

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER 2014
ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Ms Michaela Boyle (Chairperson)
Mr John Dallat (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Trevor Clarke
Mr Michael Copeland
Mr Paul Girvan
Mr Chris Hazzard
Mr Ross Hussey
Mr Daithí McKay

In Attendance: Ms Lucia Wilson (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Trevor Allen (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Jack Peel (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mrs Danielle Saunders (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Darren Weir (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Alex Easton
Mr Sean Rogers
Mr Adrian McQuillan

2.16pm The meeting began in public session

1. Apologies

Apologies are listed above.

Agreed: Mr Hussey raised concerns over how attendance and non-attendance at meetings of the Committee was recorded. The Chairperson agreed to bring his concerns to the attention of the Chairpersons' Liaison Group.

2. Minutes of the meeting on 17 September 2014

Agreed: The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

3. Correspondence

2.22pm Mr Copeland left the meeting

2.23pm Mr Copeland re-joined the meeting

Correspondence from NIAO on the Northern Ireland Events Company

The Committee noted correspondence from the NIAO in relation to the Department for Enterprise Trade and Investment (DETI) investigation into the Northern Ireland Events Company.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to DETI to ascertain why the investigation had taken so long to complete. The Committee also agreed to forward the correspondence to Mr David McNarry MLA.

Correspondence from NIAO on the cost of Value for Money (VFM) reports
The Committee noted correspondence from the NIAO on the cost of VFM reports.

Correspondence from the Committee for the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) on the Investment Strategy Implementation Report to June 2014

The Committee noted correspondence from the Committee for OFMDFM on the Investment Strategy Implementation Report to June 2014.

4. Matters Arising

Correspondence from NIAO in relation to Advanced Land Purchase by the Department for Social Development (DSD)

Mr Clarke declared an interest as he is a member of the Committee for Social Development.

14.55 *Mr Copeland left the meeting*

15.03 *The meeting moved into closed session*

15.05 *Mr Copeland re-joined the meeting*

15.09 *Mr Dallat left the meeting*

15.11 *Mr Dallat re-joined the meeting*

15.27 *Mr Hussey left the meeting*

15.29 *Mr Girvan left the meeting*

15.34 *Mr Hussey re-joined the meeting*

Agreed: NIAO agreed to prepare a more detailed paper for the Committee detailing all of their work in this area. This will be provided to the Committee in two weeks time.

Agreed: The Committee also agreed to write to DSD on this matter.

15.36 *The meeting returned to public session*

Correspondence from NIAO on the Payroll for the Department of Health and the HSC Trusts

Agreed: The Committee noted correspondence from NIAO on the Payroll for the Department of Health and the HSC Trusts and agreed to forward this to the Health Committee.

Correspondence from NIAO on NIHE "Houses for Land"

Agreed: The Committee noted correspondence from NIAO on the NIHE "Houses for Land" scheme. NIAO agreed to report back the findings of the independent review in due course.

15.48 *Trevor Clarke left the meeting*

15.55 *Michael Copeland left the meeting*

**5. Inquiry into NI Water's Response to a Suspected Fraud and DRD:
Review of an Investigation of a Whistleblower Complaint – MOR**

Agreed: The Committee noted this MOR and agreed to request an update in 12 months on the implementation of the recommendations.

**6. Inquiry into Account NI: Review of a Public Sector Financial Shared
Service Centre – MOR**

Agreed: The Committee noted this MOR and agreed to request an update on recommendation 2 in 6 months and an update on the implementation of all the recommendations in 12 months.

7. Inquiry into Improving Pupil Attendance: Follow-Up Report – MOR

Agreed: The Committee noted this MOR and agreed to request an update in 12 months on the implementation of the recommendations.

15.58 *The meeting moved into closed session*

**8. Inquiry into Tackling Social Housing Tenancy Fraud in Northern
Ireland: Consideration of Draft Report**

Agreed: The Committee considered its draft report on the above inquiry.

Introduction Section

Paragraphs 1 to 6 read and agreed

The extent of tenancy fraud in Northern Ireland

Paragraphs 1 to 5 read and agreed

Recommendation 1 read and agreed

Paragraphs 6 to 9 read and agreed

The approach to tackling tenancy fraud in Northern Ireland

Paragraphs 10 to 14 read and agreed

Recommendation 2 read and agreed

Recommendation 3 read and agreed

Paragraphs 15 to 17 read and agreed

Recommendation 4 read and agreed

Paragraphs 18 to 21 read and agreed

Paragraphs 22 and 23 read and agreed

The costs of tenancy fraud and property recovery rates

Paragraphs 24 to 28 read and agreed

Collaboration

Paragraphs 29 to 31 read and agreed

Recommendation 5 read and agreed

Paragraph 32 read and agreed

Recommendation 6 read and agreed

Paragraph 33 read and agreed

Innovative Solutions

Paragraphs 34 to 37 read and agreed

Recommendation 7 read and agreed

Paragraphs 38 and 39 read and agreed

Recommendation 8 read and agreed

Paragraph 40 read and agreed

Executive Summary

Paragraphs 1 to 9 read and agreed

Summary of Recommendations

Recommendations 1 to 8 read and agreed

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes, minutes of evidence and correspondence to be included as appendices to the report.

Agreed: The Committee ordered the report to be printed

Agreed: The Committee agreed the report to be launched on Monday 22nd October and a press release be issued on Monday 15th October.

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16:02 *Mr Girvan re-joined the meeting*

16:02 *Mr McKay left the meeting*

16:04 *Mr Copeland re-joined the meeting*

16:20 *Mr Clarke re-joined the meeting*

9. Inquiry into the Future Impact of Borrowing and Private Finance Commitments and Belfast Metropolitan College's Titanic Quarter PPP Project – Consideration of Issues Papers

Agreed: The Committee noted correspondence from Mr Pat O'Neill, Strategic Investment Board, and agreed to write to Mr Brett Hannam, Chief Executive of the SIB, to ask him for an answer to the query on the role of SIB in the wider Titanic Quarter project.

The Committee noted correspondence in relation to the Equality Impact Assessment of the Belfast Metropolitan College.

The Committee received briefing from the C&AG, Brandon McMaster and Richard Emerson on the inquiry's issues paper.

Agreed: The Committee noted the issues paper and agreed that the report on the inquiry be drafted on this basis.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson would meet Mr Kenton Hillman, Director of Corporate and Institutional Banking at Ulster Bank, on Monday 6th October to discuss the project.

16:28 *Mr Hazzard left the meeting*

10. Date, time and place of next meeting

Members were advised that the next meeting of the Committee will take place on Wednesday 8th October 2014 at 2.00pm in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

16:40 *The meeting was adjourned*

Ms Michaela Boyle
Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee