

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY, 28 MAY 2014
ROOM 106, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

- Present: Ms Michaela Boyle (Chairperson)
Mr Trevor Clarke
Mr Michael Copeland
Mr Alex Easton
Mr Paul Girvan
Mr Ross Hussey
Mr Adrian McQuillan
Mr Seán Rogers
- In Attendance: Ms Lucia Wilson (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Trevor Allen (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mrs Danielle Saunders (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Darren Weir (Clerical Officer)
Miss Clare Rice (Bursary Student)
- Apologies: Mr John Dallat (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Chris Hazzard
Mr Daithí McKay

2.27pm The meeting opened in public session

1. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson, Members and staff of the Committee thanked Clare Rice for her contribution to the work of the Committee during her time as a bursary student, and wished her well for the future.

2. Apologies

Apologies are listed above.

3. Minutes of the meeting on 14 May 2014

Agreed: The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

4. Correspondence

Correspondence in relation to Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO)

Agreed: Members noted anonymous correspondence in relation to concerns regarding whistleblowing at the NIAO and employment related issues. The Committee

to note the correspondence and await an update from the Assembly's Audit Committee following its consideration of the issues raised.

2.32pm Mr Girvan joined the meeting

Correspondence from Mr Hamilton Morton

Agreed: Members noted correspondence from Mr Hamilton Morton in relation to the costs associated with a court case and subsequent appeal to the Court of Appeal. Members agreed to refer the correspondence to the Local Government Auditor for consideration.

Correspondence in relation to the HRPTS Payroll System for Health Trust staff

Agreed: Members noted a number of items of correspondence in relation to ongoing issues regarding the HRPTS payroll system used by Health Trusts and agreed to forward the correspondence to the Comptroller and Auditor General for consideration, and to the Assembly's Health Committee for information.

2.41pm Mr Copeland and Mr Rogers left the meeting

2.43pm Mr Easton joined the meeting

Correspondence from the Bar of Northern Ireland

Agreed: Members noted correspondence from the Bar of Northern Ireland offering to meet with the Chairperson and agreed that it would not be appropriate to meet at this time.

Correspondence from Mr Laurence MacKenzie

The Committee noted correspondence from Mr Laurence MacKenzie regarding comments made during the Committee's evidence session on its inquiry into Northern Ireland Water's Response to a Suspected Fraud.

5. Inquiry into Department of Finance and Personnel – Collaborative Procurement and Aggregated Demand – Consideration of Memorandum of Reply

2.50pm Mr Copeland re-joined the meeting

2.53pm Mr Hussey left the meeting

Agreed: Members noted a Memorandum of Reply in relation to the Committee's report on 'Department of Finance and Personnel – Collaborative Procurement and Aggregated Demand' and agreed to request an update on the implementation of the recommendations in 12 months.

2.57pm the meeting moved to closed session

6. Inquiry into Tackling Social Housing Tenancy Fraud – Issues Paper

Mr Girvan and Mr Clarke declared an interest in this issue as landlords.

The Committee considered an issues paper on this inquiry's evidence session of 14 May 2014.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request additional information from the Department on issues raised and that the paper forms the basis of the Committee's draft report.

7. Inquiry into the Future Impact of Borrowing and Private Finance Commitments and Belfast Metropolitan College's Titanic Quarter PPP Project – Briefing Session

The Committee received briefing from C&AG, Eddie Bradley, Brandon McMaster and Sean Beattie on the above Audit Office reports.

3.34pm Mr Copeland left the meeting

8. Any Other Business

Correspondence to the Finance Minister

Agreed: The Committee noted draft correspondence to the Finance Minister on media coverage of the PAC report on Account NI and agreed that the letter be issued to the Minister.

9. Date, time and place of next meeting

Members noted that the next meeting of the Committee will take place on Wednesday 4 June 2014 at 2.00pm in the Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

3.55pm Mr Girvan and Mr Easton left the meeting

3.57pm the meeting adjourned

**Ms Michaela Boyle
Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee**