

Committee for Employment and Learning Visit Report

Geneva, Switzerland 4-7 March 2013

Background

At the invitation of the Committee for Employment and Learning Dr Steve Myers gave a presentation to the Assembly on his work at the CERN Institute on 13 November 2012. Dr Myers was born in Belfast and educated at the Queen's University Belfast. In 2008 he was appointed Director of Accelerators and Technology at the Institute.

During his visit Dr Myers invited the Committee to visit CERN and at its meeting on 14 November the Committee agreed to the visit. The Committee agreed to travel out to Geneva on Monday 4 March returning Thursday 7 March 2013.

The Committee also agreed to invite representatives from local Universities, Colleges NI, FE Colleges and the Assembly Business Trust to join the visit.

The Committee agreed to visit the International Labour Organisation and the University of Geneva while in Geneva.

Attendees

The Following Committee members attended:

Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA – Deputy Chairperson Committee for Employment and Learning

Mr David Hilditch MLA – Committee for Employment and Learning

Mr Fra McCann MLA – Committee for Employment and Learning

Mr Pat Ramsey MLA – Committee for Employment and Learning

Mr Alastair Ross MLA – Committee for Employment and Learning

Mrs Cathie White - Clerk to the Committee for Employment and Learning

Mr Vincent Gribbin – Assistant Clerk to the Committee for Employment and Learning

Dr Liz Conlon - Education and Outreach Advisor Institute of Physics, Ireland

Dr Arlene Hunter – The Open University

Mr Gerard Campbell – Chief Executive - Colleges NI

Mr Jim O'Hagan – Director of Finance Southern Regional College - Colleges NI

Ms Pat Quinn – Curriculum Area Manager, Science; Belfast Metropolitan College

Dr Danny Laverty – Head of Science and Technology, North West Regional College - Colleges NI

Professor Paul Maguire – Professor of Plasmas and Nanofabrication University of Ulster

Tuesday 5 March 2013

The Committee visited the University of Geneva in the morning and received presentations from the University on a number of matters in particular the University Research Centres for;

CHIMISCOPE - Conceived as a discovery and experimental laboratory, the CHIMISCOPE permit students, teachers and the public alike to approach, in an interactive and fun way, the mysteries of chemistry and biochemistry. A copy of the CHIMISCOPE presentation can be found in **Appendix A**.

UNITEC - The technology transfer office which has an instrumental role in transferring technologies from the laboratory towards the marketplace by working with start-up companies as well as existing companies in Switzerland, Europe and the rest of the world. A copy of the UNITEC presentation can be found in **Appendix B**.

CMU: Affective Sciences - The Brain and Behaviour Laboratory (BBL) is a multidisciplinary centre to study the cerebral bases of human mental functions, emotions, and behaviour as well as dysfunctions due to neurological or psychiatric diseases.

In the afternoon, the Committee visited the International Labour Organisation (ILO). The ILO is the international organisation responsible for drawing up and overseeing international labour standards.

The ILO aims to ensure that it serves the needs of working women and men by bringing together governments, employers and workers to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes.

During the visit, representatives of the ILO briefed the Committee on the importance of investing in skills development in order to boost local economy and show it to be a viable market for investment. A copy of this presentation can be found at **Appendix C**.

Wednesday 6 March 2013

The Committee visited the CERN Institute and were met by Dr Steve Myers, Director of Accelerators and Technology at the Institute, who briefed the Committee on the work of CERN. A copy of the presentation can be found at **Appendix D**.

The Committee were then taken on a tour of the Institute which included the Large Hadron Collider, the Universe of Particles exhibit in the Globe of Science.

After lunch the Committee toured the Innovation and Large Hadron Collider Computing Grid and computer centre. After the tour, the Committee received a presentation on the CERN Education Programmes (**Appendix E**) and a presentation on the training and recruitment opportunities available at the Institute. A copy of the presentation can be found in **Appendix F**.