

COMMITTEE FOR FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY, 17 OCTOBER 2012
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Mr Daithí McKay MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Dominic Bradley MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mrs Judith Cochrane MLA
Mr Leslie Cree MBE MLA
Ms Megan Fearon MLA
Mr Paul Girvan MLA
Mr John McCallister MLA
Mr Mitchel McLaughlin 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)
Ms Heather Graham (Clerical Officer)
Mr Gavin Moore (Bursary Student)

Apologies: Mr Adrian McQuillan MLA

The meeting opened at 10.12am in public session.

Agreed: that Agenda item 5 is recorded by Hansard and the Official Report published on the Assembly website.

1. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

Agreed: to write to Mr Roy Beggs to thank him for his contribution to the work of the Committee.

2. Draft Minutes of Proceedings of 10 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.

NIPSA: Equal Pay County Court Cases

Members noted a circular issued by the Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance (NIPSA) which outlined the expected timetable for the conclusion of the County Court cases.

4. Managing EU Structural Fund Programmes: Lessons Learned – Southern & Eastern Regional Assembly Briefing

The Committee received a briefing from the following representatives of the Southern & Eastern Regional Assembly: Mr Stephen Blair, Director; Councillor Dermot Lacey, Cathaoirleach/Chairman; and Councillor Tomás Breathnach, previous Cathaoirleach/Chairman.

The Committee noted briefing papers provided the Southern & Eastern Regional Assembly in advance of today's session.

Mr Bradley joined the meeting at 10.19am.

Ms Fearon and Mr Cree MBE joined the meeting at 10.20am.

Mr McCallister joined the meeting at 10.40am.

Mr Weir left the meeting at 11.12am.

Mr Weir returned to the meeting at 11.21am.

Mrs Cochrane left the meeting at 11.23am.

Mr Girvan left the meeting at 11.24am.

Mr Bradley left the meeting at 11.27am.

Mr Bradley returned to the meeting at 11.46am.

Agreed: that the briefing papers provided by the Southern & Eastern Regional Assembly be copied to the Committee for Enterprise, Trade & Investment, the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister and the Committee for Employment and Learning given the cross-cutting nature of the briefing.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr John McCallister to the Committee and his declaration of interests was noted.

5. Strategic Direction for the use of future EU Funding – DFP & SEUPB Briefing Session

The Committee received a briefing from Mrs Maura Young, Acting Head of European Division, DFP and Mr Shaun Henry, Director, Special European Union Programmes Body (SEUPB).

The Committee noted briefing papers provided by DFP and SEUPB in advance of today's session.

Mr McLaughlin left the meeting at 11.58am.

Agreed: that the DFP and SEUPB representatives would provide additional information as requested.

Agreed: that the briefing papers provided by DFP and the SEUPB be copied to the Committee for Enterprise, Trade & Investment, the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister and the Committee for Employment and Learning given the cross-cutting nature of the briefing.

6. Subordinate Legislation

The Committee considered the following proposal for subordinate legislation:

SL1 – General Register Office (Fees) Order (Northern Ireland) 2012

Mr Girvan returned to the meeting at 12.25pm.

Agreed: to request further information from DFP on how the increases in fees has been calculated in terms of cost recovery, and to defer consideration of the Committee position on the SL1 until receipt of this information.

7. Correspondence

Members noted the following items of correspondence:

- DFP: Response to Committee regarding Pay and Grading Review;
- DFP: Minister's response to the Superannuation Bill Report;
- Superannuation Bill: Notice of Amendment;
- DFP: Press Release; Finance Minister welcomes NAMA Investment in NI; and
- DFP: Correspondence on Outturn and Forecast Outturn tables.

Agreed: to request an accompanying explanatory note from DFP before circulating the monthly forecasting information to the other statutory committees for scrutiny.

- Committee for Culture, Arts & Leisure: Census figures for Languages.

Agreed: to forward the correspondence to the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) as requested.

8. Committee Work Programme

Members considered a draft of the Committee work programme.

Civil Service (Special Advisers) Bill

The Committee noted written submissions received to date on the Bill and *agreed* that all written submissions are published on the Committee's website in line with previous calls for evidence.

Agreed: that, once the evidence has been received, the Bill Sponsor will be asked to respond to any issues raised.

Members also noted that the Bill Sponsor had issued a circular to encourage written submissions in support of the Bill. It was *agreed* that this will be noted in the Committee's report on the Bill.

Agreed: that the Northern Ireland Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders, the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission and the Commission for Victims and Survivors be invited to give oral evidence on either 7 or 14 November 2012. It was further *agreed* that additional oral evidence sessions with other stakeholder organisations could be scheduled for a later date and once the Committee has considered the written submissions.

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

The Committee noted that the Consideration Stage of the Superannuation Bill is scheduled for Monday 22 October 2012.

9. Any Other Business

None.

10. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Finance and Personnel Committee will be held on Wednesday 24 October 2012 at 10.00am in Room 30, Parliament Buildings, Stormont.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12.35pm.

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