Phil Flanagan (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Steven Agnew
Mr Sydney Anderson
Mr Paul Frew
Mr William Humphrey
Mr Fearghal McKinney

In Attendance: Mr Jim McManus (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Angela McParland (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Nathan McVeigh (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Christopher Jeffrey (Clerical Officer)
Mr Peadar Ó Lamhna (Bursary Student)

Apologies: Mr Danny Kinahan

The meeting began at 10.14am

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted, as listed above.

2. Minutes of meetings held on Tuesday 14 October 2014.

Agreed: the Committee agreed the draft minutes of 14 October 2014.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson reminded members that the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation is to visit the Assembly on the 3rd November 2014.

Agreed: to request a written briefing from the Department updating the Committee on the drawdown of EU funding in advance of the joint informal meeting.

The Chairperson informed members that the planned visit to the Belfast Telegraph has been cancelled.

Agreed: to reschedule the visit to the Belfast Telegraph.

4. Oral briefing from Invest NI: Life and Health Sciences

The representatives joined the meeting at 10:18am

Members received an oral briefing from Ms Gráinne McVeigh, Head of Life Sciences, Electronics and Consumer Products, Mr Sam Kinghan, Research and Development Executive and Dr Samana Hussein-Brannigan, Technology Executive.

Key issues discussed included: the Life and Health Sciences sector; the Connected Health Initiative; the growth of the Life and Health Sciences sector globally; R&D employment and growth; EU funding opportunities; innovative clinical trials; the Bio Conference in San Diego; Life and Health Sciences strategy; Health Innovation & Life Sciences Hub; a Matrix joint report with DETI and DHSSPS; stratified medicine; priority health subsectors; and potential for future FDI in sector.

The representatives left the meeting at 11:15am

Phil Flanagan re-joined the meeting at 11:17am

Steven Agnew left the meeting at 11:17am

Due to the absence of a quorum, the Chairperson suspended the meeting at 11.17am in line with Standing Order 46(6).

The meeting recommenced in public session at 11.29am with the following members present:

*Mr Patsy McGlone, Chairperson
Mr Phil Flanagan, Deputy Chairperson
Mr Sydney Anderson
Mr Paul Frew
Mr William Humphrey*

5. Matters Arising

Members noted a response from the Department regarding the views of Invest NI on the NICVA Report 'A Commentary on Economic Data in NI'.

Members noted an update from the Department on the SIB evaluation of the G8 Summit.

Members noted a response from the Department to the Committees' queries on EU Matters.

Members noted correspondence from the Northern Ireland Tourist Board regarding the rationale for the Tourism Innovation Fund 2014-2015 being closed.

Members considered a response to a Committee request for a briefing from the Economic Advisory Group.

Agreed: that the Committee receive an oral briefing in spring 2015 from the Economic Advisory Group.

Members noted a news article regarding the postponement of the closure of the RTÉ long wave radio transmitter.

Members noted a letter of thanks to the Chairperson from the Minister for Skills, Research and Innovation.

Members considered a response from the Committee to an individual concerning the Presbyterian Mutual Society.

Agreed: to forward the letter to the individual, copying in the Public Accounts Committee and the Committee for Finance and Personnel.

Members considered correspondence from Assembly Research regarding the Committee's request to identify appropriate contacts in Scotland and within the Office of National Statistics with whom the Committee could correspond in regards to the NICVA report on economic data.

Agreed: to ask the ONS how the information they provide to Scotland compares with the information they provide to Northern Ireland.

Members noted a copy of the Official Report of the evidence session that the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Transport and Communications held with RTÉ.

6. Legislation: SL1 The Insolvency (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 (Consequential Amendments) Order (Northern Ireland) 2014

Members considered SL1 the Insolvency (Northern Ireland) Order 2005 (Consequential Amendments) Order (Northern Ireland) 2014

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

7. Written briefing: DETI: Research Agenda Update

Members noted a written briefing from the Department regarding its Research Agenda Update.

8. Written Briefing from DETI: Implementation of EU Directive (2013/11) on Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes and Regulation No 524/2013 on Online Dispute Resolution

Members considered a written briefing from the Department regarding the Implementation of EU Directive (2013/11) on Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes and Regulation No 523/2013 on Online Dispute Resolution.

Agreed: to forward the briefing to the Consumer Council asking for its views.

9. Northern Ireland Economic Strategy - Year 2 Annual Monitoring Report

Members considered the Northern Ireland Economic Strategy Year 2 Monitoring Report.

Fearghal McKinney joined the meeting at 11:32am

Agreed: to write to the relevant Departments asking for the reasons for the delays.

Agreed: to forward to the Committee's Specialist Adviser on the Economy.

10. Written Briefing from DETI: Research and Development Inquiry Report Recommendations

Members noted an update from the Department regarding Research and Development recommendations.

11. Executive Response to Growing for Growth

Members noted the Northern Ireland Executive's response to Growing for Growth.

Agreed: to advise the Department that the Committee will be seeking bi-annual updates on progress with actions for which DETI/Invest NI have responsibility.

Agreed: to inform the Committee for Agriculture & Rural Development that this has been agreed.

12. Innovation Strategy for Northern Ireland (2014-2025)

Members considered the Innovation Strategy for Northern Ireland (2014-2025)

Agreed: to inform the Department that the Committee will wish to receive a bi-annual progress report and an annual oral briefing on the implementation of the strategy.

Agreed: to forward the Action Directory to the relevant Committees for information.

13. Correspondence

Members noted the following items of correspondence:

- i. Members noted correspondence from the Department regarding Legislative Consent Motion – UK Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Bill.
- ii. Members considered correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel regarding Departmental Savings Delivery Plans up to March 2014.

Agreed: correspondence to be included in discussions with the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation on the 3rd November 2014.

- iii. Members considered correspondence requesting that the Historic Royal Palaces be given the opportunity to provide an oral briefing to the Committee.

Agreed: to respond, advising that due to its heavy work schedule it is unlikely that the Committee will be able to find time to schedule a briefing during the current session.

- iv. Members considered correspondence from Hardscape regarding a request to brief the Committee on the Ethical Trading Initiative.

Agreed: to write to Hardscape requesting a written briefing on the work of the Ethical Trading Initiative. To forward the correspondence to the All Party Group on Fair Trade, suggesting that they may wish to receive a briefing. Inform Hardscape that this has been done.

- v. Members considered correspondence from the Deputy Head of External Relations at the Royal Mail Group, regarding competition in mail delivery and its impact on universal service provision.

Agreed: that it would not be appropriate for the Committee to consider this matter whilst the Business, Innovation and Skills Committee is conducting an inquiry.

Agreed: to forward the correspondence to the Consumer Council and encourage them to respond to the inquiry.

Agreed: to write to the sender to ask, given that this is not a devolved matter, if there are any particular issues of concern which would impact disproportionately on Royal Mail services in Northern Ireland compared to elsewhere.

14. Any Other Business

Members noted that there were no additional items of business.

15. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on **Tuesday 4th November at 10.00am** in Room 29, **Parliament Buildings.**

The meeting went into closed session at 11.38am

The Chairperson left the meeting at 11.39am

The Deputy Chairperson took the chair at 11.39am

16. Electricity Policy Review

Members considered the draft Electricity Policy Review Part III Grid Connection, an Assembly Research Paper regarding Smart Grid Investment, correspondence from NIE regarding the use of micro-grids, correspondence from the Utility Regulator regarding the use of microgrids and an extract of the updated draft report.

Agreed: to include a section and recommendation relating to micro-grids.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 11:43pm

Mr Patsy McGlone
Chairperson
Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

4 November 2014