



**Northern Ireland  
Assembly**

**COMMITTEE FOR ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT**

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**24 MARCH 2015**

**ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, 10.00AM**

Present: Mr Patsy McGlone (Chairperson)  
Mr Steven Agnew  
Mr Gordon Dunne  
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 Angela McParland (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Nathan McVeigh (Clerical Supervisor)  
Mr Christopher Jeffrey (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Phil Flanagan (Deputy Chairperson)  
Ms Megan Fearon

*The meeting began at 10:10am*

### **1. Apologies**

Apologies were noted as above.

### **2. Draft Minutes of Meeting of 10 March 2015**

*Agreed:* the Committee agreed the draft minutes of 10 March 2015.

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

Members considered the itinerary for the Stuttgart visit.

*Agreed:* that the Committee is content with the itinerary.

Members considered a draft invitation, including tabled amendments to the invitation, to the Workers' Memorial Day event to be held on Monday 27 April 2015.

*Agreed:* that the Committee is content for the updated information to be included in the invitation.

Members considered an invitation from the Department to the launch of the new Northern Ireland Horizon 2020 Strategy to be held on Tuesday 31 March 2015.

*Agreed:* members to notify the Committee Office regarding their attendance at the event.

Members discussed an outstanding issue in relation to correspondence received from Jim Allister MLA which the Committee had considered during the Insolvency (Amendment) Bill Committee stage.

*Agreed:* the Committee to follow up on the matter after Easter Recess.

*Paul Givan joined the meeting at 10.14am*

### **4. Oral Briefing from the DETI and the Ulster University Economic Policy Unit: Air Connectivity Study – Economic Assessment of the Impact of Air Passenger Duty**

*The Officials joined the meeting at 10:14am*

Members received a briefing from Mr Diarmuid McLean, Head of DETI Economic Policy Division, Mr John Simms, Head of DETI Access and Agri-

Food Branch and Mr Gareth Hetherington, Associate Director, Ulster University Economic Policy Centre.

Key issues discussed included: the impact of Air Passenger Duty on the Northern Ireland economy, the block grant, comparisons between the three Northern Ireland Airports and Dublin Airport, the UK Regional Air Connectivity Fund, connectivity for inbound tourism, air freight connectivity, business traffic, outbound traffic, leisure travellers, transfer of Air Passenger Duty powers to Northern Ireland, engagement with HM Treasury, passenger forecasts, corporation tax, the Air Route Development Fund, marketing of Northern Ireland in overseas markets.

*Máirtín Ó Muilleoir joined the meeting at 10.18am*

*Fearghal McKinney joined the meeting at 10.35am*

*Máirtín Ó Muilleoir left the meeting at 11.01am*

*The Officials left the meeting at 11:09am*

## **5. Briefing from Assembly Research: Business Survey – Headline Results**

*The Researcher joined the meeting at 11:10am*

Members received a briefing from Mr Aidan Stennett, Assembly Research Officer.

Key issues discussed included: the main points raised by those who took part in the Committee survey.

*Agreed:* to include the research paper in the evidence for the Inquiry.

*Agreed:* to forward the research paper to the Department for information.

*William Humphrey left the meeting at 11.15am*

*The Researcher left the meeting at 11.20am*

## **6. Assembly Research Paper: IDA Ireland – Regional Targets and Policy Measures**

Members considered an Assembly Research paper on IDA Ireland – Regional Targets and Policy Measures.

*Paul Frew left the meeting at 11.21am*

*Agreed:* to include the research paper in the evidence for the Inquiry.

*Agreed:* to commission research to ascertain the possible reasons for targets not having been met by IDA Ireland on its stated regional objectives.

*Agreed:* to forward the research paper to the Department for information.

## **7. Matters Arising**

Members considered correspondence from the Irish League of Credit Unions (ILCU) and the Ulster Federation of Credit Unions (UFCU) in regards to the Credit Unions and Industrial & Provident Societies Bill.

*Paul Frew returned to the meeting at 11.23am*

*Agreed:* to forward the correspondence to the Department for comment.

*Agreed:* to ask the Department whether it has addressed the issue of potential fraud with the Treasury as referred to in the correspondence from UFCU.

Members considered correspondence from an individual regarding fracking on the North Coast.

*Agreed:* to forward the correspondence to the Department and also the Department of the Environment for comment.

Members considered a response from Assembly Research to a query from Protect Our North Coast Group in relation to the research paper 'Proximity of Petroleum Exploration Wells to Dwellings'.

*Agreed:* to forward the response to Protect Our North Coast Group.

Members noted correspondence from Ofcom in relation to RTÉ and TG4 online player services.

Members noted correspondence from Tourism NI regarding the Titanic Walkway and Heritage Gateway to Fermanagh.

Members noted correspondence from Tourism NI in relation to the Giro d'Italia Post Project Evaluation.

Members noted a response from the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to the Committee's request for an update on the work of the Ministerial Sub-Group on Regional Opportunities.

*Steven Agnew left the meeting at 11.28am*

Members considered a briefing note from the Committee's Specialist Advisor on the impact of a UK exit from the EU on the Northern Ireland economy.

*Agreed:* to include the briefing note in papers for the Inquiry.

*Agreed:* to extend the contract of the Committee Specialist Advisor until the end of the mandate.

*Agreed:* to forward the briefing note to the Department for information.

