

## **PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE**

### **MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

WEDNESDAY, 12 NOVEMBER 2014  
SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Ms Michaela Boyle (Chairperson)  
Mr John Dallat (Deputy Chairperson)  
Mr Roy Beggs  
Mr Alex Easton  
Mr Paul Girvan

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

Apologies: Mr Trevor Clarke  
Mr Phil Flanagan  
Mr Ross Hussey  
Mr Adrian McQuillan

*2.10pm The meeting began in public session*

#### **1. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Mr Clarke, Mr Flanagan, Mr Hussey and Mr McQuillan.

#### **2. Minutes of the meeting on 5 November 2014**

*Agreed:* The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

#### **3. Correspondence**

There is no new correspondence to report

#### **4. Matters Arising**

##### Correspondence received from Mr Dermot Nesbitt relating to DSD Advanced Land Purchases

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson would meet with Mr Nesbitt to discuss his concerns.

##### Correspondence from NIAO relating to the Presbyterian Mutual Society

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence from NIAO.

##### Correspondence from Mr James McKeown relating to the Presbyterian Mutual Society

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to forward Mr McKeown's correspondence to the Health Committee and to write to Mr McKeown to inform him of this action.

*2.15pm The meeting went into closed session*

#### **5. Inquiry into Northern Ireland Courts and Tribunals Service Trust Statement 2012-13 – Correspondence**

##### Correspondence from Mr Nick Perry – DOJ

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence from Mr Perry.

##### Correspondence from ACC Mark Hamilton – PSNI

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to note the correspondence from ACC Hamilton.

#### **6. National Fraud Initiative – NIAO Briefing**

The Committee received briefing from Neil Grey and Patrick O'Neil on the National Fraud Initiative.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the DEL Committee to propose that, as a condition of receiving funding, Universities should be asked to agree to participate in the National Fraud Initiative (NFI).

*2.39pm Mr Dallat left the meeting.  
The Committee lost its decision-making quorum. In the absence of a decision-making quorum proceedings continued in line with Standing Order 49(5).*

*2.40pm Mr Dallat re-joined the meeting*

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to HMRC to recommend their participation in the NFI.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to draft a press statement in support of the NFI encouraging widespread participation by all public and private sector bodies.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to the Justice Minister to recommend that the PSNI and Prison Service participate in NFI.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to all statutory Assembly Committees to recommend the participation of Departments in the NFI.

## **7. Consideration of Draft Forward Work Programme January-March 2015**

The Committee received briefing from the C&AG and NIAO officials on forthcoming NIAO reports which the Committee may wish to include in their Forward Work Programme. The Committee then discussed its Forward Work Programme for January-March 2015.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to refer the NIAO report on Safer Births to the Health Committee.

*2.59pm Mr Girvan left the meeting.  
The Committee lost its decision-making quorum. In the absence of a decision-making quorum proceedings continued in line with Standing Order 49(5).*

*3.00pm Mr Girvan re-joined the meeting*

*Agreed:* NIAO agreed to provide the Committee with the name of the stockbroking firm who had been providing services to the Court Funds Office between the 1930's and 2008.

*3.17pm Mr Dallat left the meeting  
The Committee lost its decision-making quorum. In the absence of a decision-making quorum proceedings continued in line with Standing Order 49(5).*

*Mr Easton declared an interest in the discussion of NIAO's General Health Report as he is the Assembly Private Secretary to the Health Minister.*

*3.25pm Mr Dallat re-joined the meeting*

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to take forward inquiries on the following topics, and in the following chronological order, beginning in January 2015:

DSD - Advanced Land Purchases  
DOJ – Managing and Protecting Funds in Court  
DETI – High Speed Cross-border broadband initiative – The Bytel Project

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to DSD and Trinity Housing Association to invite them to put forward witnesses for the DSD Advanced Land Purchases inquiry.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to DOJ to invite them to put forward witnesses for the Managing and Protecting Funds in Court inquiry.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to write to DETI to invite them to put forward witnesses for the Bytel Project inquiry.

*Agreed:* The Clerk agreed to provide the Committee with a draft agenda for a professional development day to be held in January 2015.

## **8. Any Other Business**

There was no other business to discuss.

**9. Date, time and place of next meeting**

Members were advised that the next meeting of the Committee will take place on Wednesday 26 November 2014 at 2.00pm in the Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

3.48pm *The meeting was adjourned*

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