

COMMITTEE FOR FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**WEDNESDAY, 10 OCTOBER 2012
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

- Present: Mr Daithí McKay MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Dominic Bradley MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Roy Beggs MLA
Mrs Judith Cochrane MLA
Ms Megan Fearon MLA
Mr Paul Girvan MLA
Mr David McIlveen MLA
Mr Mitchel McLaughlin MLA
Mr Adrian McQuillan MLA
Mr Peter Weir MLA
- In Attendance: Mr Shane McAteer (Assembly Clerk)
Mrs Clairita Frazer (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mrs Kathy O'Hanlon (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Jim Nulty (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Heather Graham (Clerical Officer)
Mr Gavin Moore (Bursary Student)
Mr Colin Pidgeon (Assembly Research and Information Service)
- Apologies: Mr Leslie Cree MBE MLA

The meeting opened at 10.06am in public session.

1. Apologies

There was one apology as detailed above.

Ms Fearon joined the meeting at 10.07am.

2. Draft Minutes of Proceedings of 3 October 2012

Agreed: that the minutes are published on the Assembly website.

3. Matters Arising

Table of Requests for Information from the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP)

The Committee noted the table of requests for information from DFP which provided an update on any matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

Equality Statistics for the NI Civil Service Report

Agreed: to request a background research paper on the recent report on Equality Statistics for the NICS.

4. The Quality of Financial Forecasting and Improving Spending Control – Assembly Research Briefing

The Committee received a briefing from Assembly Research on the Research paper, *the Quality of Financial Forecasting and Improving Spending Control*.

Mr Weir joined the meeting at 10.10am.

Ms Fearon left the meeting at 10.20am.

Ms Fearon returned to the meeting at 10.25am.

Mr McLaughlin left the meeting at 10.36am.

5. Departmental Financial Forecasting Information – DFP Briefing Session

The Committee received a briefing from the following DFP officials: Mr Michael Brennan, Head of Central Expenditure Division and Peter Jakobson, Central Expenditure Division.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department on the above Assembly Research paper.

Mr McLaughlin returned to the meeting at 10.37am.

Mrs Cochrane left the meeting at 10.38am.

Mr McQuillan joined the meeting at 10.53am.

Agreed: to copy DFP's correspondence on improving accuracy in departmental financial forecasting, in addition to the monthly forecast outturn information, to the other statutory committees for scrutiny at a departmental level.

6. Shared Services – Assembly Research Briefing

The Committee received a briefing from Assembly Research on the Research paper, *Shared Services in Central Government*.

Mr Bradley left the meeting at 11.14am.

Mr Beggs joined the meeting at 11.15am.

Mr Weir left the meeting at 11.16am.
Mr Girvan left the meeting at 11.19am.
Mr Weir returned to the meeting at 11.20am.

Agreed: to copy the Research paper to the Committee for Health, Social Services and Public Safety, given the development of shared services within that Department.

Mr McLaughlin left the meeting at 11.29am.

7. Enterprise Shared Services: Update on Progress – DFP Briefing

The Committee received a briefing from the following DFP officials: Paul Wickens, Chief Executive, Enterprise Shared Services (ESS); John Crosby, Director of Finance Shared Services, ESS; and Mary Cunningham, Director of Business Support Division, ESS.

Agreed: that the DFP officials will provide additional information as requested during the briefing, including: copies of the business cases for each service; benefits realisation plans; customer satisfaction figures; and the average length of time to complete a recruitment programme, from advertising to appointing of staff. The officials will also provide a written response to all issues raised in the Research paper.

8. Subordinate Legislation

The Committee considered the following statutory rules:

SR 2012/365 – The Scheme for Construction Contracts in NI (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2012

The Committee noted that the Examiner of Statutory Rules had no issues to raise by way of technical scrutiny in relation to the Rule.

Agreed: that the Committee has considered The Scheme for Construction Contracts in NI (Amendment) Regulations 2012 and recommends that the rule is affirmed by the Assembly.

SR 2012/366 – The Construction Contracts Exclusion Order (NI) 2012

The Committee noted that the Examiner of Statutory Rules had no issues to raise by way of technical scrutiny in relation to the Rule.

Agreed: that the Committee has considered The Construction Contracts Exclusion Order (NI) 2012 and recommends that the rule is affirmed by the Assembly.

Members also considered proposals for two pieces of subordinate legislation:

SL1 – The Companies (Public Sector Audit) Amendment Order (NI) 2012

Agreed: that the Committee has considered DFP's proposal for subordinate legislation under The Companies (Public Sector Audit) Amendment Order (NI) 2012, and has no objection to the policy implications of the proposed legislation at this stage.

SL1 – The Building (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2012

Agreed: that the Committee has considered DFP's proposal for subordinate legislation under The Building (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2012, and has no objection to the policy implications of the proposed legislation at this stage.

Members noted The Construction Contracts (2011 Act) (Commencement) Order (NI) 2012.

9. Correspondence

Members noted the following items of correspondence:

- DFP: Response to Committee for the Environment on INTERREG III Projects.
- Committee for Education: Letter regarding Savings Delivery Plans;
Agreed: to forward the correspondence to the Minister of Finance and Personnel as requested.
- DFP: Further clarification from Central Procurement Directorate on Public Procurement.
- Email from member of the public regarding PSNI equal pay County Court cases.
- Minister of Finance and Personnel: response regarding PSNI equal pay;
Agreed: to publish the Minister's response on the Committee's website and to forward a copy to the Committee for Justice for information.
- Press Association: Department of Finance and Personnel press releases;
Agreed: to write to the Minister to encourage a resolution to the issue raised in the correspondence.

10. Committee Work Programme

Members considered a draft of the Committee work programme.

Agreed: that the Committee work programme is amended to reflect decisions made today, and that the revised programme is published on the Assembly website.

11. Any Other Business

12. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The concurrent meeting with the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment will be held on Thursday 11 October 2012 at 10am in the Senate Chamber.

The next meeting of the Finance and Personnel Committee will be held on Wednesday 17 October 2012 at 10.00am in Room 30, Parliament Buildings, Stormont.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12.05pm.

Mr Daithí McKay MLA
Chairperson
Committee for Finance and Personnel
17 October 2012