

## **COMMITTEE FOR FINANCE AND PERSONNEL**

### **MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**WEDNESDAY, 29 JANUARY 2014**  
**LAW SOCIETY HOUSE, VICTORIA STREET, BELFAST**

- Present: Mr Daithí McKay MLA (Chairperson)  
Mr Dominic Bradley (Deputy Chairperson)  
Ms Michaela Boyle MLA  
Mrs Judith Cochrane MLA  
Mr Leslie Cree MBE, MLA  
Mr Paul Girvan MLA  
Mr Ian McCrea MLA  
Mr Mitchel McLaughlin 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)  
Mr Joseph Westland (Clerical Supervisor)
- Apologies: Mr Adrian McQuillan MLA

*The meeting commenced at 10:49 am in public session.*

*Agreed:* that agenda items 5, 6, and 7 are recorded by Hansard and the Official Report published on the Assembly's website.

#### **1. Apologies**

Apologies are detailed above.

## **2. Draft Minutes of Proceedings of 22 January 2014**

*Agreed:* that the minutes are published on the Assembly website.

## **3. Matters Arising**

The Committee noted a revised agenda for today's meeting.

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.

## **4. Draft Legal Complaints and Regulation Bill – Consideration of Written Submissions**

The Committee noted written submissions received from The Consumer Council, The Law Centre (NI), The Law Society of Northern Ireland and The Bar Council, which had been published on the Committee's website in advance of the meeting.

## **5. Draft Legal Complaints and Regulation Bill – Evidence session with The Bar Council**

*Peter Weir declared an interest as a non-practising member of The Bar.*

The Committee received evidence on the above from the following witnesses:

- Gary Potter, Chairman of Professional Conduct Committee; and
- Mark Mulholland QC, Chairman of the Bar Council.

The session was recorded by Hansard.

*Agreed:* that The Bar Council will provide follow up information on issues identified during the evidence session.

*Mitchel McLaughlin left the meeting at 12.08pm and re-joined at 12.10pm*

## **6. Draft Legal Complaints and Regulation Bill – Evidence session with The Law Society of Northern Ireland**

The Committee received evidence on the above from the following witnesses:

- Mr Alan Hunter, Chief Executive, The Law Society;
- Mr Richard J.R. Palmer, President of the Law Society;
- Mr James Cooper, Council Member/Past President and Chair of the Bain Review Group; and
- Mrs Moira Neeson, Head of Client Complaints Department and Secretary to the Bain Review Group.

The session was recorded by Hansard.

*Dominic Bradley left the meeting at 12.32pm.*  
*Peter Weir left the meeting at 12.34pm and re-joined at 12.37pm.*  
*Dominic Bradley re-joined the meeting at 12.40pm.*  
*Ian McCrea left the meeting at 12.43pm.*  
*Michaela Boyle left the meeting at 12.44pm.*  
*Michaela Boyle re-joined the meeting at 12.47pm.*  
*Ian McCrea re-joined the meeting at 12.48pm.*

*Agreed:* that The Law Society will provide a written statement to accompany its oral evidence.

## **7. Draft Legal Complaints Bill – Evidence session with DFP**

The Committee received evidence on the above from the following departmental officials

- Oswyn Paulin, Head of Legal Services, DFP; and
- Michael Foster, Legal Adviser, DFP.

The session was recorded by Hansard.

*Agreed:* to commission an Assembly Research paper on the draft Bill, which should compare the proposals with arrangements in other relevant jurisdictions, including in terms of the various issues raised in the evidence today.

## **8. Budget Bill and Spring Supplementary Estimates – Written Briefing from DFP**

The Committee considered correspondence from the Minister and DFP on the Budget (NI) Bill 2014 as well as correspondence from DFP enclosing the Spring Supplementary Estimates.

*Agreed:* to consider the papers further at next week's session with DFP officials.

## **9. Correspondence**

The Committee noted the following items of correspondence:

- Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure: Inquiry into Inclusion in the Arts of Working Class Communities;  
*Agreed:* that the Committee would not be making a response to this Inquiry.
- Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission: invite to Chairperson / Deputy Chairperson to speak at the launch of the publication of 'Public Procurement and Human Rights in Northern Ireland';  
*Agreed:* that the Chairperson will accept the invitation and attend this event.

- Committee for Employment and Learning: Inquiry into Post-School Provision for Individuals with Learning Disabilities in Northern Ireland;  
*Agreed:* that the Committee would not be making a response to this Inquiry.  
and
- Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment: Letter to The Special European Union Programmes Body regarding EU Monies.

## **10. Committee Work Programme**

Members considered a draft of the Committee work programme.

### Flexible Working inquiry

*Agreed:* that, given the cross-cutting nature of the Inquiry, a memo is issued to the other statutory committees inviting submissions to the Inquiry.

### Access to Finance – legacy property issues

*Agreed:* to schedule an informal meeting with the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) on this issue.

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

## **11. Any other business**

There was no other business.

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

The next scheduled meeting of the Finance and Personnel Committee will be held on Wednesday 5 February 2014 at 10:00am in Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

*The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12.50pm*

**Mr Daithí McKay MLA**  
**Chairperson**  
**Committee for Finance and Personnel**  
**5 February 2014**