*Máirtín Ó Muilleoir returned to the meeting at 11.29am*

#### **8. Written Submissions: Inquiry into Economic Growth and Job Creation in a Reduced Tax Environment**

Members considered written submissions to the Inquiry from Campaign for the Economic Regeneration of the Former Visteon Site, Confederation of British Industry, Daily UK, Enterprise NI, Federation of Small Businesses, Fermanagh and Omagh District Council, Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council, Mid Ulster District Council, Newry, Mourne and Down District Council, Road Haulage Association Ltd, Ulster University, Belfast International Airport Ltd and a supplementary response from the Institute of Directors Northern Ireland.

*Agreed:* to include the submissions in the evidence for the Inquiry.

#### **9. Legislation: SR 2015/80 The Employer's Liability (Compulsory Insurance) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015**

Members considered SR 2015/80 The Employer's Liability (Compulsory Insurance) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

*Agreed:* that the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment has considered the Statutory Rule SR 2015/80 The Employer's Liability (Compulsory Insurance) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and has no objection to the Rule.

#### **10. Legislation: SL1 Renewables Obligation Order (Northern Ireland) 2015**

Members considered the SL1 Renewables Obligation Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.

*Danny Kinahan joined the meeting at 11.32am*

*Agreed:* that the Committee is content with the policy implications of the proposed legislation at this stage.

#### **11. Legislation: SL1 Energy (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015**

Members considered the SL1 Energy (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.

*Agreed:* that the Committee is content with the policy implications of the proposed legislation at this stage.

#### **12. Written Briefing from DETI: Response to Electricity Policy Review Part III**

Members considered the Minister's response to the Electricity Policy Review Part III Grid Connections.

*Agreed:* to ask the Department for an update on the Strategic Energy Framework, to determine in particular who will be consulted and when will the Committee be briefed.

*Agreed:* to consider the matter again when the Department briefs the Committee on 28 April 2015.

#### **13. Written Briefing from DETI: Northern Ireland Broadband Improvement Project**

Members considered a paper providing an update on the Northern Ireland Broadband Improvement Project.

*Agreed:* to include the papers in evidence for the Inquiry.

#### **14. Written Briefing from DETI: Access to Finance**

Members considered a Departmental briefing paper on Access to Finance.

*Agreed:* to include the briefing paper in evidence for the Inquiry.

#### **15. Written Briefing from DETI: Programme for Government 2011-15 Departmental Delivery Plans – Progress at 30 December 2014**

Members noted a written briefing from the Department in relation to the Programme for Government 2011/15 Departmental Delivery Plans – Progress at 30 December 2014.

#### **16. Written Briefing from DETI: Invest NI Commercial Property Research – Grade A Office Space**

Members considered a written briefing from the Department in relation to Invest NI Commercial Property research – Grade A Office Space.

*Agreed:* to include Grade A Office Space on the agenda for the Departmental briefing on 21 April 2015.

*Agreed:* to ask the Department for the rationale behind Invest NI showing no interest in purchasing any part of the site of St Patrick's Barracks, Ballymena.

*Agreed:* to include the written briefing in evidence for the Inquiry.

## **17. Consultation: Draft Consumer Protection Strategy**

Members noted a consultation paper in relation to the Draft Consumer Protection Strategy.

## **18. Consultation: Transition from the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation (NIRO) to Contracts for Difference and Grace Periods**

Members considered a consultation paper in relation to the Transition from the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation to contracts for Difference and Grace Periods.

*Agreed:* to receive a summary of responses following consultation.

## **19. Outcome of Consultation on Proposals to Revise and Amend the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997**

Members considered the Outcome of Consultation on Proposals to Revise and Amend the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1997.

*Agreed:* to forward the summary of consultation responses to the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and NIPSA.

## **20. Impact of Bank Closures**

Members considered proposals from the Consumer Council for the Committee's joint roundtable event with the Committee for Finance and Personnel on the impact of bank closures to be held on 26 May 2015.

*Agreed:* the Committee is content with the proposals.

## **21. EU Matters**

Members noted the latest EU Matters Newsletter.

*Agreed:* to request further information on the work being carried out by the Welsh EU Funding Ambassadors.

## **22. Correspondence**

Members noted the following pieces of correspondence;

- i. Correspondence from the Northern Ireland Commonwealth Games Council regarding a bid to host the 2021 Commonwealth Youth Games.

*Danny Kinahan left the meeting at 11.46am*

*Agreed:* to arrange an informal briefing with the Northern Ireland Commonwealth Games Council on this matter.

- ii. Correspondence from the Minister in relation to amendments to the Insolvency Act 1986 and the Insolvency (Northern Ireland) Order 1989 to implement the recast Deposit Guarantee Scheme Directive.
- iii. Correspondence from Ofcom in relation to its Strategic Review of Digital Communications.
- iv. Correspondence from Margaret Ritchie MP in response to the Committee's letter on corporation tax.
- v. Correspondence from the Committee for Employment and Learning in relation to the Youth Employment Initiative.
- vi. Correspondence from the Minister regarding statements on the North South Ministerial Council meetings in Trade and Business Development and Tourism Sectoral format.
- vii. Correspondence from the Minister regarding the proposed implementation of Electricity Market Reform in Northern Ireland.

*Agreed:* to consider this in more detail when the consultation has been completed and the Strategic Issues paper is available.

## **23. Forward Work Programme**

Members considered the draft Committee Forward Work Programme.



*Agreed:* that the Committee is content for the Committee Office to liaise with the Joint Committee secretariat to organise an informal meeting.

*Agreed:* that the Committee is content with the Forward Work Programme.

#### **24. Any Other Business**

There were no items of additional business.

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

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on **Tuesday 14 April 2015** at **10.00am** in **Room 29, Parliament Buildings.**

*The meeting concluded at 11.51am.*

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**Mr Patsy McGlone**  
**Chairperson**  
**Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment**

**14 April 2015**