



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

12 JANUARY 2016

SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, 10:00am

Present:

Mr Patsy McGlone (Chairperson)
Mr Conor Murphy (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Stephen Agnew
Mr Adrian Cochrane-Watson
Mr Gordon Dunne
Ms Megan Fearon
Mr William Humphrey
Lord Morrow
Mr Máirtín Ó Muilleoir

In Attendance for Agenda Item 3:

Mr Daithi McKay
Mr Leslie Cree
Mr Gary Middleton
Mr John McCallister

In Attendance:

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

Apologies:

Mr Fearghal McKinney

The meeting began at 10:08am

1. Apologies

Apologies as noted above.

2. Declaration of Interests

No Member declared an interest.

3. Oral Briefing from Bell & Company: Cerberus and Capita

The representatives joined the meeting at 10:09am

Members received a briefing from Mr Terry Bell, Principal and Company Director, Bell & Company, Ms Claire McCarragher, Corporate Case Manager, Bell & Company, Ms Leah O' Kane, Case Manager, Bell & Company and Mr Paul Fitzgerald, Assistant Case Handler, Bell & Company.

Key issues discussed included the alleged working practices Cerberus have been applying and the role Bell & Company played when negotiating for their Clients.

Máirtín Ó Muilleoir joined the meeting at 10:11am

Adrian Cochrane-Watson joined the meeting at 10:36am

Megan Fearon joined the meeting at 10:57am

Conor Murphy joined the meeting at 11:31am

Gordon Dunne left the meeting at 11.43am

Máirtín Ó Muilleoir declared an interest as having previously represented Ulster Bank officials

The representatives left the meeting at 11:46am

Megan Fearon left the meeting at 11.46am

Leslie Cree left the meeting at 11.46am

Gary Middleton left the meeting at 11.46am

John McCallister left the meeting at 11.46am

Daithi McKay left the meeting at 11.47am

Agreed: to invite Cerberus to brief the Committee.

Agreed: to commission research to ascertain how and by whom the activities of companies such as Cerberus and Capita Asset Services are regulated.

4. Draft Minutes of Meeting of 8th December 2015

Agreed: the Committee agreed the draft minutes of 8th December 2015.

Stephen Agnew left the meeting at 11:47am

5. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson informed Members that he will decline an invitation to attend a Round Table Discussion and luncheon for Action Renewables' Annual Awards as the event is to take place on 31st March following dissolution.

Megan Fearon returned to the meeting at 11.48am

Gordon Dunne returned to the meeting at 11.48am

The Chairperson informed Members of an invitation to the Chair and Deputy Chair to attend the launch of the Utility Regulator's Consumer Protection Strategy.

Agreed: the Chair and Deputy Chair are unable to attend due to prior commitments and no other Member is available to attend.

The Chairperson informed Members of correspondence from the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU) asking for the Chair to co-sponsor, with the Chair of the Committee for Education, an event highlighting Asbestos in Schools.

Agreed: that the Chairperson co-sponsor the event.

6. Legislation: Legislative Consent Memorandum on Enterprise Bill (Small Business Commissioner Provisions)

Members considered the draft report on the Legislative Consent Memorandum on Enterprise Bill (Small Business Commissioner Provisions).

Agreed: Members agreed the draft Report.

7. Matters Arising

Members considered a list of outstanding Departmental issues from meetings.

Agreed: to reissue a request to the Department asking for the status of the Tamboran Petroleum licence application.

Agreed: in regards to the Committee's request that the Minister brief the Committee, that the Committee receive a briefing in the first instance from

officials when they brief the Committee next week on the Budget and January Monitoring.

Members considered a paper from the Department highlighting the priorities for EU Reform.

Agreed: to ask the Department for a copy of its input into the Balance of Competencies Review regarding “Single Market” and “Cohesion Policy”.

Members noted a response from the Department on Mineral Prospecting License.

Members noted a response from the Department on Telecoms 2015-2017 Continuing to Connect.

Members noted a response from the Department in relation to a research paper on Northern Ireland tourism structures and sectors.

8. Legislation: SL1 Renewable Obligation (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016

Members considered the SL1 Renewable Obligation (Amendment) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016.

Agreed: the Committee is content with the policy implications of the proposed legislation.

9. Proposed Early Closure of the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation (NIRO) to Onshore Wind

Members considered a Response from the Secretary of State for Energy & Climate Change to correspondence from the Committee along with a number of other items of correspondence in relation to the proposed early closure of the NIRO to onshore wind.

Agreed: to write to the DECC Secretary of State asking for clarification of her position in relation to the Committee’s request for a meeting.

10. Forward Work Programme

Members considered correspondence from a Member of the Committee requesting that Invest NI is asked to return to the Committee for a further question and answer session.

Agreed: that the Member clarify at next week’s meeting the issues the Member wishes to raise with Invest NI.

Agreed: to commission research that will provide a summary of the key work undertaken on the potential impact of Brexit on the economy north and south.

Agreed: to hold a concurrent meeting with the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development and receive an oral briefing on Going for Growth.

Agreed: Members agreed the Forward Work Programme.

Adrian Cochrane-Watson left the meeting at 11:53am

11. Correspondence

Members discussed correspondence from Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance (NIPSA) regarding its submission to the Health and Safety Executive Northern Ireland (HSENI) Consultation on Proposals for the Replacement of the Construction (Design and Management) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2007.

Agreed: to invite NIPSA and the Department to brief the Committee.

Agreed: to write to the Irish Congress of Trade Unions to establish if that organisation has any similar concerns.

Members discussed correspondence from Northern Ireland Solar Trade Association (NISTA) in regards to the impact on the industry of perceived delays by Northern Ireland Electricity Networks in processing grid applications.

Agreed: to request a written briefing from NISTA.

Members noted a Notice of Amendments to the Credit Unions and Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Bill.

Members noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel in relation to the 2016-17 Budget.

Members noted correspondence from the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister in relation to the Executive's Investment Strategy.

The Committee agreed to move to Agenda Item 13

13. Any Other Business

There were no additional items of business.

14. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on Tuesday 19th January 2015 at 10.00am, Room 29.

The Chairperson suspended the meeting at 12:02pm

The meeting resumed at 12:09pm in Closed Session with the following Members:

Patsy McGlone

Gordon Dunne

Megan Fearon

William Humphrey

Máirtín Ó Muilleoir

Conor Murphy

12. Oral Briefing from Research and Information Services (RaISE): Budget Scrutiny

The officials joined the meeting at 12:03pm

Members received presentation on budget scrutiny from Mr Michael Scholes, Research Officer, RaISE. Also present was Aidan Stennett, Researcher, RaISE.

The officials left the meeting at 12:26pm

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12:27pm

Mr Patsy McGlone
Chairperson
Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

19th January 2015