

COMMITTEE FOR FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY, 13 FEBRUARY 2013
CLARE HOUSE, AIRPORT ROAD WEST, BELFAST

- Present: Mr Daithí McKay MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Dominic Bradley MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Leslie Cree MBE MLA
Ms Megan Fearon MLA
Mr Paul Girvan MLA
Mr John McCallister 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
Mr Jim Nulty (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Heather Graham (Clerical Officer)
Mr Gavin Moore (Bursary Student)
- Apologies: Judith Cochrane MLA
David McIlveen MLA

The meeting opened at 10.10am in public session.

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

1. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

2. Draft Minutes of Proceedings of 6 February 2013

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.

4. Civil Service (Special Advisers) Bill – Final Consideration of Draft Report

Members considered the Committee's draft report on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis, as follows:

Agreed: that paragraphs 1 – 13 stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraphs 14 – 27 stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraphs 28 – 40 stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraphs 41 – 62 stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraphs 63 – 92 stand part of the Report;

Mr McCallister joined the meeting at 10.14am.

Agreed: that paragraphs 93 – 107 as amended stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that the Appendices stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that the Executive Summary stands part of the Report.

Agreed: that the Report on the Civil Service (Special Advisers) Bill be the Second Report of the Committee for Finance and Personnel to the Assembly for session 2012/13.

Agreed: that the Report on the Civil Service (Special Advisers) Bill be printed.

Agreed: that an extract of the draft minutes of today's proceedings relating to the report is titled "unapproved" and checked by the Chairperson before being included in the Committee report, which will be sent for printing before the next Committee meeting.

The meeting was suspended at 10.16am.

Mr McQuillan joined the meeting at 10.18am.

Mr Girvan joined the meeting at 10.19am.

Members received a 'Future at Work' demonstration and a tour of Clare House.

The meeting resumed at 11.38am.

5. Flexible Working in the Public Sector – DFP evidence session

Mr Weir returned to the meeting at 11.38am.

The Committee took evidence from the following DFP officials: Paul Wickens, Chief Executive, Enterprise Shared Services (ESS); Robert Fee, Enterprise Design Authority, ESS; Barry Lowry, Director IT Services, ESS; and Mark Bailey, Head of Pay and Policy, Corporate Human Resources. The session was recorded by Hansard.

Mr McCallister returned to the meeting at 11.55am.

Mr McQuillan left the meeting at 12.21pm.

Mr Bradley left the meeting at 12.28pm.

Agreed: that the DFP officials will provide additional information as agreed during the session. The Committee also requested a written response to issues not covered during the evidence session.

6. Subordinate Legislation

The Committee considered the following statutory rules:

SR 2013/12 The Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2013

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 Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) (Amendment) Regulations (NI) 2013 and has no objection to the Rule.

SR 2013/15 The Rates (Temporary Rebate) (Amendment) Order (NI) 2013

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 Rates (Temporary Rebate) (Amendment) Order (NI) 2013 and recommends that it be affirmed by the Assembly.

SR 2013/16 The Rates (Regional Rates) Order (NI) 2013

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 Rates (Regional Rates) Order (NI) 2013 and recommends that it be affirmed by the Assembly.

SR 2013/17 The Rates (Exemption for Automatic Telling Machines in Rural Areas) Order (NI) 2013

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 Rates (Exemption for Automatic Telling Machines in Rural Areas) Order (NI) 2013 and recommends that it be affirmed by the Assembly.

SR The Companies (Public Sector Audit) Order (NI) 2013

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 Companies (Public Sector Audit) Order (NI) 2013 and recommends that it be approved by the Assembly.

7. Correspondence

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

- DFP: Follow up information to EU Funding briefing

Agreed: to copy to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) for information.

- DFP: Follow up information to briefing by Land and Property Service

- DFP: PSNI hearing loss claim

Agreed: to copy to the Committee for Justice for information.

- DFP: Publication of key statistics from the 2011 Census for electoral wards and small areas for NI

- DFP: Priority stakeholders to the preliminary consultation on the Rate Rebate Replacement Scheme

- OFMDFM Committee: European Priorities 2013-14

Agreed: to forward to DFP for urgent response. The Committee will also request the Department's analysis of the recently agreed EU Budget with particular reference to future PEACE and INTERREG funding.

- DFP: Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (Amendment) Scheme (NI) 2013

Mr Bradley returned to the meeting at 12.36pm.

- DFP: Follow up information regarding Departmental Savings Delivery Plans

Agreed: to copy to the relevant statutory committees for information and scrutiny as appropriate.

- DFP: Energy Efficiency Directive

The following items of routine correspondence were emailed to members on Tuesday 12 February 2013:

- Cares NI Volunteering eZine
- Equality Commission: Latest News – February 2013

8. Committee Work Programme

Agreed: that the Committee will take a similar approach to that of the Public Accounts Committee to its scrutiny of the NI Audit Office Review of the Efficiency Delivery Programme, given that the report had been referred on by that Committee.

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 20 February 2013 at 10.00am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12.38pm.

**Mr Daithí McKay MLA
Chairperson
Committee for Finance and Personnel
20 February 2013**