

COMMITTEE FOR FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY, 10 JULY 2013 SENATE CHAMBER PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Mr Daithí McKay MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Dominic Bradley MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Paul Girvan MLA
Mr Leslie Cree MBE MLA
Mr John McCallister MLA
Mr David McIlveen MLA
Mr Peter Weir MLA
Mr Patsy McGlone MLA, Chairperson, Committee for Enterprise,
Trade and Investment
Ms Sandra Overend MLA, Committee for Enterprise, Trade and
Investment

In Attendance: Mr Shane McAteer (Assembly Clerk)
Mrs Clairita Frazer (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Phil Pateman (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Jim Nulty (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Heather Graham (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mrs Judith Cochrane MLA
Ms Megan Fearon MLA
Mr Mitchel McLaughlin MLA
Mr Adrian McQuillan MLA

The meeting opened at 10:08 am in public session.

1. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

Agreed: that agenda items 4 & 5 are covered by Hansard and the Official Record published on the Assembly's website.

2. Draft Minutes of Proceedings of 3 July 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.

Memo to the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment regarding meeting with Ulster Bank

The Committee noted a memo to the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment and the procedure for today's meeting.

Agreed: that the papers and Hansard report of today's session are provided to the wider membership of the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment for information.

Mr McCallister joined the meeting at 10.10am.

4. Access to Branch Banking – Evidence from the Consumer Council

The Committee received evidence on the Consumer briefing paper "Access to Branch Banking" from the following witnesses: Antoinette McKeown, Chief Executive, Consumer Council and Aodhan O'Donnell, Director of Policy, Consumer Council. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard.

The Committee noted details of media coverage regarding Branch Closures and press releases issued by the IBOA – the Finance Union.

Mr Girvan joined the meeting at 10.15am.

Mr Bradley left the meeting at 10.45am.

Mr Weir left the meeting at 10.46am and re-joined at 10.50am.

Mr Bradley re-joined the meeting at 10.53am

Agreed: that the witnesses will provide follow up information as discussed during the session.

Agreed: that the Committee would write to the Minister of Finance and Personnel to press the Financial Conduct Authority to publish the results of its investigation in the RBS/Ulster Bank Payments Systems Failure.

5. Ulster Bank Branch Closures – Evidence from Ulster Bank Officials

The Committee received evidence from the following representatives of the Ulster Bank: Ellvenna Graham, Head of Ulster Bank, Northern Ireland, Richard Ennis, representing Business Banking and Sean Murphy, representing Branch Banking. The evidence session was recorded by Hansard.

Mr McIlveen left the meeting at 11.14am and re-joined at 11.19am

Daithí McKay declared an interest as a former employee of the Ulster Bank.

Peter Weir declared an interest as a customer of the Ulster Bank.

Mr Weir left the meeting at 11.47am.

Mr McIlveen left the meeting at 11.48am.

Mr Bradley left the meeting at 11.52am.

John McCallister declared an interest as a customer of the Ulster Bank [and holder of an RBS Mortgage]

Mr Weir re-joined the meeting at 11.59am.

Mr Bradley re-joined the meeting at 12noon.

Mr Girvan left the meeting at 12.01pm and re-joined at 12.05pm.

Leslie Cree declared an interest as a recipient of a small amount of compensation as a result of the Ulster Bank Systems failure.

Mr Weir left the meeting at 12.10pm and re-joined at 12.15pm.

Mr McCallister left the meeting at 12.15pm.

Agreed: that the witnesses will provide follow up information as discussed during the session.

Agreed: that a letter (as amended) is issued to the Chief Executives of Danske Bank, Bank of Ireland and First Trust Bank enclosing a copy of the Consumer Council's Briefing Paper "Access to Branch Banking" and outlining the Committee's concerns regarding branch closures. It was further agreed that this letter should be sent to the Chief Executives of Santander, Nationwide, Barclays and Halifax.

6. Correspondence

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

- Department of Finance and Personnel: Environmental Crime.

7. Committee Work Programme

The Committee considered a draft of the Committee work programme.

Agreed: that a workshop is conducted on 2 October 2013 by the Legislative Strengthening Trust on the scrutiny of Bills.

Agreed: that the draft Committee Work Programme is amended to reflect any decisions made today and published on the Committee's website.

8. Any Other Business

9. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Finance and Personnel Committee will be held on Wednesday 11 September 2013 at 10:00 am in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12.20pm.

Mr Daithí McKay MLA
Chairperson
Committee for Finance and Personnel
11 September 2013