



Northern Ireland
Assembly

AUDIT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

MONDAY, 6TH OCTOBER 2014
ROOM 21, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Mr David Hilditch (Deputy Chairperson)
Ms Anna Lo

In Attendance: Mr Paul Gill (Assembly Clerk)
Mrs Hilary Cleland-Bogle (Assistant Clerk)
Mr Jonathan Kerr (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Danny Kinahan (Chairperson)

The meeting commenced at 3.34pm in open session

Chairperson's Introduction

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the meeting should commence in open session and that it should move into closed session from agenda item 7.

The Chairperson welcomed Members to the meeting.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Declaration of Interests

The Chairperson reminded Members of their obligation to declare any relevant financial or other interests before and during each Committee meeting.

3. Draft minutes of the meeting held on 1st July 2014

Agreed: The draft minutes of the meeting held on 1st July 2014 were agreed by the Committee.

4. Matters arising

The Committee noted the paper on the National Fraud Initiative which had been received from the C&AG.

5. Budget briefing from the Northern Ireland Audit Office

Members noted the Clerk's Paper; the NIAO Paper on the October Monitoring Round; the NIAO Paper on the Resource Requirement for 2015-2016; and the correspondence to and from the Minister of Finance.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr Kieran Donnelly, Comptroller and Auditor General; Ms Janet Sides, Assistant Auditor General; Ms Patricia Blair, Audit Manager; and Mr Joe Campbell, Audit Manager and invited Mr Donnelly to brief the Committee on the Paper on the October Monitoring Round.

Following discussion the Chairperson thanked Mr Donnelly and his colleagues and invited him to brief the Committee on the budget position in relation to 2015-16.

3.41pm *The meeting adjourned.*

4.03pm *The meeting reconvened.*

Mr Donnelly briefed the Committee on the budget position in relation to 2015-16.

Agreed: Following discussion the Committee agreed to write to the Minister of Finance setting out the NIAO's latest position in relation to its projected budget requirement for 2015-16 onwards.

The Chairperson asked Mr Donnelly and his colleagues to remain at the table for the next agenda item.

6. Appointment of Non-Executives to the Northern Ireland Audit Office

Members noted the Clerk's Paper and the Paper from the NIAO.

The Chairperson invited Mr Donnelly to brief the Committee on the appointment of the non-executives.

The Committee noted that interviews would be held in early November.

The Chairperson thanked Mr Donnelly and his colleagues for attending the meeting.

4.18pm *The meeting moved into closed session.*

7. Briefing from the Northern Ireland Audit Office Non Executives

Members noted the Clerk's paper, the Memorandum of Understanding on the Governance and Accountability Arrangements of the NIAO and other papers.

The Chairperson welcomed Ms Mary Halton, Chairperson, NIAO Audit Committee; Ms Diane McGiffin, member of the NIAO Audit Committee; and Mr Gary Martin, former member of the NIAO Audit Committee.

The Chairperson invited Ms Halton to provide the Committee with an understanding of the governance arrangements of the NIAO and how the NIAO Audit Committee and Advisory Group operate within this.

Ms Halton also briefed the Committee on the arrangements that the NIAO Audit Committee had made in relation to the whistleblowing complaints forwarded to them by the Committee.

Following discussion on these and related issues, the Chairperson thanked Ms Halton, Ms McGiffin and Mr Martin for attending the meeting.

8. Public Services Ombudsperson Bill

Members noted the Clerk's Paper and correspondence from OFMDFM.

The Clerk briefed the Committee on the background to this issue.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to OFMDFM setting out its view on the proposal.

9. End of Session Report

Agreed: The Committee agreed the End of Session Report.

10. Correspondence

The Committee noted correspondence from the C&AG in relation to the Northern Ireland Housing Executive.

The Committee noted correspondence from a member of the public in relation to the NIAO's handling of a particular matter.

Agreed: Following discussion the Committee agreed to write to the correspondent setting out the Committee's position.

11. Any other business

There was no other business.

12. Time, date and place of next meeting

Members noted that Committee staff will inform members of the time, date and place of the next meeting in due course.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 4.50pm.



Danny Kinahan
Chairperson
Audit Committee

Dated: 2nd December 2014