



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

# Committee for the Economy Legacy Report 2017 - 2022

Report: NIA 214/17-22

# Contents

<b>Remit, Powers and Membership of the Committee .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Review of 2017 – 2022 Mandate .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Scrutiny .....	5
Approach .....	13
Suggested Issues for the Successor Committee .....	16
<b>Appendix 1 – Committee for the Economy .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Appendix 2 – Mandate facts and figures.....</b>	<b>25</b>
Committee meetings & visits .....	25
Committee Bill Reports .....	26
<b>Appendix 3 - Expenditure for the period 1 September 2017 – XX March 2022 .....</b>	<b>30</b>

# Remit, Powers and Membership of the Committee

The Committee for the Economy is a Statutory Departmental Committee established in accordance with paragraphs 8 and 9 of Strand One, of the Belfast Agreement, and under Assembly Standing Order No 48. The Committee has a scrutiny, policy development and consultation role with respect to the Department for the Economy, and has a role in the initiation of legislation. The Committee has nine members, including a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, and a quorum of five.

The Committee has power to:

- consider and advise on Departmental budgets and Annual Plans in the context of the overall budget allocation;
- approve relevant secondary legislation and take the Committee Stage of relevant primary legislation;
- call for persons and papers;
- initiate inquiries and make reports; and
- consider and advise on matters brought to the Committee by the Minister for the Economy.

## Membership

The Committee has 9 members, including a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson, and a quorum of five members. The membership of the Committee is as follows:

Dr Caoímhe Archibald MLA (Chairperson)

Mr Matthew O'Toole (Deputy Chairperson)

Mr Keith Buchanan MLA

Mr Stewart Dickson MLA

Mr Stephen Dunne MLA

Mr Michael Nesbitt MLA

Mr John O'Dowd MLA

Ms Claire Sugden MLA

Mr Peter Weir MLA

1 With effect from 10 February 2020 Mr John Stewart replaced Mr Alan Chambers

2 With effect from 8 February 2021 Mr Paul Givan replaced Mr Gary Middleton

3 With effect from 19 March 2021 Mr Gary Middleton replaced Mr Paul Givan

4 With effect from 12 April 2021 Mr Mervyn Storey replaced Mr Gordon Dunne

5 With effect from 1 June 2021 Mr Mike Nesbitt replaced Mr John Stewart

6 With effect from 21 June 2021 Mr Peter Weir replaced Mr Christopher Stalford

7 With effect from 21 June 2021 Mr Keith Buchanan replaced Mr Mervyn Storey

8 With effect from 5th July 2021 Mr Stephen Dunne replaced Mr Gary Middleton

9 With effect from 18th October 2021 Mr Matthew O'Toole replaced Ms Sinead McLaughlin

# Review of 2017 – 2022 Mandate

## Scrutiny

1. The key points of the Committee’s scrutiny during the 2017 - 2022 mandate are summarised below.
2. A significant part of this mandate has been marked by the period of the Covid-19 pandemic and the Committee has prioritised and focused on the economic impact of the pandemic and engaged with stakeholders around the challenges they have faced. Due to government guidelines, the Committee was unable to engage face-to-face with stakeholders and therefore sought new and innovative ways to consult and communicate during this period.

## Micro Inquiries & Online Discussion Events

3. Under Standing Order 46(7), the Committee has the power to make a special report on any ***“matters which the committee may think fit to bring to the notice of the Assembly”***.
4. The Committee has a responsibility to scrutinise the key strategies under development by the Department and was keen to contribute proactively to the development of these strategies by advising the Minister and the Department on the key themes within the strategies.
5. The Committee undertook a series of micro inquiries and online discussion events as outlined below. This model allowed the Committee to engage collaboratively with its stakeholders on key strategies under development by the Department and to produce a number of micro inquiry reports within a relatively short timeframe.
6. The Committee received very positive feedback from stakeholders in terms of this model of engagement, particularly in relation to the short timeframe

for bringing Micro Inquiry reports for debate in the Chamber following the engagement.

