

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY, 17 JUNE 2015
ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Ms Michaela Boyle (Chairperson)
Mr John Dallat (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Roy Beggs
Mr Trevor Clarke
Mr Phil Flanagan
Mr Paul Girvan
Mr Daithi McKay
Mr Jim Wells

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 Ross Hussey
Mr Adrian McQuillan
Mr Sean Rogers

2.03pm The meeting began in open session.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr Hussey, Mr Rogers and Mr McQuillan.

2. Minutes of the meeting of 10 June 2015

Agreed: The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed

3. Correspondence

There was no new correspondence received.

4. Matters Arising

Correspondence from the Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland.

2.06pm *Mr Wells declared an interest as the former Minister for Health with responsibility for NIFRS and 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).*

2.07pm *Mr Clarke joined the meeting. The Committee regained its decision making quorum.*

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the correspondence from the Commissioner for Public Appointments to the Head of the Civil Service in Northern Ireland, Dr Malcolm McKibben. They also agreed to forward the correspondence to the Department of Health.

2.13pm *Mr McKay joined the meeting*

2.14pm *Mr Girvan joined the meeting*

2.15pm *The meeting moved into closed session
Mr Wells re-joined the meeting.*

Correspondence from DETI re Bytel

2.19pm *Mr McKay left the meeting*

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note this correspondence

5. Ministerial Direction – Phase 2 of the Coleraine to Londonderry Track Renewal Project.

2.26pm *Mr Girvan left the meeting*

2.29pm *Mr Girvan re-joined the meeting*

Agreed: The Committee agreed that NIAO would look at this project in detail and report back.

2.32pm *Mr McKay re-joined the meeting.*

6. Inquiry into DSD: Advanced Land Purchases – Consideration of Draft Report

Mr Wells declared an interest in this inquiry having formerly made representations on behalf of a constituent. After discussion with other Committee Members it was concluded that there was no conflict of interest and Mr Wells remained for the discussion of this item.

2.42pm *Mr Flanagan left the meeting*

2.44pm *Mr Flanagan re-joined the meeting*

2.45pm *Mr McKay left the meeting*

2.50pm *Mr McKay re-joined the meeting*

Agreed: The Committee considered correspondence from the Department and from Choice Housing and agreed to delay publication of the report on DSD: Advanced Land Purchases until after it had received a copy of the Choice Housing internal investigation into Corporate Governance in Trinity Housing.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence regarding the ongoing Helm Housing litigation.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to defer further consideration of the draft DSD: Advanced Land Purchases Report until 1 July. This was to establish if there was any additional information that may need to be factored into the report arising from issues raised by a Member.

7. Forward Work Programme

Agreed: The Committee agreed to undertake the following inquiries in the session beginning September 2015;

The Health and Social Care Sector Report 2012-2013 & 2013-2014
NI Events Company
Sustainability of Schools
Housing Executive Land Deals and Disposals

3.01pm Mr Wells left the meeting

3.15pm Mr McKay left the meeting.

3.26pm Mr McKay re-joined the meeting

3.53pm Mr McKay left the meeting

8. Any Other Business

FoI Requests over Summer Recess

Agreed: It was agreed that, as was the practice in previous years, the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson would be delegated authority to submit views on the releasing or withholding of information in any non-routine or contentious FoI requests received.

Media Coverage of Paul Priestly FoI Request

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the media coverage about Mr Paul Priestly and his interaction with the committee.

9. Date, time and place of next meeting

Members were advised that the next meeting of the Committee would be at 2pm on Wednesday 1ST July in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

4.03pm Meeting adjourned

Mr John Dallat
Deputy Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee