

## **COMMITTEE FOR FINANCE**

### **MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**WEDNESDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER 2016  
ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mrs Emma Little Pengelly (Chairperson)  
Ms Claire Hanna (Deputy Chairperson)  
Mr Jim Allister MLA  
Mr Jonathan Bell MLA  
Mr Paul Girvan MLA  
Mr Ross Hussey MLA  
Mr Gerry Mullan MLA  
Mr John O'Dowd MLA  
Ms Caitríona Ruane MLA  
Mr Philip Smith MLA  
Mr Jim Wells MLA

In Attendance: Mr Jim McManus (Assembly Clerk)  
Ms Kate McCullough (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Phil Pateman (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr James Westland (Clerical Supervisor)  
Miss Heather Graham (Clerical Officer)

Apologies:

*The meeting commenced at 2:06pm in public session.*

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

#### **1. Apologies**

There were no apologies.

## **2. Draft Minutes of Proceedings of 29 June and 7 September 2016**

*Agreed:* the Committee agreed the draft minutes of 29 June and 7 September 2016.

## **3. Matters Arising**

### June Monitoring

Members noted the Department's response to the Committee's request for further briefing on the 'Tell Us Once' initiative within the Digital Transformation Project; on aspects of the Asset Management Strategy and on the Reform of the Property Management Programme.

### NI Public Services Ombudsman June Monitoring Bid

*John O'Dowd declared an interest as Chair of the Audit Committee.*

*Claire Hanna declared an interest as Member of the Audit Committee.*

Members noted a copy of a letter from the Audit Committee issued to the Department of Finance regarding the bid in June Monitoring by the Office of the Northern Ireland Public Services was not addressed by the Finance Minister.

### SEUPB and the Impact of Brexit

Members noted the response from the Department following briefing by the Department's EU Division and SEUPB on 29 June 2016.

### Department Papers regarding NAMA

Following the Committee's request on the 30 June 2016 Members noted the Department's response that all paperwork regarding NAMA has been shared with the Committee.

*Caitríona Ruane joined the meeting at 2:40pm*

### Corporation Tax Negotiations and the Fresh Start Agreement

Members noted the Ministers response in relation to Corporation Tax and the Fresh Start Agreement.

*Agreed:* to consider scheduling Corporation Tax Negotiations and the Fresh Start Agreement at a future meeting.

### OBA Conference

Members to advise Committee Office if they wish to attend.

## **4. Budget 2017-20 – Oral Evidence from Department of Finance**

Members received oral evidence on Budget 2017-20 from the following departmental officials:

- Brigitte Worth, Finance Director, Corporate Services Group, Department of Finance
- Janis Marynowski, Corporate Services Group, Department of Finance

*This session was recorded by Hansard*

*Agreed:* that the Department provides a response to questions not covered during the meeting.

*Agreed:* that the Department provides, as previously undertaken detail of any internal allocations made during the June monitoring round for each department.

*Agreed:* that the Department provides a written briefing on the role and remit in relation to the management of the Northern Ireland Civil Service Estate.

*Agreed:* that the Department provides detail on the staff complement by department involved in processing business cases to include, the nature of these business cases processed and the impact upon the application process following the Minister's decision to increase the de-minimis threshold.

*Ross Hussey left the meeting at 3:01pm*

#### **5. Procurement – RaISe Briefing Paper – The Use of Business Cases in the Public Sector**

Members received a research briefing from Assembly Research on the Use of Business Cases in the Public Sector.

*Agreed:* to ask the Department to establish been received and how many are outstanding.

*Agreed:* to ask the Department how it will re-prioritised its workload to ensure EU funded business cases are completed before the Treasury's autumn statement.

*Paul Girvan left the meeting at 3:10pm*

#### **6. Procurement – RaISe Briefing Paper – Public Procurement after the EU Referendum**

Members received a research briefing from Assembly Research on Public Procurement after the EU Referendum.

*Agreed:* to consider in the future evidence on the protection and access to the market for Northern Ireland business in light of Brexit and to ask for research at a later date.

*Paul Girvan returned to the meeting at 3:26pm*

*Claire Hanna left the meeting at 3:45pm*

**7. Procurement CPD – Procurement Procedures and Business Case Process – Departmental Paper**

Members noted a written briefing from Central Procurement Directorate on Procurement Procedures and Business Case Process.

**8. EU Referendum – RaISe Briefing Paper**

Members noted a research briefing from Assembly Research on the EU Referendum.

**9. Committee for the Executive Office – Programme for Government Research Paper**

Members noted a research briefing from Assembly Research on outcomes based approaches to Government.