## **Energy Strategy Micro Inquiry**

7. The Committee for the Economy carried out a micro inquiry to seek views from stakeholders on what they wanted to see in the Energy Strategy being developed by the Department for the Economy in the context of the UK Government legislative target of net zero carbon by 2050.
8. The Committee published an online survey via Citizen Space asking stakeholders a range of questions about what they would like to see as the key elements of the Energy Strategy; what the future holds for the renewable industry; and if there would necessarily be a difference in the price of energy for business and consumers in the future. The Committee received over 180 responses from across energy organisations, consumers, individuals, businesses and academics.
9. The Committee published its Micro Inquiry Special Report in November 2020, and brought a motion for debate in the Assembly Chamber setting out a number of common themes which emerged from the inquiry including clear support for ambitious targets, energy efficiency, consumers and affordability and the decarbonisation of heat.
10. The debate highlighted the need for the Energy Strategy to have a statutory footing and binding targets that are clear, measurable and ambitious. The Committee also wishes to see a strategy to make energy affordable so both businesses and consumers can thrive and enjoy higher levels of health and wellbeing.
11. The Department's consultation on the Energy Strategy broadly dealt with the themes outlined in the Committee's report.

[Read more on the Committee's Report on the Energy Strategy Micro Inquiry.](#)

## **Economic Outlook Micro Inquiry**

12. The aim of this Micro Inquiry was to engage with key stakeholders to seek their views, and to develop a themes-based report providing evidence on how the economy has been impacted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and ideas on how to rebuild it better.
  
13. In November 2020, the Committee held a discussion event with a wide range of stakeholders including Chambers of Commerce, business and industry representatives and economists. The Committee published the key themes which stakeholders feel are necessary in order to rebuild and boost the economy including: technology and digital infrastructure; skills and employment; transport infrastructure; and energy for businesses and consumers.
  
14. The Committee published its Micro Inquiry Special Report on the Economic Outlook in December 2020 and brought a motion for debate in the Assembly Chamber. The debate highlighted the need to deliver on the policies which would help stabilise the economy right now, and to develop an overarching plan to make sure our economy is rebuilt in a way that improves its responsiveness to the needs of our communities and businesses.

[Read more on the Committee's Report on the Economic Outlook Micro Inquiry.](#)

## **Skills Strategy Micro Inquiry**

15. The Committee carried out a Micro Inquiry to seek views from a range of stakeholders on what the framework for the new Skills Strategy should cover, both strategically and practically.
  
16. In January 2021, the Committee held a Micro Inquiry event where it met with 50 stakeholders ranging from industry bodies, employers, recruitment specialists, universities and colleges, the third sector (representing people with disabilities, older people, and women), social enterprise, trade unions, qualification awarding bodies, and government depts. This allowed to the Committee a detailed insight into what the framework for a new Skills

Strategy should be to help rebuild our economy both on a local and global platform.

17. The Committee published a report outlining the key themes stakeholders feel are necessary in order to develop the skills needed to boost our local economy and to compete internationally including: supporting our people to greater employability; defining the role of academic institutions, community learning and awarding qualifications; the response to Covid-19/economic recovery; inclusive Learning and Workplaces; lifelong learning and the path to leadership; and collaboration and co-operation across Government departments.

18. The Committee published its report on the Skills Strategy Micro Inquiry Special Report in March 2021 and brought a motion for debate in the Assembly Chamber. This debate brought to the floor of the Assembly an insight into what stakeholders want to see as the framework for a new Skills Strategy to help rebuild our economy both on a local and global platform.

[Read more on the Committee's Report on the Skills Strategy Micro Inquiry.](#)

## **High Street Stimulus' Voucher Scheme and '10X Economy' Micro Inquiry Special Report**

19. The Committee carried out a Micro Inquiry to seek views from sectoral representative bodies and stakeholders as to what should be put in place to ensure the success of the High Street Stimulus voucher scheme, intended to encourage footfall and sustain sales through the Autumn period after an initial post lockdown boost. Also, looking to the future, what will be required to realise the ambition of the 10X Economic vision to rebuild and re-imagine the economy in the longer-term.

20. The Committee published a report outlining the key elements which stakeholders believed would make the High Street Stimulus Scheme



successful including: marketing and communications; ensuring that it was inclusive and flexible; real-time data analysis; and outcome focused and clear economic impact.

21. The report also set out key themes emerging from stakeholder discussions, gaps they identified currently in 10X, along with elements that they would like to see included in subsequent action plans to support its delivery. These included: that it should be entrepreneurial led; balanced and inclusive; reflective of business scale; have a ‘whole of government’ approach; longevity; a measurable action plan; sector analysis; and identified priorities.

