

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY, 6 NOVEMBER 2013
SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

- Present: Ms Michaela Boyle (Chairperson)
Mr John Dallat (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Trevor Clarke
Mr Michael Copeland
Mr Alex Easton
Mr Paul Girvan
Mr Chris Hazzard
Mr Ross Hussey
Mr Daithí McKay
Mr Adrian McQuillan
Mr Seán Rogers
- In Attendance: Miss Aoibhinn Treanor (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Trevor Allen (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mrs Danielle Saunders (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Darren Weir (Clerical Officer)
Miss Clare Rice (Bursary Student)
- Apologies: None

2.05pm The meeting opened in public session

1. Apologies

Apologies are listed above.

2. Minutes of the meeting on 16 October 2013

Agreed: The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

2.06pm Mr Girvan joined the meeting

2.08pm Mr Clarke and Mr Dallat joined the meeting

3. Matters arising

2.11pm Mr Copeland and Mr Hazzard joined the meeting

- i. Members noted an invitation to the Chairperson from the Committee for Employment and Learning to its Higher Education Showcase event on 19th November;
- ii. Members noted that the Committee's motion for debate on its reports and associated memoranda has been scheduled for 12th November.

Agreed: Members agreed to notify the Committee Office of their intent to speak during the debate;

- iii. The Committee noted correspondence from the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) in relation to industrial relations at the North West Regional College. The Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) gave an undertaking to the Committee to report any emerging issues;
- iv. Members noted correspondence from Dr J McKee of the NI Fire and Rescue Service acknowledging receipt of the Committee's "Report on the NIFRS: An Organisational Assessment and Review of Departmental Oversight and Report on Accounts 2011-2012".

2.12pm the meeting moved to closed session; the C&AG and NIAO Officials left the meeting

2.15pm an Assembly Legal Advisor joined the meeting

- v. The Committee noted correspondence and received advice in relation to information included in the Committee's "Report on the NIFRS: An Organisational Assessment and Review of Departmental Oversight and Report on Accounts 2011-2012".

Agreed: the Committee considered and agreed a response to the correspondence.

2.23pm the Assembly Legal Advisor left the meeting

2.23pm the C&AG and NIAO officials re-joined the meeting

4. Inquiry into Department for Regional Development: Review of an Investigation of a Whistleblower Complaint – Issues Paper

The Committee discussed an issues paper on its inquiry into the Review of an Investigation of a Whistleblower Complaint.

Agreed: the Committee agreed to request from the Department for Regional Development a copy of correspondence to the BBC and an internal audit report in relation to this matter.

2.40pm Mr Hussey left the meeting

2.46 Mr McKay joined the meeting

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the issues paper should form the basis of the Committee's report on this inquiry.

5. Inquiry into DCAL: Management of Major Capital Projects – Draft Press Release

Agreed: The Committee approved a draft press release on its inquiry into DCAL: Management of Major Capital Projects for issue on Wednesday 13th November.

6. Inquiry into The Police Service of Northern Ireland: Use of Agency Staff - Consideration of Draft Report

The Committee continued its consideration of the draft report on the Inquiry into The Police Service of Northern Ireland: Use of Agency Staff.

Paragraphs 37 – 39 read and agreed.

Paragraph 40 read, amended and agreed.

Paragraph 41 read and agreed.

3.29pm Mr Copeland and Mr Dallat left the meeting

3.33pm Mr Dallat re-joined the meeting

3.34pm Mr Copeland re-joined the meeting

3.37pm Ms Boyle left the meeting; Mr Dallat took the Chair

3.40pm Ms Boyle re-joined the meeting and resumed the Chair

3.44pm Mr Rogers left the meeting

Paragraph 42 read, amended and agreed.

3.47pm Mr Rogers re-joined the meeting

Paragraphs 43 – 44 read, amended and agreed.

Paragraph 45 read and agreed.

Paragraphs 46 – 47 read and agreed. A number of Members put on record their concerns in relation to the proposed amendments to paragraph 47.

4.02pm Mr Easton left the meeting

4.04pm Mr Dallat left the meeting

4.08pm Mr Dallat re-joined the meeting

4.08pm Mr McKay left the meeting

4.10pm Mr Easton re-joined the meeting

4.14pm Mr McKay re-joined the meeting

4.16pm Mr Girvan and Mr Copeland left the meeting

4.18pm Mr Dallat left the meeting and Mr Girvan re-joined the meeting

4.27pm Mr Dallat re-joined the meeting and Mr McKay left the meeting

Paragraph 48 read, amended and agreed.

4.30pm Mr McKay re-joined the meeting

4.32pm the meeting was suspended.

4.42pm The meeting resumed with the following Members present:

Ms Michaela Boyle (Chairperson)
Mr John Dallat (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Trevor Clarke
Mr Michael Copeland
Mr Alex Easton
Mr Paul Girvan
Mr Chris Hazzard
Mr Daithí McKay
Mr Adrian McQuillan
Mr Seán Rogers

4.54pm Mr Copeland left the meeting

5.02pm Mr McKay left the meeting

5.03pm Mr McKay re-joined the meeting

5.09pm Mr Clarke left the meeting

5.10pm Mr Clarke re-joined the meeting

Paragraphs 49 – 50 read, amended and agreed.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the remainder of the report until its meeting on 13 November 2013.

7. Any other business

Mr Rogers, the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson discussed the question of follow-up raised at the PAC Symposium on 21st and 22nd October, and Members noted that a paper on the event will be provided to the Committee in due course for discussion and to prompt, if necessary, strategic review.

8. Date, time and place of next meeting

Members agreed that the next meeting of the Committee will take place on Wednesday 13 November 2013 at 1.30 pm in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

5.40pm the meeting was adjourned.

Ms Michaela Boyle
Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee