



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

13 JANUARY 2015

ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, 10.00AM

Present: Mr Patsy McGlone (Chairperson)
Mr Phil Flanagan (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Steven Agnew
Mr Gordon Dunne
Ms Megan Fearon
Mr Paul Frew
Mr Paul Givan
Mr William Humphrey
Mr Danny Kinahan
Mr Fearghal McKinney
Mr Máirtín Ó Muilleoir

In Attendance: Mr Jim McManus (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Nathan McVeigh (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Christopher Jeffrey (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: None

The meeting began at 10:23am

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

2. Declaration of Interests

There were no interests declared by members.

3. Draft minutes of meeting of 9 December 2014

Agreed: the Committee agreed the draft minutes of 9 December 2014.

4. Chairperson's Business

Members discussed the recent reduction in the price of oil.

Agreed: to write to the Utility Regulator asking for information on the implications the recent reduction in the price of oil has on local energy providers.

Members considered an invitation to the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson to attend the Allianz Arts and Business Northern Ireland Awards ceremony to be held on Wednesday 21 January 2015.

Agreed: the Committee is content for the Deputy Chairperson to attend if he is available.

Members considered an invitation to the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson from Assembly Community Connect to attend a 'Chief Officers of the Third Sector' event to be held on Tuesday 3 March 2015.

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

Fearghal McKinney left the meeting at 10.29am

Members considered correspondence from InterTradeIreland regarding its new 'Funding for Growth Advisory Service'.

Agreed: to write to the Department asking how InterTradeIreland disseminates such information as contained in the Funding for Growth Advisory Service and asking if Invest NI issue this invitation to its client list.

5. Oral Briefing from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Insolvency (Amendment) Bill

The officials joined the meeting at 10.30am

Máirtín Ó Muilleoir joined the meeting at 10.30am.

Phil Flanagan joined the meeting at 10.32am.

Members received an oral briefing from Departmental Officials regarding the Insolvency (Amendment) Bill.

Key issues discussed included: the main purpose of the Bill, full and partial authorisation and the amendment relating to the Statutory Code of Conduct.

Paul Givan left the meeting at 10.36am.

Máirtín Ó Muilleoir left the meeting at 11.06am.

William Humphrey left the meeting at 11.09am.

Megan Fearon left the meeting at 11.16am.

The Officials left the meeting at 11.19am

Agreed: to considered correspondence received from a member of the public at the next meeting.

Agreed: to write to the Department asking for clarification that PricewaterhouseCoopers and Cavanagh Kelly fully understand the position regarding full and partial authorisation.

Agreed: to write to the Department asking that the Committee receive a copy of the amendment regarding the Statutory Code of Conduct as soon as it is available.

Agreed: to write to the Department asking for comment on advice received from the Examiner of Statutory Rules.

6. Matters Arising

Fearghal McKinney returned to the meeting at 11.30am.

Members considered correspondence from the Department in relation to the January Monitoring Round.

Agreed: to write to the Department asking if there is a delay in the Super Connected Cities Programme and if so, why and for clarification on the Invest NI Revaluation of Assets as stated in the correspondence.

Members considered a response from the Department in relation to Northern Ireland Economic Strategy Year 2 Annual Monitoring Report.

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

Members considered a response from the Department in relation to Invest NI Mid-Year Brief.

Agreed: to raise the issue with Invest NI at its next briefing to the Committee.

Members considered a response from the Department in relation to the Agri-Food Loan Scheme.

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

Members considered response from the Department and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development in relation to the Northern Ireland Broadband Improvement Project.

Agreed: to write to the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development asking for an update on the rollout of super-fast broadband and for an analysis of the Broadband Improvement Figures provided.

Members noted an update from the Department in relation to the 2014-2020 NI ERDF Investment for Growth and Jobs Programme.

Members considered correspondence from the Committee for Employment and Learning in relation to SDC Trailers.

Agreed: to forward the correspondence to SDC Trailers for information.

Members considered a response to an Assembly Written Question in relation to Credit Unions.