22. The Committee published a detailed report which it provided to the Department and which has been valuable in scrutinising and evaluating the roll-out of the HSSS and scrutiny of the 10X Economic Recovery Plan.

[Read more on the Committees Report on the High Street Stimulus' Voucher Scheme and '10X Economy' Micro Inquiry.](#)

## Legislation

23. The Committee undertook five Committee Stages of Bills during the mandate, one departmental Bill and four Private Members' Bills.

### **Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Bill**

24. This departmental Bill creates a statutory entitlement to leave and pay for working parents who suffer the death or still birth of a child. The Committee wished to see these statutory rights in place and welcomed this Bill carrying out an extensive public consultation to which it received 382 responses. The Committee brought forward a number of important amendments to this Bill to extend it to include miscarriage and to remove the 26-week qualifying period for pay.

25. The Assembly agreed and supported the Committee's amendments at Consideration Stage. As a result of the Committee's scrutiny of this Bill, the Department made some changes at Further Consideration Stage following ongoing dialogue with the Committee to ensure the amendments were as practicable as possible.

26. The Committee agreed amendments to allow for regulations to be brought forward within 12-months of Royal Assent and also agreed that the amendments should allow the Department scope for modifications.

[Read the Committee's report on the Parental Bereavement \(Leave and Pay\) Bill.](#)

### **Small-Scale Green Energy Bill**

27. The aim of this Private Member's Bill was to establish a scheme to incentivise the growth of renewable micro-generation. The Committee scrutinised the provisions of this Bill through written and oral evidence and recognised the concerns raised around the timing of the Bill and its interaction with the Energy Strategy which, at Committee Stage, was still under development by the Department.

28. The Committee agreed that it was not in a position to consider the Bill in the context of the Strategy within the timeframe nor could it do so in any meaningful way in the absence of an Action Plan. The Committee therefore concluded that it would reserve its position on the clauses of the Bill and present the evidence it received for consideration by the Assembly should the Bill proceed to Consideration Stage. The Bill Sponsor subsequently decided not to move the Consideration Stage of the Bill.
29. The Committee expects that the Department will bring forward a package of legislation in the next mandate and recommends that the valuable evidence presented in this report be considered in the context of this legislation.

[Read the Committee's report on the Small-Scale Green Energy Bill.](#)

## **Domestic Abuse (Safe Leave) Bill**

30. This Private Member's Bill creates statutory entitlements for a domestic abuse survivor or victim to at least ten days of safe leave and pay. The Committee strongly supported this Bill and, despite the challenging timeline, worked to ensure that it could complete Committee Stage within the timeframe.
31. The Committee consulted widely through written and oral evidence. There was widespread support for the Bill and a wish to see it complete its passage through the Assembly before the end of the Mandate.
32. The Bill, as drafted, was intentionally wide in order to permit the Department to undertake that detailed scrutiny work. There may therefore be a need to make further technical or operational fixes to the primary provisions within the Bill after further policy work has been conducted. It will be for the Assembly to decide upon the appropriate course of action, including new primary legislation, if appropriate.

33. The Committee wished to see the introduction of these statutory entitlements and agreed the clauses of this Bill. The Committee's position was supported by the Assembly at Consideration Stage.

[Read the Committee's report on the Domestic Abuse \(Safe Leave\) Bill.](#)

## **Employment (Zero Hours Workers and Banded Weekly Working Hours) Bill**

34. This Private Member's Bill seeks to end the use of zero-hour contracts in the labour market and replace them with banded-hour contracts and to make exclusivity terms unenforceable. The Committee had a very limited timeframe in which to scrutinise and consult on this Bill given that it was introduced at a late stage in the mandate. However, the Committee carried out a high level consultation on the general principles of the Bill recognising the concerns of stakeholders around the limited time for detailed consideration.

35. The Committee published a high level report outlining views around the general principles of the Bill. The Bill did not reach Consideration Stage before the end of the mandate. The Committee therefore commends its report to its successor Committee should the Bill or any of its provisions be re-introduced in the next mandate.

36. The Committee recognises the commitment within the New Decade New Approach' agreement, which states in relation to Employment Rights that "the Executive should move to ban zero hour contracts and that there is general support for the provisions within this Bill. However, it also acknowledges that the limited consultation has raised a number of complex issues which require significantly more detailed scrutiny and further discussion with the Department and stakeholders.

