

COMMITTEE FOR FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**WEDNESDAY, 17 DECEMBER 2014
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr Dominic Bradley MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mrs Judith Cochrane MLA
Mr Leslie Cree MBE, MLA
Mr Paul Girvan MLA
Mr John McCallister MLA
Mr Ian McCrea MLA
Mr Peter Weir MLA

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

Apologies: Mr Daithí McKay MLA (Chairperson)
Ms Michaela Boyle MLA
Mr Adrian McQuillan MLA
Mr Máirtín Ó Muilleoir MLA

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

1. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

2. Draft Minutes of Proceedings of 10 December 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.

Developer Rating Exclusion – Rating of Empty Homes

The Committee considered follow up information on the DFP proposals for changes to the existing Developer Rating Exclusion in relation to the Rating of Empty Homes.

Agreed: that, on the basis on the information provided, the Committee is content with the Department's proposal to remove the enhanced developer exclusion. The Committee also *agreed* that there was merit in keeping under review the current standard 12 month exemption period, in terms of the case for potentially reducing this in future.

Judith Cochrane joined the meeting at 10:12am

Paul Girvan joined the meeting at 10:12am

The Committee moved into closed session at 10:16am in line with normal convention for considering draft committee reports.

4. Draft Budget 2015-16 – Final Consideration of Draft Committee Report (Closed Session)

Members considered the draft of the Committee's Report on the Executive's Draft Budget 2015-16 on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis as follows:

Agreed: that paragraphs 1-7 stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraph 8 stands part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraphs 9-14 stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraphs 15-22 stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraphs 23-29 stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraphs 30-33 stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraphs 34-37 stand part of the Report;

Peter Weir left the meeting at 10:34am

Agreed: that paragraphs 38-40 stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraphs 41-46 stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraphs 47-51 stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraphs 52-55 stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraphs 56-58 stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraphs 59-60 stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraphs 61-64 stand part of the Report;

Peter Weir rejoined the meeting at 10:38am

Agreed: that paragraphs 65-72 stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraphs 73-79 stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraphs 80-89 stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraphs 90-98 stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraphs 99-101 stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraphs 102, as amended, stands part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraphs 103-106 stand part of the Report;

Agreed: that paragraphs 107-117 stand part of the Report; and

Agreed: that paragraphs 118-130 stand part of the Report.

Agreed: that Appendices 1 to 3 stand part of the Report.

Agreed: That the report (as amended) be the 12th Report of the Committee for Finance and Personnel to the Assembly 2014-15.

Agreed: that the Committee Report on the Executive's Draft Budget 2015-16 is published online.

Agreed: that the agreed press release is issued and published online.

Members noted the publication arrangements for the report and that the report would not be embargoed.

Judith Cochrane left the meeting at 10:49am

5. Legislative Consent Motion (LCM) – Pensions Scheme Bill (Public Service Defined Benefit Schemes).

The Committee considered the Draft Report on the LCM: Pensions Scheme Bill (Public Service Defined Benefit Schemes) on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis as follows:

Agreed: that paragraphs 1 to 12 stand part of the Report.

Agreed: that the appendices stand part of the Report.

Agreed: that the Committee report on the proposed LCM on the Pension Schemes Bill (Public Service Defined Benefit Schemes) is made to the Assembly.

Members noted that a typescript copy of the report will be laid in the Business Office and copied to DFP shortly and that all MLAs will be notified of the availability of the report in advance of the debate on the LCM.

6. Legislative Consent Motion - Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Bill (Public Sector Exit Payments)

The Committee considered the Draft Report on the LCM: Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Bill (Public Sector Exit Payments) on a paragraph-by-paragraph basis as follows:

Agreed: that paragraphs 1 to 11 stand part of the Report.

Agreed: that the appendices stand part of the Report.

Agreed: that the Committee report on the proposed LCM on the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Bill (Public Sector Exit Payments) is made to the Assembly.

Members noted that a typescript copy of the report will be laid in the Business Office and copied to DFP shortly and that all MLAs will be notified of the availability of the report in advance of the debate on the LCM.

John McCallister left the meeting at 11:00am.

The Committee moved into open session at 11.11am.

7. Correspondence

The Committee noted the following correspondence:

- DFP – Closure of Northern Ireland Law Commission;
- Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister – Ilex response Draft Budget 2015-16;
Agreed: that the response would be incorporated into the Committee's report on the Executive's Draft Budget 2015-16.

- Northern Ireland Law Commission – Consultation on Defamation Reform in Northern Ireland;
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- Chairperson's Liaison Group – Key Issues 09 December 2014;
- Omagh Enterprise – From Fixed to Flexible Working: A Proposal for Public Sector Bodies;
Agreed: to invite representatives of the Omagh Enterprise Company Limited to a future Committee to discuss their proposals further.

- Member of Public – Equal Pay; and
- Member of Public – Parental Access.

Agreed: to respond to the member of the public noting that it is the Committee's understanding that the Committee for Justice has forwarded this same correspondence to the Department of Justice and the Lord Chief Justice for a direct response.

8. 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.

9. Any other business

The Committee noted that the usual practice of delegating authority to the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson during periods of recess in relation to Freedom of Information requests would apply during the forthcoming Christmas period.

10. Date, Time and place of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Finance and Personnel Committee will be held on Wednesday, 14 January 2015 at 10:00am, Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The Deputy Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 11:18 am.

Mr Dominic Bradley MLA
Deputy Chairperson
Committee for Finance and Personnel
14 January 2015