Agreed: to write to the Department of Social Development and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development to ask for a progress report on any interaction with the credit union movement on the matter and that the Committee is kept up to date with developments.

Agreed: to copy the correspondence to the Irish League of Credit Unions and the Ulster Federation of Credit Unions for comment.

Members considered a briefing paper from the Office of National Statistics regarding Economic Data in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: to forward the paper to Assembly Research and commission research that will provide further understanding as well as a detailed comparison of the information the Office of National Statistics provides to Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Members considered correspondence from the Consumer Council and the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills in relation to Alternative Dispute Resolution.

Agreed: to write to the Department asking for an update on how the Alternative Dispute Resolution Directive will be implemented in Northern Ireland.

7. Subordinate Legislation: Statutory Rule – The Gas and Electricity Licence Modification and Appeals Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

Members considered SR 2015/1 The Gas and Electricity Licence Modification and Appeals Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Agreed: that the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment has considered the Statutory Rule – SR 2015/1 The Gas and Electricity Licence Modification and Appeals Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rules report, has no objection to the Rule.

8. Written Briefing from DETI: Innovation Survey of Micro Businesses in Northern Ireland

Members considered a written briefing from DETI regarding the Innovation Survey of Micro Businesses in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: to receive an oral briefing from the Department on this issue.

9. Written Briefing from DETI: Update on the ERDF Investment for Growth and Jobs Programme 2014-2020

Members considered a written briefing from DETI regarding an update on the ERDF Investment for Growth and Jobs Programme 2014-2020.

Agreed: to receive an oral briefing from the Department on this issue.

Agreed: to write to the Department asking for the latest data available in relation to the number of companies engaged in Research and Development in Northern Ireland.

10. Correspondence

Members noted the following items of correspondence:

- i. Correspondence from the Minister in relation to EU Regulation 1257/2013 on Ship Recycling.
- ii. Correspondence from the Minister and the Department in relation to Electricity Security of Supply.

Agreed: to write to the Department asking for a copy of the business case and a more detailed briefing on how the decision was reached.

Agreed: to write to the Department asking if all North-South interconnectors are running at full capacity.

Agreed: to receive an oral briefing from the Department and the Utility Regulator on the Electricity Security of Supply Report.

Agreed: to write to Mutual Energy and the Utility Regulator asking for more information on the Moyle Interconnector repairs.

- iii. Correspondence from the Department in relation to a memorandum of understanding between the Northern Ireland Authority for Utility Regulation and the Consumer Council for Northern Ireland.

- iv. Correspondence from an individual in relation to domestic PV arrays, payment for exported power.

Agreed: to forward the correspondence to the Department to confirm if this is correct and if so how will it be addressed.

- v. Correspondence from the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development in relation to its Annual Progress Report 2014, Rural White Action Plan.

- vi. Correspondence from the Northern Ireland Tourist Board in relation to its Annual Report 2013/2014.

- vii. Correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel in relation to Post Project Evaluations.

Agreed: to write to the Department asking for a summary of the reasons for delays in Post Project Evaluations.

- viii. Correspondence from Manufacturing NI and the Utility Regulator in relation to the licensing of Aggregated Generator Units and Demand Side Units.

Agreed: to raise this issue when the Utility Regulator briefs the Committee.

- ix. Correspondence from Ofcom Northern Ireland in relation to its UK Infrastructure Report 2014.
- x. Correspondence from Northern Ireland Farm Groups in relation to the Agri-Food Strategy Board.

Agreed: to write to the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment and the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development asking that the Committee be copied into their response.

Steven Agnew left the meeting at 11.50am.

11. Forward Work Programme

Members considered the Committee forward work programme.

Agreed: to consider the forward work programme during the planning meeting following this Committee meeting.

Steven Agnew returned to the meeting at 11.54am.

12. Any Other Business

There were no additional items of business.

13. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on **Tuesday 20 January 2015** at **10.00am** in Room 29, **Parliament Buildings**.

The meeting concluded at 11:55am

Mr Patsy McGlone
Chairperson
Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

20 January 2015