

COMMITTEE FOR FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**WEDNESDAY, 09 OCTOBER 2013
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr Daithí McKay (Chairperson)
Mr Dominic Bradley MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mrs Judith Cochrane MLA
Ms Megan Fearon MLA
Mr Paul Girvan MLA
Mr John McCallister MLA
Mr Ian McCrea MLA
Mr Mitchel McLaughlin MLA
Mr Adrian McQuillan MLA
Mr Peter Weir MLA

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

Apologies: Mr Leslie Cree MBE MLA

The meeting opened at 10.09am in public session.

1. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

Agreed: that agenda item, 4, 5 and 6 are covered by Hansard and the Official Report published on the Assembly's website.

2. Draft Minutes of Proceedings of 02 October 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 summary table of requests for information from DFP which provided an update on any matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

Northern Ireland Affairs Committee: Inquiry into the banking structure in Northern Ireland

In relation to the Committee's approach to inputting to this inquiry, members noted a pro forma prepared by Assembly Research to identify local businesses which have experienced difficulties in accessing finance from the local banks and who would be prepared to contribute their experiences as case studies for a research report. This pro forma would be distributed on Thursday 10 October 2013, subject to the Enterprise, Trade and Investment Committee agreeing this proposal.

Mr Weir joined the meeting at 10.11am

4. Public Service Pensions Bill – Evidence from the Fire Brigades Union

Agreed: to seek a written response from the Department to drafting queries relating to provisions in the Bill.

The Committee received took evidence on the Public Service Pensions Bill from the following representatives of the Fire Brigades Union:

- Jim Barbour, UK Vice President;
- Matt Wrack, General Secretary;
- Jim Quinn, Regional Secretary;
- Sean Starbuck, National Pensions Officer.

The session was recorded by Hansard.

Mr McLaughlin left the meeting at 10.21am

Mr McLaughlin rejoined the meeting at 10.24am

Mr McCallister joined the meeting at 10.40am

Mr Weir left the meeting at 11.00am

Mr Girvan left the meeting at 11.10am

Mr Weir rejoined the meeting at 11.11am

Mr Girvan rejoined the meeting at 11.12am

Mr McCallister left the meeting at 11.19am

Mr McCallister rejoined the meeting at 11.20am

Mrs Cochrane left the meeting at 11.19am

Agreed: that further questions would be forwarded to the witnesses for written response as required.

5. Public Service Pensions Bill – Evidence from the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT)

The Committee took evidence on the Public Service Pensions Bill from the following representatives from NASUWT:

- Dave Wilkinson - NASUWT National Negotiating Official;
- Seamus Searson - NASUWT Northern Ireland Organiser;
- Justin McCamphill – Junior Vice President of NASUWT NI & Serving Northern Ireland Teacher.

The session was recorded by Hansard.

Dominic Bradley declared an interest as a former teacher, former member of a teachers' union and current member of the Northern Ireland Teachers Pension Scheme.

John McCallister declared an interest as his wife is employed as a teacher.

Mr McCrea left the meeting at 11.26am

Ms Fearon left the meeting at 11.29am

Mr McCrea rejoined the meeting at 11.42am

Ms Fearon rejoined the meeting at 11.42am

Mr McQuillan left the meeting at 11.44am

Mr McQuillan rejoined the meeting at 11.45am

Ms Fearon left the meeting at 12.04pm

Mr Bradley left the meeting at 12.04pm

6. Public Service Pensions Bill – Evidence from the Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance (NIPSA) and the Irish Congress of Trade Unions – Northern Ireland Committee (ICTU (NIC))

The Committee took evidence from the following representatives from NIPSA and ICTU (NIC) on the Public Service Pensions Bill.

- Bumper Graham, Deputy Secretary NIPSA;
- John O'Farrell, Union Representative, ICTU (NIC);
- Gareth Scott, Union Representative, Unite;
- Nuala O'Donnell, Union Representative, Irish National Teachers Organisation (INTO); and
- Harry Baird, Union Representative, First Division Association (FDA).

The session was recorded by Hansard.

Mr Bradley rejoined the meeting at 12.12pm
Mr Weir left the meeting at 12.23pm
Mr McCallister left the meeting at 12.25pm
Mr Weir rejoined the meeting at 12.30pm
Mr McLaughlin left the meeting at 12.45pm
Mr Girvan left the meeting at 12.45
Mr Bradley left the meeting at 12.46pm

Agreed: that the witnesses will provide follow up information as discussed during the session, including urgent written responses to issues identified by the Committee which were not explored in the evidence sessions.

Agreed: that, arising from the concerns identified in last week's evidence from the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission in relation to the legal certainty of clause 23 of the Bill, the Clerk will enquire whether Assembly Legal Services could offer advice to inform the Committee's consideration of this matter.

7. Correspondence

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

- Committee for Education: Response regarding the use of Contingency Funds and the Monitoring Round System;
- Further letter by member of public and Departmental correspondence regarding Property Management Companies;
Agreed: to forward to DFP for direct response.
- Assembly Research Paper - Publications Update, September 2013;
- DFP: Regional Bank Lending Data;
- Chairpersons Liaison Group: Note to Committees;
- Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series Presentation;
- HMRC: letter regarding devolved administration receipts;
- DFP: Financial Provisions Bill
Agreed: to forward the correspondence to Committee for Justice for information.

8. Committee Work Programme

Members considered a draft of the Committee work programme

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

9. Any other business

None

10. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Finance and Personnel Committee will be held on Wednesday 16 October 2013 at 10:00 am in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12.48pm

**Mr Daithí McKay MLA
Chairperson
Committee for Finance and Personnel
16 October 2013**