

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY, 15 DECEMBER 2016, ROOM 29

PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Mr Robin Swann MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Daniel McCrossan (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Robbie Butler MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Mr Gordon Dunne MLA
Mr Alex Easton MLA
Mrs Michelle Gildernew MLA
Ms Carla Lockhart MLA
Mr Trevor Lunn MLA
Mr Oliver McMullan MLA

Apologies: Mr Declan Kearney MLA

In Attendance: Ms Lucia Wilson, Assembly Clerk
Mr Damien Martin (Clerk Assistant)
Ms Elaine Farrell, Assistant Assembly Clerk
Ms Karen Barry, Clerical Supervisor
Mr Darren Weir, Clerical Officer

2.00 pm The meeting began in Closed Session.

1. Consideration of further witnesses for RHI Inquiry

The Clerk briefed the Committee on PAC's remit, accountability framework and convention.

The Clerk Assistant provided procedural advice on the roles and responsibilities of Statutory and Standing Committees and the overlap of scrutiny.

2.01 p.m. Mr Dunne and Ms Lockhart joined the meeting.

2.03 p.m. Mr Clarke and Mr Easton joined the meeting.

2.28 p.m. Ms Lockhart left the meeting.

2.30 pm. Ms Lockhart re-joined the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee discussed and agreed the names of the witnesses it will invite to the Committee to give evidence to the RHI Inquiry as follows: Arlene Foster, Jonathan Bell, Sammy Wilson and Patsy McGlone.

Agreed: The Committee agreed a draft Press Release to issue which advises of the decision made in respect of attendance of further witnesses.

The following NIAO officials joined the meeting at 2.35 p.m.

Kieran Donnelly, Comptroller and Auditor General

Kerry Harkin, Assembly Liaison Officer

Tomas Wilkinson, Director

Brian O'Neil, Audit Manager

The officials briefed the Committee and this was followed by a question and answer session.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request legal advice on the duties and responsibilities for “whistleblowers”.

2.56 p.m. Mr McMullan left the meeting.

2.59 p.m. Mr McMullan re-joined the meeting.

3.14 p.m. The meeting moved into Open Session.

The Chairperson confirmed the decision made in closed session in respect of further witnesses to the RHI inquiry.

2. Any Other Business

None.

3. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting of the Public Accounts Committee will take place on Wednesday 11 January 2017 at 2.00 p.m. in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

The meeting adjourned at 3.32 p.m.

Mr Robin Swann (Chairperson)
Public Accounts Committee