



Northern Ireland
Assembly

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY 2 JULY 2020, ROOM 115,
PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Mr William Humphrey MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Roy Beggs MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Cathal Boylan MLA
Ms Órlaithí Flynn MLA
Mr Harry Harvey MLA
Mr David Hilditch MLA
Mr Andrew Muir MLA
Mr Maolíosa McHugh MLA
Mr Matthew O'Toole MLA

Apologies: None

In Attendance: Ms Lucia Wilson, Assembly Clerk
Ms Gillian Barker, Assistant Assembly Clerk
Ms Karen Barry, Clerical Supervisor
Mr Darren Weir, Clerical Officer

The meeting commenced at 10.02 am in closed session.

1. Apologies

None

2. Minutes of meeting on 17 June 2020

The draft minutes of 17 June 2020 were agreed and signed.



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY 2 JULY 2020, ROOM 115,
PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Mr William Humphrey MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Roy Beggs MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Cathal Boylan MLA
Ms Órlaithí Flynn MLA
Mr Harry Harvey MLA
Mr David Hilditch MLA
Mr Andrew Muir MLA
Mr Maolíosa McHugh MLA
Mr Matthew O'Toole MLA

Apologies: None

In Attendance: Ms Lucia Wilson, Assembly Clerk
Ms Gillian Barker, Assistant Assembly Clerk
Ms Karen Barry, Clerical Supervisor
Mr Darren Weir, Clerical Officer

The meeting commenced at 10.02 am in closed session.

1. Apologies

None

2. Minutes of meeting on 17 June 2020

The draft minutes of 17 June 2020 were agreed and signed.

3. Matters Arising

Agreed: Members agreed to continue with the practice of delegating authority to the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson for dealing with FOI matters during summer recess.

Agreed: Members noted the Chair has responded to CLG on the proposed change to sitting days. The Business Committee are taking forward the responses.

4. Declaration of Members' Interests

The following declaration of interests was declared:

- Mr Andrew Muir MLA, declared he was a former employee of Translink and specifically in relation to the Major Capital Projects, that his step father is a quality manager for the A6 Dungiven by-pass.

5. Correspondence

Committee noted a memo dated 17 June 2020 from the Finance Committee regarding the NIAO Report 'The Landweb Project' and that a primacy notice dated 17 June 2020 has been sent to the Finance Committee regarding this report from the PAC Clerk.

Closed Session - 10.09 am

6. Legal Advice: Statutory remit of PAC in regards of whistleblower

Simon Kelly, Legal Adviser joined the meeting.

The Committee noted the briefing from Simon Kelly, Legal Services on the statutory remit of PAC with regards to addressing the whistleblower's previous and recent correspondence. The Committee discussed the briefing.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward the whistleblower's submission dated 19 June 2020 to the Audit Office with regards to its relevance to the PAC 2015 Report on the Governance of Land and Property in the NI Housing Executive.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the whistleblower informing him of this action.

Matthew O'Toole joined the meeting at 10.16 am

Closed Session - 10.16 am.

7. Draft Excess Votes Report 2016-2017

Mr Kieran Donnelly CB, C&AG, Mr Tomas Wilkinson, Director and Mr Kyle Bingham, Assembly Support Officer joined the meeting.

The Committee noted that, due to broadcasting restrictions in Room 115, the draft Excess Votes Report 2016-2017 was being considered in closed session.

The Clerk briefed the Committee on the budget timetable and the necessity to consider Excess Votes prior to summer recess.

The C&AG briefed the Committee on the reasons behind the excess expenditure for 2016-2017 explaining that it was mainly technical in nature.

There then followed a question and answer session.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the report should be amended to reflect the issues raised by members on excess votes for 2016 2017.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to revisit this matter on 8 July 2020 in open session.

*Mr Matthew O'Toole left the meeting 10.56am
Mr Matthew O'Toole re-joined the meeting at 11.01 am*

Closed Session – 10.56am

8. Inquiry into Major Capital Projects – Recap and Briefing Session

Mr Kieran Donnelly CB, C&AG, Mr Tomas Wilkinson, Director and Mr Kyle Bingham, Assembly Support Officer remained in the meeting.

The Chairperson informed the Committee that the session today was to continue the process of gathering information for the inquiry into the NIAO Report Major Capital Projects.

The Audit Office briefed the Committee specifically on the Casement Park Project and Major Works on A5 & A6 roads.

There then followed a question and answer session.

Closed Session – 11.04 am.

9. Inquiry into Major Capital Projects – Preparation Session for Evidence Session

Mr Kieran Donnelly CB, C&AG, Mr Tomas Wilkinson, Director and Mr Kyle Bingham, Assembly Support Officer remained in the meeting.

The Committee discussed its preparation for the Inquiry into Major Capital Projects specially the Casement Park Project and Major Works on A5 & A6 roads.

Members noted the witnesses for the evidence session next week:

- Tracy Meharg, Accounting Officer, Department for Communities (DfC)
- Jacqueline Fearon, Head of Capital Delivery, DfC.
- Katrina Godfrey, Accounting Officer, Department for Infrastructure (DfI); and
- John Irvine, Director of Major Projects and Procurement, DfI

Closed Session – 11.21 am

10. Draft Forward Work Programme

The Clerk briefed the Committee on the draft forward work programme covering the period September to December 2020.

Agreed: The draft forward work programme was agreed as amended.

11. Any other business

None

12. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 8th July 2020 at 3.00 pm in the Senate.

Meeting was adjourned 11.32 am

Mr William Humphrey MLA

PAC Chairperson

Minutes of 2 July 2020

Signed: