

COMMITTEE FOR FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**WEDNESDAY, 18 MARCH 2015
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Ms Michaela Boyle MLA
Mr Leslie Cree MBE, MLA
Mr Paul Girvan MLA
Mr John McCallister 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 Alison Ferguson (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Joe Westland (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Heather Graham (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Daithí McKay MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Dominic Bradley MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Ian McCrea MLA
Mr Adrian McQuillan MLA

The Clerk informed members that both the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson would not be present at today's meeting and invited nominations for a temporary Chairperson.

It was proposed by Paul Girvan and seconded by John McCallister that Peter Weir should be elected as temporary Chairperson. No further nominations were proposed; therefore Peter Weir assumed the role of the Chairperson for the duration of the meeting.

The meeting commenced at 10:21am in public session.

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

1. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

2. Draft Minutes of Proceedings of 11 March 2015

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. Corporation Tax (NI) Bill – Briefing from Assembly Research

The Committee received a briefing on the key provisions and considerations in the Corporation Tax (Northern Ireland) Bill from Assembly Research.

Agreed: That the researchers will provide follow up information on issues discussed during the briefing.

Agreed: to request that DFP provides a written response to each of the issues raised in the Assembly Research paper.

5. Performance against Business Plan Targets – Briefing from Land & Property Services (LPS)

The Committee received a briefing on LSP Performance against Business Plan Targets from the following officials:

- Colum Boyle, Chief Executive, LPS, DFP;
- Patricia McAuley, Director of Revenue and Benefits Reform, LPS, DFP;
- Mick Cory, LPS, DFP; and
- Mervyn Adair, LPS, DFP.

Paul Girvan left the meeting at 11:37am

Paul Girvan rejoined the meeting at 11:53am

Agreed: that the Committee will consider a future visit to the new LPS office accommodation at Lanyon Plaza, Belfast.

*The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 11.54am to facilitate a short comfort break.
The meeting resumed at 11.59am.*

6. Non –Domestic Revaluation – Briefing from Land & Property Services (LPS) and DFP

The Committee received a briefing on the Non-Domestic Revaluation from the following officials:

- Alan Bronte, Director of Valuation, LPS, DFP; and
- Brian McClure, Head of Rating Policy, DFP.

Agreed: to send the LPS/DFP response to issues raised during a previous evidence session on Non-Domestic Revaluation to the Northern Ireland Independent Retail Trade Association (NIIRTA) along with the Hansard transcript from today's session.

7. SR 2015/123 The Rates (Small Business Hereditament Relief) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

Members considered the DFP papers relating to this statutory rule, together with the related report by the Examiner of Statutory Rules, which was published on Friday 13 March 2015. The Examiner had confirmed that he was raising no points about the Rule by way of technical scrutiny.

Agreed: that the Committee has considered SR 2015/123 The Rates (Small Business Hereditament Relief) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) and has no objection to the rule.

SR 2015/141 The Superannuation (District Councils) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015

The Committee considered the DFP papers relating to this statutory rule.

Members were informed that the Examiner of Statutory Rules has identified an issue with the rule arising from his technical scrutiny, upon which he is liaising with the Department.

Agreed: to reschedule Committee consideration of SR 2015/141 to a date when the Examiner has reported on the matter.

Members noted that the statutory period expires on 28 April 2015, allowing time for further Committee scrutiny.

8. Correspondence

The Committee noted the following correspondence:

- DFP - Ministerial response on the Memorandum of Understanding on the Budget Process;

- Note of the Chairpersons' Liaison Group – 3 March 2015;
- Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA) – Submission on 'A Review of the Operation of the Barnett Formula';
Agreed: to schedule an oral briefing from CIPFA on its submission;
- Roundtable on Measuring Wellbeing in Northern Ireland – Carnegie Trust Short report;
Agreed: to schedule an oral briefing from the Carnegie Roundtable on the way forward following publication of its report. Members noted that this briefing could potentially take the form of a panel type briefing also including officials from DFP and the Northern Ireland Statistics & Research Agency.

9. Committee Work Programme

Stakeholder Event on Bank Branch Closures

Members were reminded that the above event will take place on the afternoon of Tuesday 26 May 2015 in the Members Dining Room/Room 115 Parliament Buildings.

Agreed: to commission Assembly Research to provide support, including in terms of a research paper on the outputs from the stakeholder event.

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

10. Any other business

There was no other business.

11. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Finance and Personnel Committee will be held on Wednesday, 25 March 2015 at 10:00am, Room 30, Parliament Buildings

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12:41pm

Mr Daithí McKay MLA
Chairperson
Committee for Finance and Personnel
25 March 2015