



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

10 FEBRUARY 2015

ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, 10.00AM

Present: Mr Patsy McGlone (Chairperson)
Mr Phil Flanagan (Deputy Chairperson)
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)
Ms Sohui Yim (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Nathan McVeigh (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Christopher Jeffrey (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: None

The meeting began at 10.16am

1. Apologies

There were no apologies.

2. Draft minutes of meeting of 03 February 2015

Agreed: the Committee agreed the draft minutes of 03 February 2015.

3. Chairperson's Business

Members noted that the Department's response to Committee queries on the Insolvency Bill have not yet arrived, therefore there were no papers for Agenda item 7 – Insolvency (Amendment) Bill: Scrutiny of the Bill.

Agreed: To defer consideration of Agenda item 7 until next week.

Members noted the summary of an informal meeting with Protect our North Coast to discuss the Rathlin Energy Petroleum Licence, along with additional information regarding the issue.

Agreed: To defer discussion of this issue until next week as a substantive item on the agenda.

4. Oral briefing from the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Budget 2014-15 and other issues

The Minister and Departmental representatives joined the meeting at 10.18am.

Members received a briefing from the Minister, Mr Andrew McCormick, DETI Permanent Secretary and Mr Eugene Rooney, Head of Management Service Group.

Key issues discussed included: outline of the Departmental budget for 2014-2015; the status of various economic programmes within the Department; creation of jobs in Northern Ireland; tourism in Northern Ireland; and energy issues in the Northern Ireland.

Mr William Humphrey left the meeting at 10.45am.

Mr Máirtín Ó Muilleoir declared an interest as he has a family member working in Tourism Ireland.

The Minister and Departmental representatives left the meeting at 11.19am.

5. Oral Briefing from Committee Specialist Advisor: Economic Challenges and Opportunities in a Different Tax Environment

The Committee's Specialist Advisor joined the meeting at 11.20am.

Mr Gordon Dunne left the meeting at 11.20am.

Ms Megan Fearon joined the meeting at 11.26am.

Mr Fearghal McKinney left the meeting at 11.35am.

Members received an oral briefing from Dr Leslie Budd.

Key Issues discussed included: effects of a reduction in corporation tax; the impact on economic development; and the challenges to the local economy.

Agreed: To receive more up to date information on the figures from the IMF referred to in an Assembly Research Paper.

Agreed: To receive supplementary information on the effects of changes to the rate of corporation tax on the USA economy.

Agreed: To receive additional information on the possible impact on the NI economy of a UK withdrawal from the the EU.

The Committee's Specialist Advisor left the meeting at 12.01pm.

6. Matters Arising

Mr Gordon Dunne returned to the meeting at 12.02pm.

Ms Megan Fearon left the meeting at 12.03pm.

Members discussed a DARD response to the Committee's queries on the Agri-Food Strategy Board.

Agreed: To ask the Department to consider how greater representation from primary producers on the Agri-Food Strategy Board can be achieved.

Members noted a DARD response to the Committee's queries on credit unions.

Members noted a DARD response to the Committee's queries on the Broadband Improvement Project.

Members noted a Departmental response to the Committee's queries on Funding for Growth.

Members noted a DSD response to the Committee's queries on credit unions.

Agreed: to ask DSD to keep the Committee up to date with the second pilot on modernising credit union services.

Members noted that the Department has advised that further amendments to the Insolvency (Amendment) Bill are required and that Departmental officials are awaiting details from GB colleagues and will then seek the Minister's agreement to the detailed proposals.

8. Inquiry into Economic Growth and Job Creation in a Reduced Tax Environment

Mr Phil Flanagan left the meeting at 12.08pm.

Members discussed the Committee's Inquiry into Economic Growth and Job Creation in a Reduced Tax Environment.

Agreed: To request written evidence from the Ulster Farmers' Union and the NI Agricultural Producers' Association and to inform the Agriculture Committee that this has been done.

Agreed: In principle to a Committee visit to Stuttgart.

Agreed: That the Committee Office cost the visit and draw up a proposal and business case for the visit.

Members discussed the Chair's meeting with the CEO of Invest NI to discuss the best way for the Committee to obtain information on determinants of foreign direct investment (FDI) in regions where Invest NI has a presence.

Agreed: To commission Assembly Research into the provision and perception of key FDI determinants (as identified by the Committee's jobs and growth inquiry survey) in target FDI markets.

9. Consultation: Proposals on the alignment of Health and Safety Regulations with the EU direct acting Classification, Labelling and Packaging Regulation

Members considered a consultation on Proposals on the alignment of Health and Safety Regulations with the EU direct acting Classification, Labelling and Packaging Regulation.

Agreed: To receive a summary of response following consultation.

10. Written Briefing from NIIRTA: Policy Priorities for Local Economic Development Report

Members noted a written Briefing from NIIRTA: Policy Priorities for Local Economic Development Report

11. Written Briefing from DETI: Response to Committee Pre-Legislative Scrutiny of the Credit Unions and Industrial and Provident Societies Bill

Members discussed a written Briefing from DETI: Response to Committee Pre-Legislative Scrutiny of the Credit Unions and Industrial and Provident Societies Bill.

Agreed: For the Committee Office to liaise with the Department and to forward the appropriate information to the ILCU and UFCU for comment.

12. Written Briefing from OFMDFM Committee: European Commission Work Programme 2015

Members discussed a written briefing from OFMDFM Committee: European Commission Work Programme 2015.

Agreed: For the Committee Office to draft a response for Committee's consideration at next week's meeting.

13. Correspondence

Members noted the following item of correspondence:

- i. Correspondence from Assembly Outreach regarding a visit to the Assembly by the Indian High Commissioner.
- ii. Correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel on Business Rates Revaluation and draft schedule
- iii. Correspondence from the Department on Proposed Revised Health and Safety ACOPs
- iv. Correspondence from the Department on the Outcome of Remit Criminal Sanctions Consultation
- v. Correspondence from the Committee for the Environment on Wind Farm Energy and Storage

Agreed: To copy the Committee's research on microgrids and energy storage to the individual and to the Committee for the Environment to inform it that this has been done.

- vi. Correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel on the Budget Bill (Northern Ireland) 2015 and Spring Supplementary Estimates 2014-15

14. Any Other Business

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 17 February 2015** at **10.00am** in **Room 29, Parliament Buildings.**

The meeting concluded at 12.19pm.

Mr Patsy McGlone
Chairperson
Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

17 February 2015