*Claire Hanna returned to the meeting at 3:48pm*

**10. Department of Finance Consultation Documents on the Proposed Changes to the Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012 (As Amended)**

Members noted departmental papers on its intention to carry out consultation on proposed changes to the Building Regulations (NI) 2012 (As Amended)

*Agreed:* that the Committee will receive a summary of responses following consultation.

**11. OECD Public Governance Review – Northern Ireland (United Kingdom) Implementing Joined-Up Governance for a Common Purpose**

Members considered the OECD Report and associated Annex.

*Gerry Mullan left the meeting at 3:51pm*

**12. Subordinate Legislation**

*Jonathan Bell left the meeting at 4:00pm*

**SL1 The Superannuation (Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016**

Members considered the proposal for above SL1.

*Agreed:* that the Committee has considered the above proposal and is content with the policy implications of the proposed legislation at this stage.

*Jonathan Bell rejoined the meeting at 4:01pm*

### **13. Subordinate Legislation**

#### **SL1 The Public Service Pensions (Northern Ireland Public Service Ombudsman) Regulations (Northern Ireland)**

Members considered the proposal for above SL1. Mr Andrew, McAvoy, Rating Policy Division, Department of Finance provided clarification to questions raised by members'.

*Agreed:* that the Committee has considered the above proposal and is content with the policy implications of the proposed legislation at this stage.

### **15. Correspondence**

The Committee noted the following correspondence:

#### Email from Member of the Public re Tax Changes and self-assessment .

*Agreed:* to respond to the author to suggest that they may wish to highlighted this issue to their local Member of Parliament given that taxation is a reserved matter which falls outside the Committee's remit.

#### #Morethanashop/Cancer Research.

*Agreed:* to request from the Department a response on whether it has undertaken any analysis on the impact on Charity shops in the event of a policy change to place making them liable to pay Non-domestic rates and to respond to the author acknowledging their correspondence.

*Agreed:* to establish from the Department, as part of the wider review of the Non-domestic rating system, what consideration is being given to introducing a rate liability on land or property considered under the current system to be derelict.

#### Department of Finance - Review of the Effects of the Public Service Pensions Act (Northern Ireland) 2014.

*Agreed:* to ask the Department for a written briefing on the findings of the review once it has been completed.

Department of Finance - Implementation of Equality Scheme.

*Agreed:* seeking clarification from the Department that, at section 2 progress of equality schemes, the answers to 4 and 5 are given as in some departments/job and not in the organisation wide.

Office of the Attorney General for Northern Ireland – Invitation to the Attorney General’s Colloquium.

*Agreed:* Members will let the Committee Office know if they wish to attend.

Northern Ireland Assembly - Invitation to Positive Futures’ Event - Senate Chamber Monday 26 September 2016.

*Agreed:* Members will let the Committee Office know if they wish to attend.

Member of Public - Complaint to the Department of Finance re NAMA

*Agreed:* That Committee staff highlight the applicable extracts of the former Committee’s report on the NAMA review in respect of the process for the nominations to NAMA’s Northern Ireland Advisory Committee.

*Agreed:* to request a copy of the Department’s response to the complainant.

**14. SL1 The Rates (Increased Reduction for Recreational Hereditaments) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016**

Members considered the proposal for above rule

*Agreed:* that the Committee will give further consideration to the policy proposals in the proposed rule at its meeting on 21 September.

*Jim Allister left the meeting at 4.41pm*

**16. Forward Work Programme**

The Budget Process

*Agreed:* to forward the letter from the Minister to all Statutory Committees and the Audit Committee for information and request that they copy Finance Committee in when responding to their respective departments.

*Agreed:* to ask statutory committees to forward copies of departmental restructured baselines to the Committee to assist this Committee in coordinating the statutory committee response to the budget.

*Agreed:* that the briefing from departmental officials on 28 September should include: details of the planned process and timescale for the budget; the role of departments and statutory committees in general; the role of this Committee in particular; and the planned process and timescale; including statutory committee involvement, in the budget process in the longer term.

HMRC and Consultation on Corporation Tax

*Agreed:* to hear from HMRC officials at the meeting of 19 October 2016.

Strategic Planning

*Agreed:* to develop the Committee's priorities for the mandate following next week's Committee meeting.

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

**17. Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

**18. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting**

The next scheduled meeting of the Finance and Personnel Committee will be held on Wednesday, 21 September 2016 at 2:00pm, Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

*The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 4.47pm.*

**Mrs Emma Little Pengelly MLA**  
**Chairperson**  
**Committee for Finance**  
**21 September 2016**