37. Read the Committee's report on the Employment (Zero Hours Workers and Banded Weekly Working Hours) Bill.

## Onshore Fracking (Prohibition) Bill

38. This Private Member's Bill was also introduced at the end of the mandate resulting in a very limited timeframe for scrutiny by the Committee. The Committee decided that, due to time constraints, it would not carry out a public consultation but held one evidence session with the Geological Survey on the general technical aspects of the Bill. The Committee recommends this high level report to its successor Committee should the Bill or any of its provisions be re-introduced in the next mandate.

[Read the Committee's report on the Onshore Fracking \(Prohibition\) Bill.](#)

## Approach

39. As outlined above, the Committee held a number of online stakeholder events as part of its detailed programme of Micro Inquiries which allowed the Committee to engage collaboratively with its stakeholders on key strategies under development by the Department.

40. In addition, the Committee carried out an extensive programme of informal meetings during this mandate, holding 29 meetings with a wide range of stakeholders. Given the pressure on the Committee agenda during the pandemic, the Committee established weekly informal meetings with stakeholders which proved an extremely useful platform for engagement and discussion.

41. In order to ensure that the key issues and action points were captured, a written summary was provided to all Committee members following informal meetings and included as part of the next formal Committee meeting. This allowed the Committee to engage with a wide range of stakeholders and for issues raised to be heard and included on the public record of the Committee. A list of informal meetings is provided at **Appendix 4**.

## Visits

42. The Committee undertook a visit to Queen’s University, Belfast in September 2021 where members met with the Vice-Chancellor and visited the ANSIN Nanotechnology Laboratory. During the visit Members had the opportunity to discuss with the Vice-Chancellor and senior staff the role of QUB in the Belfast Regional City Deal and the all-island research agenda. The Committee also met with the Physics CNM team who led the SiP Smart Nano bid. The Committee also held a strategic planning session where it agreed its programme of work and priorities to the end of the mandate.



**Committee for the Economy Members with Professor Ian Greer, Vice Chancellor, Queen’s University Belfast.**



## External meetings

43. The Committee held an external meeting in February 2020 at Invest NI where it also had the opportunity to hear from Tourism NI, who share the same location. The main theme of this visit was around the economic impact of the referendum and exit from the EU. The Committee had the opportunity to meet with the new Chief Executive of Invest NI and to hear from Invest NI around how businesses were being supported to understand and prepare for EU Exit. The Committee heard from Tourism NI on its current programme of work and in the context of EU Exit.



**Committee for the Economy Members with Kevin Holland, Chief Executive of Invest NI and John McGrillen, Chief Executive Tourism NI**

## **Suggested Issues for the Successor Committee**

44. The Committee considered a number of issues which have yet to be formally concluded. These are discussed briefly below.

### **Employment Law**

45. During its scrutiny of both the Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Bill, the Domestic Abuse (Safe Leave) Bill and the Employment (Zero Hours Workers and Banded Weekly Working Hours) Bill, there were a number of employment related policy areas which the Committee could not explore in detail due to the significant time constraints.

46. During its scrutiny of the Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Bill, the Committee heard from many stakeholders that they wished to see bereavement leave and pay entitlements extended to everyone impacted by the death of a close relative or partner. The Committee was supportive of this but recognised that it significantly widened the scope of the Bill and did not wish to risk any delay in implementing its main provisions.

47. The Committee also wished to explore how workers, such as sub-contractors and those on zero-hour contracts, can be guaranteed the same protections under this Bill as that afforded to employees.

48. In responding to the Committee on various aspects of the Bill, the Minister stated that the Parental Bereavement Leave and Pay Bill could be considered a foundational Bill upon which future parental bereavement entitlements and protections could be built, if so desired. Indeed, the Minister indicated his intention on a number of occasions in response to the Bill for a wider review of employment law in the future.

49. Given this stated intention, the successor Committee may wish to follow up in term of how the policy areas outlined above could be implemented as part of an overall review of employment law.



