

# COMMITTEE FOR FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

## MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**WEDNESDAY, 06 MARCH 2013  
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr Daithí McKay MLA (Chairperson)  
Mr Dominic Bradley MLA (Deputy Chairperson)  
Mrs Judith Cochrane MLA  
Ms Megan Fearon MLA  
Mr Paul Girvan MLA  
Mr John McCallister 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 Kathy O'Hanlon (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mrs Clairita Frazer (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Jim Nulty (Clerical Supervisor)  
Ms Heather Graham (Clerical Officer)  
Mr Gavin Moore (Bursary Student)

Apologies: Mr Leslie Cree MBE MLA

*The meeting opened at 10.03am in public session.*

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

### **1. Apologies**

There was one apology as detailed above.

## **2. Draft Minutes of Proceedings of 27 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.

#### Air Passenger Duty

*Agreed:* to invite representatives from PriceWaterhouse Coopers to provide an oral briefing to the Committee on research undertaken in respect of Air Passenger Duty.

*Mrs Cochrane joined the meeting at 10.04am.*

*The meeting moved into closed session at 10.06am.*

## **4. Review of the Efficiency Delivery Programme – NI Audit Office Briefing**

The Committee held a preparatory session in advance of Agenda item 5. This included an oral briefing from Eddie Bradley, Assistant Auditor General, Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO), and Jacqueline O'Brien, Audit Manager, NIAO, on a number of issues relating to the NIAO's Review of the Efficiency Delivery Programme.

*Mr McCallister joined the meeting at 10:17am.*

*Mr McQuillan left the meeting at 10.18am.*

*Mr McQuillan returned to the meeting at 10.21am.*

*Mr Weir left the meeting at 10.23am.*

*Mr Weir returned to the meeting at 10.27am.*

*Ms Fearon left the meeting at 10.44am.*

*The meeting moved into public session at 10.46am.*

## **5. Review of the Efficiency Delivery Programme – DFP Evidence Session**

The Committee took oral evidence from Mike Brennan, Head of Central Expenditure Division, DFP; Jeff McGuinness, Central Expenditure Division, DFP; and Stephen Barrett, Central Expenditure Division, DFP. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard.

*Mrs Cochrane left the meeting at 10.57am.*

*Mr McCallister left the meeting at 11.41am.*

*Agreed:* that the DFP officials will provide additional information as requested during the session.

*Agreed:* that the Committee will write to the Committees for Education, Employment and Learning, Regional Development and Health, Social Services and Public Safety to ask for their agreement that either the Committee for Finance and Personnel (CFP) takes evidence from officials from their departments regarding issues raised by the NIAO Review and reports back to each committee, or that each committee takes evidence from their respective department and reports to CFP. Members indicated a preference for the latter option.

## **6. Correspondence**

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

- DFP: Update on centrally held items for Budget and In-Year Monitoring;
- DFP: Response to issues in the Assembly Research briefing note entitled “Spending Review 2013”;
- DFP: EU Budget Negotiations;

*Agreed:* to seek an update from DFP on Northern Ireland’s position in respect of being granted transitional status; and clarification on why the potential 6% reduction in the UK’s current Investment for Growth and Jobs allocation would disproportionately affect Northern Ireland.

*Agreed:* to forward the DFP correspondence to the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister for information.

- CETI: Gazumping in Housing Market;

*Mr McIlveen declared an interest as a registered estate agent.*

*Agreed:* to commission an Assembly Research paper and to seek DFP’s view on this matter.

*Mr McQuillan left the meeting at 11.46am.*

- NI Human Rights Commission: Comment on ‘Equal Civil Marriage’ Consultation Paper and Comment on Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill;

*Agreed:* to request DFP’s view on the issues raised in correspondence from the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, including: advice on whether a Legislative Consent Motion is required to be passed by the Assembly in relation to the provisions relating to Northern Ireland in the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill, which is at Westminster; the implications and difficulties that may arise in terms of the application in Northern Ireland of the Human Rights Act 1998 and of relevant jurisprudence emanating from the Supreme Court.

- DFP: January Forecast Outturn Tables;
- DFP: Terms of Reference for a study to identify opportunities to improve Northern Ireland’s air connectivity, which will be commissioned by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment in conjunction with DFP.

*Agreed:* to seek clarification from DFP regarding the timescale for the study.

## **7. Committee Work Programme**

The Committee 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.

**8. Any Other Business**

None.

**9. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Finance and Personnel Committee will be held on Wednesday 13 March 2013 at 10.00am in Room 30, Parliament Buildings, Stormont.

*The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 11.49am.*

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