

## **COMMITTEE FOR FINANCE AND PERSONNEL**

### **MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**WEDNESDAY, 25 MARCH 2015  
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr Daithí McKay MLA (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 Adrian McQuillan MLA  
Mr Máirtín Ó Muilleoir 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:

*The meeting commenced at 10:08am in public session.*

*Agreed:* that agenda items 4 and 6 are 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 18 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. DFP response to the Committee's Report on the Inquiry into Flexible Working in the Public Sector in Northern Ireland**

The Committee received a briefing on the DFP response to the Committee's Report on the Inquiry into Flexible Working in the Public Sector in Northern Ireland from the following departmental officials:

- Paul Wickens, Chief Executive, Enterprise Shared Services (ESS), DFP; and
- Mark Bailey, Head of Pay and Policy Division, Corporate HR, DFP.

*This session was recorded by Hansard.*

*Agreed:* that the Department will be requested to provide a substantive written response to each of the recommendations in the Inquiry Report.

*Agreed:* that the departmental officials will consider what further monitoring information can be collated on flexible location working in the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS) and related savings, in the context of realising benefits from the move to Workplace NI accommodation standards and under the authority of DFP's Property Management role. It was further *agreed* to request the Department to provide key statistics on flexible location working in NICS on a periodic basis to facilitate the Committee in exercising its scrutiny function in this regard.

*Agreed:* to publish the two related items of correspondence from DFP on the Committee webpages.

*Paul Girvan joined the meeting at 10:10am*

*Michaela Boyle left the meeting at 10:11am*

*Judith Cochrane joined the meeting at 10:18am*

*Michaela Boyle re-joined the meeting at 10:18am*

*Máirtín Ó Muilleoir left the meeting at 10:20am*

*Ian McCrea left the meeting at 10:38am*

*John McCallister joined the meeting at 10:40am*

*Judith Cochrane left the meeting at 10:41am*

*Ian McCrea re-joined the meeting at 10:41am*

*Peter Weir left the meeting at 10:45am*

*Peter Weir re-joined the meeting at 10:51am*

*Judith Cochrane re-joined the meeting at 11:00am*

## **5. Enterprise Shared Services: Performance against Business Plan Objectives**

The Committee received a briefing on ESS Performance against Business Plan Objectives from the following departmental officials:

- Paul Wickens, Chief Executive, ESS, DFP; and
- Colm Doran, Director, HR Shared Services, DFP.

*Agreed:* that the departmental officials will provide a follow up written response to issues raised during the session.

*Adrian McQuillan left the meeting at 11:10am*

*Peter Weir left the meeting at 11:28am*

*Peter Weir re-joined the meeting at 11:35am*

*Ian McCrea left the meeting at 11:35am*

*Michaela Boyle left the meeting at 11:40am*

## **6. HR Connect: Full Business Case Review**

The Committee received a briefing on HR Connect: Full Business Case Review from the following departmental officials:

- Paul Wickens, Chief Executive, ESS, DFP; and
- Colm Doran, Director, HR Shared Services, DFP.

*This session was recorded by Hansard.*

*Agreed:* to schedule an oral briefing on the NICS ‘Review of HR arrangements including other HR Services outside the scope of HR Connect’.

*Ian McCrea re-joined the meeting at 11:58am*

*Michaela Boyle re-joined the meeting at 12:00pm*

## **7. SL1: The Public Service (Civil Servants and Others) Pensions (Amendment) Regulation (Northern Ireland) 2015**

Members considered a proposal from DFP for this subordinate legislation

*Agreed:* that the Committee has considered DFP’s proposal for subordinate legislation under the Public Service (Civil Servants and Others) Pensions (Amendment) Regulation (Northern Ireland) 2015 and has no objection to the policy implications of the proposed legislation at this stage.

## **SR 2015/147 The Valuation (Telecommunications, Natural Gas and Water) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015**

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

*Agreed:* that the Committee has considered SR 2015/147 The Valuation (Telecommunications, Natural Gas and Water) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rule's report, 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.

*Agreed:* that the Committee has considered SR 2015/141 The Superannuation (District Councils) Order (NI) 2015 and, subject to the Examiner of Statutory Rule's report, has no objection to the rule.

## **8. Correspondence**

The Committee noted the following correspondence:

- DFP - Ministerial summary of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's 2015 March Budget;
- DFP – Study of Adverse Impact in NICS Recruitment Competitions;

*Agreed:* to forward the response to Assembly Research, requesting comment on any applicable scrutiny points in advance of the Committee's scheduled briefing from DFP.

- DFP – Departmental Monthly Forecast Outturn Data for December 2014;
- Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development (CARD) – The relocation of the Department's Headquarters from Dundonald House to Shackleton Barracks, Ballykelly;
- Public Accounts Committee – NICS Voluntary Exit Scheme (VES)

*Agreed:* to write to DFP for clarification on whether individuals leaving NICS through the VES will be able to re-enter other parts of the public sector in Northern Ireland without having to repay a proportion of their redundancy payments, in order to respond to the correspondent's concerns.

- Private Members' Bill – Naming of Public Facilities;

*Agreed:* that members will consider responding to the consultation on an individual basis.

- EU Matters March 2015.

## **9. Committee Work Programme**

Members gave consideration to the likely implications from the Westminster General Election on Thursday 7 May 2015 for scheduling Committee meetings.

*Agreed:* that, due to the Westminster General Election taking place on 7 May 2015, the Committee will not meet on 6 May 2015 and that business for the meeting on 29 April 2015 will be scheduled accordingly.

*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**

### Committee visit to Edinburgh

Members were updated on attendees for the Committee's visit to Edinburgh on 27 - 28 May 2015.

*Agreed:* that the Committee will not meet on Wednesday, 27 May 2015 as a result of the visit.

### Committee input regarding Freedom of Information requests during Easter recess

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 Easter recess.

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

The next scheduled meeting of the Finance and Personnel Committee will be held on Wednesday, 15 April 2015 at 10:00am, Room 30, Parliament Buildings

*The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12:15pm*

**Mr Daithí McKay MLA**  
**Chairperson**  
**Committee for Finance and Personnel**  
**15 April 2015**