



COMMITTEE FOR ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

2 JUNE 2015

ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, 10.00AM

- Present: Mr Patsy McGlone (Chairperson)
Mr Steven Agnew
Mr Gordon Dunne
Ms Megan Fearon
Mr Paul Frew
Mr Paul Givan
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)
Mr William Humphrey

The meeting began at 10:10am

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted as above.

2. Draft Minutes of Meeting of 26 May 2015

Agreed: the Committee agreed the draft minutes of 26 May 2015.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson informed members that the Committee Office is currently speaking to members on an individual basis to ascertain their availability to attend the Committee visit to Queen's University Centre for Cancer Research and Cell Biology.

The Chairperson informed members that the mobile phone network operator, 3 (three), has requested an informal meeting with members to brief them on the company's roll out plans.

Agreed: that members are content that an informal meeting is arranged.

Agreed: that the Committee Office contact members regarding a date and a time for the meeting.

Members considered an invitation to the Chairperson to an event to mark the inauguration of the Chinese Consulate General in Belfast.

Agreed: that the Chairperson will attend this event.

4. Oral Briefing from DETI: Response to Electricity Policy Review Part III Grid Connections

The Officials joined the meeting at 10:11am

Members received a briefing from Mr John Mills, Head of Energy Division, DETI, Mr Bill Stevenson, Principal Officer, Electricity Branch, DETI and Ms Alison Clydesdale, Principal Officer, Renewable Energy Branch, DETI in relation to DETI's response to the Electricity Policy Review Part III Grid Connections.

Key issues discussed included: ministerial policy, roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders, the role of Energy Division in strategic economic development, smart grids and micro grids, small scale renewables, Renewables Obligation Scheme, Contract for Difference (CFD) scheme and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

Paul Givan joined the meeting at 10.42am

Fearghal McKinney left the meeting at 10.55am

Paul Givan left the meeting at 10.59am

The Officials left the meeting at 11:11am

Agreed: to ask the Department for a written briefing outlining the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholder organisations in relation to electricity policy.

Agreed: to ask the Department to clarify the role of Energy Division in strategic economic development considering it is the Northern Ireland Executive's No. 1 priority.

Agreed: to ask the Department whether the Report on CfD will provide an analysis of the impact on the economy in terms of both the larger energy users and the renewables industry in the contexts of going ahead or not going ahead with the scheme.

Paul Frew joined the meeting at 11.16am

Máirtín Ó Muilleoir joined the meeting at 11.20am

5. Oral Briefing from DETI: June Monitoring Round 2015-16

The Officials joined the meeting at 11:22am

Members received a briefing from Mr Trevor Cooper, Head of Finance Division, DETI and Mrs Bernie Brankin, Principal Officer, Finance Branch, DETI, in relation to June Monitoring Round.

Key issues discussed included: bids for new projects and unavoidable budgetary pressures.

Paul Frew left the meeting at 11.29am

Megan Fearon left the meeting at 11.32am

Paul Givan returned to the meeting at 11.32am

The Officials left the meeting at 11:41am

Agreed: to ask the Department for information on the impact of services on the Health & Safety Executive Northern Ireland with regards to the Voluntary Exit Scheme, especially considering the earlier requirement of new posts.

Steven Agnew left the meeting at 11.41am

The meeting was suspended at 11.42am

The meeting recommenced in public session at 11.56am with the following members present:

Mr Patsy McGlone (Chairperson)

Mr Gordon Dunne

Mr Máirtín Ó Muilleoir

Mr Megan Fearon

Mr Paul Givan

6. Matters Arising

Members considered a draft agenda for the meeting with the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Transport and Communications.

Agreed: that Assembly Research provide background information on Tourism Ireland.

The Chairperson informed members that the Committee agreed to visit the Oireachtas Joint Committee on Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation for an informal meeting.

Agreed: the Committee is content with either of the suggested dates for the visit to take place.

Steven Agnew returned to the meeting at 11.59am

Members considered a response from the Department to a Committee query on CfD.

Agreed: the Committee is content to receive an oral briefing from the Department following the consultation.

Members noted information from the Irish Congress of Trade Unions in relation to the transposition of EU Directives.

Members noted a response from O2 to queries from the Chairperson in relation to network problems.

7. Legislation: SL1 Offshore Installations (Offshore Safety Directive) (Safety Case etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

Members discussed the SL1 Offshore Installations (Offshore Safety Directive) (Safety Case etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Agreed: the Committee is content with the policy proposals at this stage.

8. Legislation: SL1 Genetically Modified Organisms Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

Members discussed the SL1 Genetically Modified Organisms Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Agreed: the Committee is content with the policy proposals at this stage.

9. Legislation: SL1 The Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

Members discussed the SL1 The Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

Agreed: the Committee is content with the policy proposals at this stage.

10. Assembly Research Paper: Support for Entrepreneurship in Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland

Members considered an Assembly Research Paper in relation to Support for Entrepreneurship in Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland.

Agreed: to include the research paper as evidence for the Inquiry.

11. Written Briefing from DETI: Quarterly Update on the Northern Ireland Broadband Improvement Project

Members considered a written briefing from the Department providing a quarterly update on the Northern Ireland Broadband Improvement Project.

Agreed: to include the written briefing as evidence for the Inquiry.

12. Written Briefing from DETI: Updates on the Report on the Inquiry into Renewable Energy and Strategic Energy Framework Implementation Plan

Members noted a written briefing from the Department in relation to updates on the Report on the Inquiry into Renewable Energy and Strategic Energy Framework Implementation Plan.

13. Written Briefing from Tourism NI: Tourism NI Operating Plan 2015/16

Members noted a written briefing from Tourism NI in relation to the Tourism NI Operating Plan 2015/16.

14. Correspondence

Members noted the following items of correspondence;

- i. Correspondence from the Minister in relation to Credit Unions and Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Bill.

Agreed: to include the Bill in packs for the Departmental briefing on 16 June 2015.

- ii. A thank you letter from the Minister of Finance and Personnel.

- iii. Correspondence from QPANI and a recent online news article in relation to the Lough Neagh Sand Extraction industry.

The Committee noted that the Committee for the Environment had received similar correspondence from QPANI and has written to the Department of the Environment for comment.

Agreed: to forward the correspondence to the Committee for the Environment and ask to be copied into any response received from the Department of the Environment on the matter.

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 **Tuesday 9 June 2015** at **10.00am** in **Room 29, Parliament Buildings**.

The Chairperson informed members that the meeting will be followed by a concurrent meeting with the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development at 12.30pm in the Senate Chamber.

The meeting went into closed session at 12:07pm

17. Committee Report: Inquiry into Growing the Economy and Creating Jobs in a Reduced Tax Environment

Members discussed the draft 'Report on the Committee's Inquiry into Growing the Economy and Creating Jobs with Lower Corporation Tax'.

Agreed: that the Committee is content to include the written responses from CBI and the Department of the Environment as evidence for the Inquiry.

Agreed: to write to the Department of the Environment asking what consideration has been given to the availability of electricity grid connections and costs, high speed broadband availability and mobile connectivity and other infrastructure availability in the drawing up of local area development plans and land zoning.

Steven Agnew left the meeting at 12.46pm

Mr Patsy McGlone
Chairperson
Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

9 June 2015