



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

Committee for Finance and Personnel

# OFFICIAL REPORT (Hansard)

Financial Provisions Bill:  
Clause-by-clause Scrutiny

4 December 2013

# NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

## Committee for Finance and Personnel

### Financial Provisions Bill: Clause-by-clause Scrutiny

4 December 2013

#### **Members present for all or part of the proceedings:**

Mr Daithí McKay (Chairperson)  
Ms Michaela Boyle  
Mr Leslie Cree  
Mr Paul Girvan  
Mr John McCallister  
Mr Ian McCrea  
Mr Adrian McQuillan  
Mr Peter Weir

#### **Clause 1 (Repeal of the Development Loans (Agriculture and Fisheries) Act (Northern Ireland) 1968)**

**The Chairperson:** No issues were raised in the evidence to the Committee about the clause.

*Question, That the Committee is content with the clause, mindful that the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development does not have any concerns with its provisions, put and agreed to.*

*Question, That the Committee is content with clause 2, mindful that the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development does not have any concerns with its provisions, put and agreed to.*

#### **New Clause**

**The Chairperson:** The new clause is on the rating of owners instead of occupiers in certain cases.

*Question, That the Committee is content with the new clause, for which the Minister will table an amendment at Consideration Stage to read as per the wording provided at addendum 1, put and agreed to.*

#### **New Clause**

**The Chairperson:** The new clause is on the repeal of articles 23 and 24 of the Rates (NI) Order 1977.

*Question, That the Committee is content with the new clause, for which the Minister will table an amendment at Consideration Stage to read as per the wording provided at addendum 2, put and agreed to.*

### **New Clause**

**The Chairperson:** The new clause concerns the power of the Department of Finance and Personnel to require information for rating purposes. An issue was raised about the clause, to which DFP responded. The Committee was content with the clarification provided.

*Question, That the Committee is content with the new clause, for which the Minister will table an amendment at Consideration Stage to read as per the wording provided at addendum 3, put and agreed to.*

### **New Clause**

**The Chairperson:** The new clause is to do with a discount on rates on dwellings.

*Question, That the Committee in content with the new clause, for which the Minister will table an amendment at Consideration Stage to read as per the wording provided at addendum 4, put and agreed to.*

**Mr Girvan:** May I just clarify one point? That is to allow those with vacant properties to take advantage of the discount, is that correct?

**The Committee Clerk:** Yes.

**Mr Girvan:** That is OK.

### **Clause 3 (Provision as to payment of interest on funds in court)**

**The Chairperson:** The Committee was content with the clarification provided by the Department. The Department will bring forward an amendment to clause 3 too.

*Question, That the Committee is content with the clause, subject to the amendment to be tabled by the Minister at Consideration Stage to read as per the wording provided at addendum 5 and mindful that the Committee for Justice has no concerns with its provisions, put and agreed to.*

### **Clause 4 (Power of Northern Ireland Housing Executive to recover certain costs)**

**The Chairperson:** The Committee was content with the clarification provided by the Department.

*Question, That the Committee is content with the clause, mindful that the Committee for Social Development has not expressed any concerns with its provisions, put and agreed to.*

*Question, That the Committee is content with clause 5, mindful that the Public Accounts Committee and the Audit Committee do not have any concerns with its provisions, put and agreed to.*

### **Clause 6 (Expenditure on bodies providing services for the police, etc.)**

**The Chairperson:** The Committee was content with the clarification provided. The Department will bring forward an amendment to the clause.

*Question, That the Committee is content with the clause, subject to the amendment to be tabled by the Minister at Consideration Stage to read as per the wording provided at addendum 6 and mindful that the Committee for Justice does not have any concerns with its provisions, put and agreed to.*

*Question, That the Committee is content with clause 7, put and agreed to.*

*Question, That the Committee in content with clause 8, subject to the amendment to be tabled by the Minister at Consideration Stage to read as per the wording provided at addendum 7, put and agreed to.*

*Question, That the Committee is content with the schedule, subject to the amendment to be tabled by the Minister at Consideration Stage to read as per the wording provided at addendum 8, put and agreed to.*

*Question, That the Committee is content with clause 9, put and agreed to.*

*Question, That the Committee agree the long title of the Bill, subject to the amendment to be tabled by the Minister at Consideration Stage to read as per the wording provided at addendum 9, put and agreed to.*

**The Chairperson:** A working draft report has been tabled for Committee consideration. Members are being asked to consider the report and forward any comments to the Committee Clerk before close of play on Friday. The Committee is required to report to the Assembly by 12 December, in accordance with the timetable for the Committee Stage of the Bill. Are members content?

*Members indicated assent.*

**The Committee Clerk:** In the tabled papers, there is a short working draft of the report. The first section is background information on the Committee's approach to the evidence taken. There is then a section on the consideration of the Bill's provisions. That narrates the different issues that were identified by members of this Committee and any of the other applicable Committees, as well as the clarifications and explanations provided. There is then a section on clause-by-clause consideration, which will be added to based on the minutes of this meeting. There is then a possible generic conclusion and recommendation, acknowledging the input from other Committees and the Department in responding to and addressing the issues raised by the Committees. The draft report highlights the fact that financial provisions Bills, by their very nature, tend to be catch-all vehicles for different Departments to add provisions, and sometimes that can lead to late amendments, as in this case. Therefore, there is a recommendation to DFP to be mindful of that, going forward.

This is just for members' initial consideration. If there are any thoughts on it, I ask you to relay them to me for Friday. I will provide a final draft for formal consideration next week.