

# COMMITTEE FOR FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

## MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**WEDNESDAY, 27 FEBRUARY 2013  
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 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) Dr Robert Barry (Senior Research Officer) (Agenda item 5 only)

*The meeting opened at 10.06am in public session.*

### **1. Apologies**

There were no apologies.

### **2. Draft Minutes of Proceedings of 20 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.

#### Titanic Signature Project and EU Funding

*Agreed:* that, in view of the cross-cutting nature of this issue, the Committee will request officials from the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment (DETI), and the Department for Regional Development if necessary, to accompany DFP officials at the forthcoming briefing. Members of the ETI Committee will also be invited to attend the briefing and will have an opportunity to ask questions.

*Mr McIlveen joined the meeting at 10.08am.*

### **4. Public Service Pensions Bill – Evidence from Trade Union Representatives**

The following trade union representatives joined the meeting to give evidence on the forthcoming Public Service Pensions Bill: Bumper Graham, Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance (NIPSA); John O’Farrell, Irish Congress of Trade Unions; Jim Quinn, Fire Brigades Union (FBU); Brian Ferguson, UNISON; Nuala O’Donnell, Irish National Teachers’ Organisation; and Harry Baird, First Division Association. The session was recorded by Hansard.

*Mr McQuillan joined the meeting at 10.09am.*

*Mr Girvan joined the meeting at 10.12am.*

*Ms Fearon left the meeting at 10.23am.*

*Ms Fearon returned to the meeting at 10.27am.*

*Mrs Cochrane joined the meeting at 10.39am.*

*Mr Weir left the meeting at 10.42am.*

*Mr McIlveen left the meeting at 10.53am.*

*Mr Weir returned to the meeting at 10.54am.*

*Mr McIlveen returned to the meeting at 10.55am.*

*Agreed:* the FBU will provide the Committee with a copy of its response to the related GB consultation on pension reforms.

*Agreed:* the collective trade union response to the DFP consultation will be provided to the Committee when completed.

*Agreed:* the Committee will seek further information from DFP on a number of issues, including: a comprehensive list of all pension schemes and associated stakeholders that will be affected by the Bill and the implications it will have for each scheme; how the drafting of secondary legislation will be sequenced in relation to the primary legislation; and full details of how the potential cost of £262m per annum to the Northern Ireland block grant from a failure to implement the reforms has been calculated and whether this will be a HM Treasury imposed figure.

**5. Equality issues in recruitment to the Northern Ireland Civil Service – Assembly Research briefing**

The Committee received a briefing from Assembly Research and Information Service on Equality Issues in Recruitment to the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS).

*Mr McQuillan left the meeting at 11.19am.*

*Mr McLaughlin left the meeting at 11.30am.*

**6. Equality issues in recruitment to NICS – DFP briefing**

The Committee received a briefing on equality issues in recruitment to NICS from the following DFP officials: Marianne Fleming, Head of Resourcing Division, Corporate HR; and Stephen Martin, Appointments and Marketing Branch.

*Ms Fearon left the meeting at 11.41am.*

*Mr McQuillan returned to the meeting at 11.43am.*

*Mr McLaughlin returned to the meeting at 11.52am.*

*Mr Weir left the meeting at 11.52am.*

*Mr McIlveen left the meeting at 11.55am.*

*Agreed:* the DFP officials will provide a written response on the changes that were made in respect of the 2011 EOII competition following the analysis of the 2007 EOII competition; and further information on the re-use of tests.

**7. Flexible Working in the Public Sector – Evidence from Women Like Us**

As part of its inquiry into this matter, the Committee took evidence from Emma Stewart MBE, Director of Women Like Us, via a sound conference call. The session was recorded by Hansard.

*Mrs Cochrane left the meeting at 12.17pm.*

*Mr Girvan left the meeting at 12.21pm.*

*Mr Girvan returned to the meeting at 12.23pm.*

*Agreed:* the witness will provide follow-up information as agreed during the evidence session.

**8. Subordinate Legislation**

The Committee considered a DFP proposal to amend the Building (Prescribed Fees) Regulations (NI) 1997.

*Agreed:* that the Committee has considered DFP's proposal for subordinate legislation to amend the Building (Prescribed Fees) Regulations (NI) 1997 and has no objection to the policy implications of the proposed legislation at this stage.

*Agreed:* to request DFP's view on how the inspection of "type approved" dwellings within a development can be enforced consistently.

**9. Correspondence**

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

- Minister of Finance and Personnel: written statement on the De-Agentisation of Land and Property Services;

*Agreed:* to request an oral briefing on the rationale for this change.

- Member of the public: Late Payment Directive – Government Response;
- Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development: Correspondence to DFP regarding the proposed relocation of the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's (DARD) headquarters.

*Agreed:* to forward the correspondence to DFP as requested.

*Agreed:* to request clarification from DFP on: the flexibility for staff in DARD not wishing to move to the new headquarters to transfer to other NICS departments and for those staff in other departments who may wish to transfer to DARD; and the Department's role in communicating with other departments on this issue.

*Mr McQuillan left the meeting at 12.30pm.*

#### **10. Committee Work Programme**

*Agreed:* that the work programme is updated to reflect any agreements made today and published on the Committee's website.

##### Effective Questioning Workshop

*Agreed:* to arrange a follow up session on Effective Questioning in approximately six months to enable members to assess how the techniques from the workshop on 20 February are being applied.

#### **11. Any Other Business**

None.

#### **12. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Finance and Personnel Committee will be held on Wednesday 6 March 2013 at 10.00am in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

*The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12.32pm.*

**Mr Daithí McKay MLA**  
**Chairperson**  
**Committee for Finance and Personnel**  
**6 March 2013**