50. The successor Committee should also be aware that many of the provisions of the Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Bill were to be given effect through secondary legislation. Additionally, amendments agreed by the Assembly allow for regulations to be brought forward within a defined period following Royal Assent and also agreed that the amendment should allow the Department scope for modifications, for example, in relation to the inclusion of miscarriage.
51. The successor Committee will wish to scrutinise the details of the regulations and any modifications as they are brought forward.
52. In relation to the Domestic Abuse (Safe Leave) Bill, there was an acknowledgment by the Bill Sponsor that the Department has not conducted the normal policy development work nor any assessments of regulatory and other impacts that are usually carried out in advance of any new legislation being introduced to the Assembly. The successor Committee will therefore wish to monitor to ensure the full implementation of the provisions of this Bill through regulations or potential additional primary legislation.
53. In its report on the Employment (Zero Hours Workers and Banded Weekly Working Hours) Bill the Committee recognises the commitment within the New Decade New Approach' agreement, which states in relation to Employment Rights that "the Executive should move to ban zero hour contracts" and that there was general support for the provisions within this Bill. The successor Committee will wish to consider in more detail the complex issues raised through this Bill should it be brought forward in the future.
54. The Committee has also discussed the impact of Covid-19 on employment and working practices generally. Employees and workers are making new choices about where they want to live and how they work creating new expectations for better work-life balance and flexibility. The Committee believes that this may be an area which will require further exploration as we emerge from the pandemic.

## Energy Legislation

55. The Energy Strategy received Executive approval and was published by the Department in December 2021. The Department indicated in early 2021 that it would not be in a position to bring forward any legislation to support the Energy Strategy in the current mandate. An Action Plan was subsequently published in January 2022. The Committee has established during discussions with the Department that it is unclear how the Action Plan is to be funded.
56. The Committee has engaged extensively around energy policy and, as outlined above, published a detailed report following its Micro Inquiry on the Energy Strategy. The Committee met with and heard evidence from Exeter University academics on their report on *Energy Governance for the Northern Ireland Energy Transition*. The Committee closely followed the PAC report on the NI Renewables Obligation recognising that there was close alignment with the themes emerging from its Micro Inquiry and from the University of Exeter findings.
57. This Committee has viewed the Energy Strategy as part of a suite of strategies and policies that fit together to deliver overarching strategies, such as the Economic Recovery Action Plan and the ‘New Decade, New Approach’ Agreement. Additionally, it believes that the Strategy will need to dovetail with other departmental strategies, such as those for skills, tourism and sectoral reviews of FE and HE.
58. The successor Committee may wish to consider the overall implementation of the Energy Strategy including the legislative programme and the attached funding and how it links to wider Executive policies to move to ‘Net Zero’ and to ameliorate the impact of fuel poverty.

## Petroleum Licensing

59. In October 2020, the Department commissioned Hatch Regeneris to undertake independent research on the economic, societal and

environmental impacts of onshore petroleum exploration and production in Northern Ireland. Hatch engaged with stakeholders, including government, councils, industry, environmental organisations and community groups. The Department has not yet released the outcome of the report. The Private Member's Bill, the Onshore Fracking (Prohibition) Bill which aimed to ban fracking as noted above reached Committee Stage but did not complete its passage through the Assembly.

60. The Committee considers it important that the Hatch findings are released in full and considered in detail to ensure there is a comprehensive and evidence based approach to any new legislation or policy changes in relation to fracking.

## **Skills Strategy**

61. This Committee has been proactive in monitoring and contributing to the development of the Skills Strategy by the Department, including through its Micro Inquiry on the Skills Strategy. The Committee has heard repeated calls from many stakeholders for the delivery of a Skills Strategy to address skills gaps, promote entrepreneurship, increase productivity and reduce unemployment. This is particularly important in the times that we live in with the transition to the twin green and digital 'revolutions' and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

62. The Department's new Skills Strategy will be a key driver for economic growth, particularly as we emerge from the Covid-19 crisis, and has the potential to make a vital contribution to the economic recovery and enable us to build resilience into the economy going forward.

63. The successor Committee will wish to ensure that the draft strategy brought forward by the Department will provide a skills delivery framework that can help workers of all ages, employers and communities to adapt to these changes, and one that helps build an economy that delivers for everyone.

