

COMMITTEE FOR FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

DRAFT MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**WEDNESDAY, 30 SEPTEMBER 2015
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present:	Mr Daithí McKay MLA	(Chairperson)
	Ms Michaela Boyle 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 Jim Wells MLA	
In Attendance:	Mr Shane McAteer	(Assembly Clerk)
	Mr Phil Pateman	(Assistant Assembly Clerk)
	Mrs Clairita Frazer	(Assistant Assembly Clerk)
	Mr Nory Kaplan-Kelly	(Legislative Studies Programme Student)
	Mr Oliver Bellew	(Clerical Supervisor)
	Miss Heather Graham	(Clerical Officer)
Apologies:	Mr Dominic Bradley MLA	(Deputy Chairperson)
	Mrs Judith Cochrane MLA	

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

Mr Girvan and Mr McCallister joined the meeting at 10.09am.

1. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

2. Draft Minutes of Proceedings of 23 September 2015

Agreed: that the minutes will be 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. Legal Complaints and Regulation Bill – Briefing from the Law Society of Northern Ireland

Members received an oral briefing from the Law Society of Northern Ireland on the Legal Complaints and Regulation Bill.

This session was recorded by Hansard

Mr McQuillan joined the meeting at 10.21am.

Ms Boyle joined the meeting at 10.36am.

Mr Girvan and Mr McCallister left the meeting at 10.46am.

Mr Girvan re-joined the meeting at 10.50am.

Mr Girvan left the meeting at 10.59am.

Agreed: that the Law Society will provide the Committee with follow up information on issues discussed during the briefing session.

Agreed: that the written submission by the Law Society will be published on the Committee's web pages.

5. Review of the Sale of National Asset Management Agency (NAMA) Loan Portfolio in Northern Ireland – Correspondence and next steps

Agreed: that the written submission received from Mr Jamie Bryson will be published on the Committee's webpages.

Agreed: to invite Mr David Watters and Mr Andrew Creighton to attend oral hearings in relation to the review, which will provide them with an opportunity to respond to the references made to them in the briefing from Mr Jamie Bryson on 23 September 2015. It was further *agreed* that questions for these witnesses will be provided by members and by Assembly Research and that these will be considered by Assembly Legal Services before being issued to the witnesses for written response ahead of the oral hearings.

Agreed: to request a copy of all documentation and records held by the Office of the First and deputy First Minister relating to NAMA operations in Northern Ireland, including the Project Eagle sale, in order to inform further evidence sessions in relation to the review.

Agreed: to invite Mr Brendan McGinn of Fortress to attend an oral hearing in relation to the review, which will provide him with an opportunity to respond to the references made to him in the briefing from Mr Jamie Bryson on 23 September 2015.

Agreed: to invite Mr Paddy Kearney and representatives from the Lagan Group to attend oral hearings in relation to the review, which will provide them with an opportunity to respond to the references made to them in the briefing from Mr Jamie Bryson on 23 September 2015, including with regard to the issues raised in relation to the Millmount site.

Mr Girvan re-joined the meeting at 11.03am

Agreed: that the letter and list of written questions are sent to PIMCO for response and that the correspondence is published on the Committee's webpages ahead of scheduling an oral hearing from PIMCO.

The Committee considered an agreed note of the private meeting between representatives of the Committee and the National Crime Agency (NCA) on Monday 28 September 2015, together with a follow up letter from the NCA. Members were advised that any suggested amendments to the note would need to be agreed by the NCA.

Agreed: that, as part of the Committee's visit to the Oireachtas to meet informally with the Dáil Public Accounts Committee on 1 October 2015, the Chairperson will address the Committee formally to outline progress and next steps in the review, as set out in the statement prepared for this purpose. Members noted that travel arrangements for the visit would be confirmed later today.

Agreed: that the updated list of 'Responses pending to Committee requests' in relation to the review will be published on the Committee webpages.

Agreed: that the correspondence with Tughans in relation to the review will be published on the Committee's webpages.

Agreed: that, given the repeated failure of DFP to respond to the Committee's requests for information in relation to its review, the Chairperson will write to the Minister of Finance and Personnel to emphasise the seriousness with which the Committee regards the situation and to request that the Permanent Secretary attends a further oral hearing and that the outstanding information is provided as a matter of urgency.

Members discussed papers that were referred to at last week's meeting during the oral hearing from the Deputy First Minister.

6. Subordinate legislation: S.R 2015/328 - The Unfunded Public Service Defined Benefits Schemes (Transfers) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

Members considered the DFP papers relating to this statutory rule.

It was noted that the Examiner of Statutory Rules had confirmed that he has no points to raise by way of technical scrutiny in relation to the Rule.

Agreed: that the Committee has considered S.R 2015/328 - The Unfunded Public Service Defined Benefits Schemes (Transfers) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and has no objection to the rule.

7. Subordinate legislation: SL1 – Superannuation (Assembly Ombudsman for Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Complaints) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015

Agreed: that the Committee has considered DFP's proposal for subordinate legislation under SL1 – Superannuation (Assembly Ombudsman for Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Complaints) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015 and has no objection to the policy implications of the proposed legislation at this stage.

8. Subordinate legislation: SL1 – The Public Service Pensions (Assembly Ombudsman for Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Complaints) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

Agreed: that the Committee has considered DFP's proposal for subordinate legislation under SL1 – The Public Service Pensions (Assembly Ombudsman for Northern Ireland and the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Complaints) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and has no objection to the policy implications of the proposed legislation at this stage.

9. Correspondence

Members noted the following correspondence;

- Ministerial response in relation to the Rates (Amendment) Bill;
- Ministerial response in relation to the Review of the Operation of the Barnett Formula;
Agreed: to schedule an oral briefing from DFP officials on the matter.
- DFP advising of performance against business plan targets;
- DFP monthly forecast outturn data for May to June 2015;
- DFP – 2021 Census Topic Consultation for Northern Ireland and joint working with ONS NRS;
- Committee for Regional Development to DFP in relation to Belfast Rapid Transport;
- Member of the public in relation to dissatisfaction with Land & Property Services;
Agreed: to forward the correspondence to DFP for a direct response.

- Member of the public in relation to Equal Pay issues; and
- Office of the Lord Chief Justice regarding the Review of Civil and Family Justice. *Agreed:* to request that the Committee receives a formal briefing on the Review proposals.

10. Committee Work Programme

The Committee noted the work programme which will be published on the Committee's website.

11. Any Other Business

In noting that Mr Girvan and Mr McQuillan will be replaced as members of the Committee, the Chairperson thanked them for their contribution to the work of the Committee and wished them well in their new positions on other Assembly committees.

12. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Finance and Personnel Committee will be held on Wednesday, 7 October 2015 at 10:00am, Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 11.21am.

Mr Daithí McKay MLA
Chairperson
Committee for Finance and Personnel
7 October 2015