



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

20 OCTOBER 2015

ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, 10:00am

Present: Mr Patsy McGlone (Chairperson)
Mr Conor Murphy (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Steven Agnew
Mr Adrian Cochrane-Watson
Mr Gordon Dunne
Mr Fearghal McKinney
Mr Máirtín Ó Muilleoir
Mr Paul Girvan
Mr Paul Givan
Mr William Humphrey

In Attendance: Mr Jim McManus (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Angela McParland (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Michael Greer (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Marion Johnson (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Ms Megan Fearon

The meeting began at 10:10am

1. Apologies

Apologies as noted above.

2. Draft Minutes of Meeting of 6th October & 15th October 2015

Agreed: the Committee agreed the draft minutes of 6th October & 15th October 2015.

3. Chairperson's Business

Members discussed a meeting note on the visit to InterTradeIreland by a delegation of Committee members on Wednesday 7th October 2015.

Agreed: to receive an oral briefing from InterTradeIreland.

Agreed: to receive an oral briefing from the Minister in relation to InterTradeIreland's budget following the briefing from the organisation.

4. Oral Briefing from Mobile Network Operators: Development plans, future plans and relationship with Ofcom

The witnesses joined the meeting at 10:12am

Máirtín Ó Muilleoir joined the meeting at 10:20am

Paul Girvan joined the meeting at 10:32am

Adrian Cochrane-Watson joined the meeting at 10:55am

Conor Murphy left the meeting at 11:00am

Members received a briefing from Paul James, Head of Public Affairs, O2, Paul Morris, Head of Government Affairs, Vodafone, Scott McGimpsey, Principal Delivery Manager, EE and Simon Miller, Head of Government and Regulatory Engagement, Three.

The key issues discussed were the mobile network operators' successes to date, future plans of the companies, the barriers the companies face and instances of a joined up approach by the companies to address issues.

Agreed: to request details of specific examples of the challenges the mobile network operators have faced around planning issues.

Agreed: members to forward details of areas with poor signal to the mobile network operators by way of the Committee Office.

The witnesses left the meeting at 11:19am

The Chairperson suspended the meeting at 11:19am in order to allow members to participate in the vote in Plenary on the Consideration stage of the Public Services Ombudsperson Bill.

5. Oral Briefing from Department for Culture, Media and Sport: Mobile Infrastructure Project (MIP)

The meeting recommenced at 11:42am with the following members in attendance:

Patsy McGlone (Chairperson)

Gordon Dunne

Paul Girvan

William Humphrey

Fearghal McKinney

The witnesses joined the meeting at 11:42am

Members received a briefing from Jabeen Paracha, Senior Stakeholder Manager, Department for Culture, Media and Sport and Francis Loughran, Stakeholder Manager, Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

The key issues discussed included how the Mobile Infrastructure Project is operated, the issues the project faces, its achievements to date, its budget and the future of the project.

Paul Givan returned to the meeting at 11:55am

Steven Agnew returned to the meeting at 11:56am

The witnesses left the meeting at 12:26pm

6. Matters Arising

William Humphrey left the meeting at 12:27pm

Members noted correspondence from the Committee for the Environment in relation to Countryside Access.

Members noted a Departmental response detailing the reasons for a delay in the Committee receiving a progress report on the Enterprise Zone Pilot.

Members noted further information from Tourism NI following its briefing to the Committee on the Year of Food and Drink 2016.

Members noted a response from the Utility Regulator in relation to NIE.

7. Legislation: Credit Unions and Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Bill

Members discussed a written submission from the Ulster Federation of Credit Unions (UFCU) and correspondence from the Examiner of Statutory Rules (ESR).

Agreed: to ask the Department to comment on the issues raised by the UFCU in relation to Clause 1.

Agreed: to forward the correspondence from the ESR to the Department, as notice of what may be contained in the Examiner's response on delegated powers.

Agreed: to bring a motion to extend the Committee stage at the next meeting.

8. Written Briefing from DETI: Horizon 2020 – Briefing on the Success of the Northern Ireland Programme

Members discussed the report on the Horizon 2020 programme.

Agreed: to ask the Department to provide an oral briefing on the success of the Northern Ireland programme.

Agreed: to ask the Department to clarify what specialist knowledge has been made available to applicants. To also ask the Department to comment on the view that funding for Horizon 2020 application support would significantly increase the success rate.

9. Written Briefing from DETI: Cost of Doing Business Research Update

Members discussed a written briefing from the Department on the Cost of Doing Business Research Update.

Agreed: to ask the Department to provide an oral briefing on the report.

10. Written Briefing from InterTradeIreland: Annual Report 2014

Members noted the InterTradeIreland Annual Report 2014.

11. Written Briefing from Research and Information Service: Utility Regulator RP6 Approach Document Stakeholder Workshop

Members noted an Assembly Research briefing note providing a summary of the Utility Regulator's workshop which took place on 7th October 2015.

12. EU Matters Newsletter

Members discussed the latest edition of the EU Matters Newsletter.

Agreed: to commend the EU Manager on the Newsletter.

Agreed: the Committee agreed to receive further information on the Regional Access to Junker Plan.

13. Correspondence

Members noted the following items of correspondence;

- i. Correspondence from the Minister regarding amending the Estate Agents Act 1979 to give the Secretary of State for Business Innovation and Skills powers to appoint a lead enforcement authority.

Agreed: that the committee is content with the Minister's response agreeing to seek a legislative consent motion for the provisions in the Housing Bill that will amend the 1979 Act to extend to Northern Ireland.

- ii. Correspondence from the Assembly and Executive Review Committee regarding the Assembly and Executive Reform (Assembly Opposition) Bill.

Agreed: that, in regards to Paragraph 14, the Committee advises that it be retained that Committees advise and assist Ministers as well as scrutinise, and that the wording be 'scrutinise, advise and assist Ministers'.

Agreed: to revisit Clause 18 and Clause 21 at a later date.

- iii. Correspondence from the Northern Ireland Assembly Business Trust (NIABT) regarding a NIABT EU Referendum/Brexit event.

Agreed: that the Chairperson will attend the event.

- iv. Correspondence from the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister regarding the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission.
- v. Correspondence from the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce thanking the Chair for participating in their joint event with Danske Bank on 30 September 2015.
- vi. Correspondence from the Chief Executive of East Belfast Enterprise thanking the Chair for attending an event.

- vii. Correspondence from Solace NI regarding its role as a first point of contact for senior local government officers.

14. Forward Work Programme

Agreed: the Committee agreed the Forward Work Programme with an additional Departmental briefing on the closure of the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation scheme to new onshore wind in 2016.

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 3rd November 2015 at 10.00am 29, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12:42pm

Mr Patsy McGlone
Chairperson
Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

3 November 2015