

# **COMMITTEE FOR FINANCE AND PERSONNEL**

## **MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**WEDNESDAY, 30 APRIL 2014  
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr Daithí McKay (Chairperson)  
Mr Dominic Bradley (Deputy Chairperson)  
Ms Michaela Boyle MLA  
Mrs Judith Cochrane MLA  
Mr Leslie Cree MBE, MLA  
Mr Paul Girvan MLA  
Mr John McCallister MLA  
Mr Ian McCrea MLA  
Mr Mitchel McLaughlin MLA

In Attendance: Mr Shane McAteer (Assembly Clerk)  
Mrs Clairita Frazer (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Phil Pateman (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Joe Westland (Clerical Supervisor)  
Miss Heather Graham (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Adrian McQuillan MLA  
Mr Peter Weir MLA

*The meeting commenced at 10:55 in public session.*

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

*Agreed:* that the stakeholder responses on the rate rebate replacement arrangements are provided to DFP officials.

## **1. Apologies**

Apologies are detailed above.

*Mitchel McLaughlin left the meeting at 10:56*

## **2. Draft Minutes of Proceedings of 09 April 2014**

*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.

## **4. European Union Funding – Update briefing from DFP and the Special European Union Programmes Body**

The Committee received a briefing on European Union (EU) Funding, from the following officials from DFP and the Special European Union Programmes Body (SEUPB):

- Frank Duffy – Head of EU Division, DFP;
- Dominic McCullough – Head of North/South Policy and Programme Unit, EU Division, DFP;
- Pat Colgan – Chief Executive, SEUPB; and
- Shaun Henry – Director, Managing Authority, SEUPB.

*Michaela Boyle declared an interest stating that she is the Chairperson of the Public Accounts Committee.*

*Agreed:* to obtain copies of the mid-programme evaluations of PEACE III and INTERREG IVA, along with a written analysis of how the Department and SEUPB will address the recommendations in the reports; and, upon receipt, to forward to the relevant statutory committees for information.

The session was recorded by Hansard.

*Ian McCrea left the meeting at 10:59*

*Judith Cochrane left the meeting at 11:15*

*Paul Girvan joined the meeting at 11:16*

*Judith Cochrane re-joined the meeting at 11:33*

*Ian McCrea re-joined the meeting at 11:47*

*Dominic Bradley left the meeting at 11:50*

*Michaela Boyle left the meeting at 12:13*

## **5. Northern Ireland Audit Office Report on Sickness Absence in the Northern Ireland Public Sector – Briefing from DFP**

The Committee received a briefing in response to the Northern Ireland Audit Office report from the following DFP officials:

- Colin Lewis, Head of Corporate Human Resources (CHR), DFP; and
- Mark Bailey, Head of Pay & Policy Division, CHR, DFP.

The session was recorded by Hansard.

*Agreed:* that DFP will write to the Committee to provide further detail on the Northern Ireland Civil Service ‘Recovery’ Strategy.

*Agreed:* to seek a written response to issues not addressed during the session due to time constraints.

*Paul Girvan left the meeting at 12:14*

*John McCallister left the meeting at 12:16*

*Dominic Bradley re-joined the meeting at 12:24*

*Michaela Boyle re-joined the meeting at 12:25*

*Michaela Boyle left the meeting at 12:35*

## **6. Rate Rebate Replacement arrangements – Consideration of Proposed Options**

The Committee considered stakeholder responses to DFP’s proposed options for interim Rate Rebate Replacement arrangements and received further briefing from the following departmental officials:

- Brian McClure, Head of Rating Policy Division, DFP; and
- Teresa Murray, Rating Policy Division, DFP.

*Agreed:* to give further consideration to the proposed options at the Committee’s meeting on 14 May 2014.

*Agreed:* to schedule a briefing on the outcome of DFP’s consultation on the Small Business Rates Relief Scheme.

## **7. Legislative Consent Motion on Changes in Air Passenger Duty Bands in UK Finance Bill 2014**

The Committee discussed the Department’s proposed LCM on Changes in Air Passenger Duty Bands in the UK Finance Bill 2014.

*Agreed:* that a short report detailing the evidence gathered on the LCM is prepared for initial consideration at next week’s meeting.

## 8. Subordinate Legislation

The Committee noted correspondence from DFP on the Statutory Rule 2014/99 The Pensions Increase (Review) Order (Northern Ireland).

## 9. Subordinate Legislation

Members considered Statutory Rule 2014/110 The Whole of Government Accounts (Designation of Bodies) Order (Northern Ireland) 2014.

*Agreed:* that the Committee has considered the SR 2014/110 The Whole of Government Accounts (Designation of Bodies) Order (Northern Ireland) 2014 and has no objection to the rule.

## 10. Correspondence

- DFP: Small Business Rate Relief e-mail to organisations and individuals;
- DFP: Monthly Forecast Outturn Data February 2014;
- DFP: Involvement in the Go ON UK Digital Skills Initiative;
- DFP: Implementation of the Procurement Guidance Note on Integrating Sustainable Development into the Procurement of Food and Catering Services;
- DFP: Drawdown of European Competitive Funding;
- DFP: Criminalisation of forced marriages;
- DFP: Clarification on the nature of the Scottish Prison Service drug testing contract;

*Agreed:* to forward the DFP response to Randox Laboratories and to the Committee for Justice for information.

- DFP: Northern Ireland Net Fiscal Balance Report 2011-2012;
- DFP: Response to Committee for Regional Development Cycling Inquiry;
- Civil Servant - Administrative Officer Recruitment Competitions;

*Agreed:* to forward to DFP for a direct response.

- DFP: Letter on Public Procurement Issues;
- Ulster Bank Employee: The Future of Ulster Bank:

*Agreed:* to provide the correspondent with a copy of the previous correspondence between the Committee and Ulster Bank on this issue for information.

- RSPB Transfer of funds for the next Northern Ireland Rural Development Programme 2014-2020

## **11. Committee Work Programme**

Members considered a draft of the Committee work programme.

*Agreed:* that the Committee work programme will be updated to reflect decisions taken today and published on the Committee's website

## **12. Any other business**

There was no other business.

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

The next scheduled meeting of the Finance and Personnel Committee will be held on Wednesday 07 May 2014 at 10:00 am, Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

*The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 13:00 pm*

**Mr Daithí McKay MLA**  
**Chairperson**  
**Committee for Finance and Personnel**  
**07 May 2014**