



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

1 DECEMBER 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
Ms Megan Fearon
Mr William Humphrey
Mr Fearghal McKinney
Lord Morrow
Mr Máirtín Ó Muilleoir

In Attendance:

Mr Jim McManus (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Angela McParland (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Michael Greer (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Briege Mullan (Clerical Officer)

Apologies:

None

The meeting began at 10:12am with the Deputy Chairperson in the Chair

1. Apologies

No apologies were recorded.

2. Draft Minutes of Meeting of 24th November 2015

Agreed: the Committee agreed the draft minutes of 24th November 2015.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson reminded members of the joint informal briefing by the Minister for Employment and Learning in regards to Michelin to be held in the afternoon with this Committee and the Committee for Employment and Learning.

The Chairperson reminded Members of the visit on Wednesday 2nd December 2015 to Kingspan Environmental Headquarters in Portadown.

The Chairperson informed members that the Committee has been invited to attend the BT Young Scientist and Technology Exhibition in January 2016.

Agreed: the Committee agreed to visit on Wednesday 6th January. The Committee Office to email members in regards to their availability to attend.

Máirtín Ó Muilleoir joined the meeting at 10:15am

Fearghal McKinney joined the meeting at 10:15am

4. Oral Briefing from InterTradeIreland: Funding

The representatives joined the meeting at 10:16am

Members received a briefing from Mr Thomas Hunter McGowan, Chief Executive Officer, InterTradeIreland, Mr Aidan Gough, Director of Strategy and Policy, InterTradeIreland, Mr Laurence Lord, Corporate Services Director and Ms Margaret Hearty, Director of Programmes & Business, InterTradeIreland.

Key issues discussed included current funding for the organisation, the effects of cuts on staff morale and programmes at risk due to further cuts.

William Humphrey left the meeting at 10:47am

Meagan Fearon joined the meeting at 10:57am

The representatives left the meeting at 11:03am

5. Oral Briefing from the Committee Specialist Advisor and Ulster University Economic Policy Centre: Economic Update

The representatives joined the meeting at 11:04am

Members received a briefing from Dr Leslie Budd, Committee Specialist Advisor on Economic Policy and Professor Neil Gibson, Director, Ulster University Economic Policy Centre.

Key areas discussed included global value chains, reduced corporation tax, exports and the 'Brexit' debate.

Fearghal McKinney left the meeting at 11:20am

Stephen Agnew left the meeting at 11:28am

Patsy McGlone, Chairperson, joined the meeting at 11.37am

The Chairperson took the Chair at 11:37am

Adrian Cochrane-Watson joined the meeting at 12:24pm

Conor Murphy left the meeting at 12:35pm

Adrian Cochrane-Watson left the meeting at 12:36pm

Agreed: that the Committee is content that the Specialist Advisor include some of his findings from his work with the Committee in his contribution to a book to be published shortly.

The representatives left the meeting at 12:48pm

6. Oral Briefing from DETI: November Monitoring Round

The officials joined the meeting at 12:49pm

Members received a briefing from Mr Trevor Cooper, Head of Finance Division, DETI, and Mrs Bernie Brankin, Principal, Finance Branch, DETI.

Key issues discussed included the November Monitoring Round and the bidding for potential money for organisations such as InterTradeIreland.

Conor Murphy joined the meeting at 1:03pm

The officials left the meeting at 1:18pm

7. Matters Arising

Members noted a response from Invest NI regarding the Michelin plant, Ballymena.

Members considered correspondence from the Ulster Farmers' Union in relation to the proposed closure of the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation to onshore wind.

Agreed: to invite the Ulster Farmers' Union to brief the committee.

8. Legislation: Legislative Consent Memorandum on Housing and Planning Bill

Members considered the Legislative Consent Memorandum on the Housing and Planning Bill.

Agreed: to ask the Department if, when the legislation is changed, it is envisaged that Trading Standards Service would respond to a tender for the appointment of a new lead enforcement authority for the UK.

9. Written Briefing from DETI: Update on Restructuring of Departments

Members noted a written briefing from DETI providing an update on the future restructuring of Departments.

Agreed: to receive an oral briefing from the Restructuring Project Team.

Agreed: to forward the paper to the Committee for Employment & Learning and invite that Committee to attend the briefing.

10. Written Briefing from Assembly Research: Impact of reducing the VAT rate on tourism goods and services in the Republic of Ireland

Members discussed a briefing paper from Assembly Research on the Impact of reducing the VAT rate on tourism goods and services in the Republic of Ireland.

Agreed: to forward the paper to the Westminster Northern Ireland Affairs Committee to inform its Inquiry.

11. Correspondence

Members noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel on Departmental Monitoring of Savings Delivery Plans.

Members noted correspondence from the UK Green Investment Bank in regards to infrastructure projects.

Agreed: to write to the Green Investment Bank asking how much of the £10bn investment has been invested in Northern Ireland projects.

Members noted correspondence from the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister in regards to EU reform.

Members noted correspondence from Firmus Energy providing an update on its development plans.

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 8th December 2015 at 10.00am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 1:32pm

Mr Patsy McGlone
Chairperson
Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

8th December 2015