## **Budget Scrutiny**

64. The Committee has undertaken regular scrutiny of the Department's budget, funding allocations, savings delivery plans, priorities and pressures during this period. The Committee has found it difficult to track and scrutinise the Department's budget due to a reliance on in-year allocations; consistent inaccuracy in over-costing of Covid relief Schemes; over-costing of some Covid interventions preventing reallocated within the timeframe; and regular surrender of significant sums because of poor planning and budget management.
65. The last briefing the Committee received on the draft budget for 2022-25 was on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2022. At that point the Department highlighted considerable shortfalls in the funding and potential areas where savings might be made, as well as the Department's obligations, inescapable pressures and priority policies. As skills and education form roughly three-quarters of the Department's budget, these are areas that are under particular consideration for making savings.
66. Officials have indicated to the Committee that the savings modelled at the beginning of 2022 did not represent concluded plans and are largely illustrative of possibilities. Given the uncertainty around decision making in relation to the budget and the potential budget cuts, the successor Committee may wish to consider an early briefing on budget as a matter of priority for an assessment of the current state of play and any progress in decision making.

## **Powers of the Utility Regulator**

67. The issue of the role and remit of the Utility Regulator has been discussed by the Committee as part of its Micro Inquiry on the Energy Strategy and in subsequent briefings from the Utility Regulator and energy stakeholders, particularly around the issue of the rising costs of energy and fuel poverty.
68. The current statutory duties of the Utility Regulator are many decades old and the Committee believes should be evaluated in the context of its role in decarbonisation and renewable energy. The Committee believes that the

role and statutory duties of the Utility Regulator is an area to be explored and that there is potential for modifying the remit of the Utility Regulator to increase that office's ability to intervene and regulate on a wider and deeper basis.

## **Evaluation of the High Street Stimulus Scheme**

69. The High Street Stimulus Scheme was the 'flagship' policy within the Department's Economic Recovery Action Plan. Given the significant spend on the HSSS, the Committee viewed it as vital to ensure that there is appropriate post-project evaluation and assessment of its effectiveness including economic impact and multiplier and data analysis. At the end of this mandate the Committee was informed by the Department that this work would be carried out by an external organisation. The successor Committee may wish to scrutinise the results of this evaluation.

## **Independent Review of Invest NI**

70. In February 2022, the Department launched an independent Review of Invest NI which the Department expects will report by September 2022.

71. The Department also has launched a number of key economic strategies including 'Skills for a 10x Economy' and 'Trade and Investment for a 10X Economy', which Invest NI will have a key role in delivering upon.

72. The Committee sees this review as fundamental to ensuring that the key economic development agency is fit for purpose in supporting Northern Ireland to achieve its economic potential as envisaged in its key strategies and in doing so ensures a regional balance.

## **Project Stratum**

73. The Committee has engaged extensively with the Department and Fibrus in relation to the roll out of Project Stratum. The Committee wishes to highlight a number of issues including around the level and quality of engagement that Fibrus has with the councils; whether budgeting is on track and

resources are continuing to flow as needed from the UKG; and around the quality of the data provided to scope the project and the premises that are likely to come within scope of the project. The Committee also draws attention to the need for ongoing monitoring of the customer service data as it emerges.

## **Brexit Scrutiny**

74. The Committee has scrutinised and provided a number of observations to the Department in relation to two of the Common Frameworks on Company Law and Late Payment in Commercial Transactions. The Common Frameworks underpin working relationships between the UK Government and the devolved governments following EU Exit. Other Common Frameworks were expected and have been delayed including in relation to the Mutual Recognition of Professional Qualifications and Services Frameworks. At present the Committee has reserved its position on the Common Frameworks until there is further certainty in terms of the NI Protocol and Brexit negotiations.
75. The Committee also expects that other Brexit related legislation will require Legislative Consent Motions, for example, in relation to the Subsidy Control Bill and Professional Qualifications Bill.

## **Kendall Report Agri-Food Sector**

76. In January 2022, the Economy and Agriculture Ministers announced the Independent Strategic Review of the Agri-Food Sector. DAERA carried out a consultation in February 2022 to seek views in relation to the review which had not yet concluded at the time of this report. Consideration of this review will be key as part of the Department for the Economy 10x Strategic Vision which aims to transform the whole NI economy over the next decade through innovation and green growth.

## **Feminist Recovery Plan**

77. The Covid-19 Feminist Recovery Plan sets out a number of recommendations in relation to the economic aspects of the recovery which include areas of employment legislation such as gender pay gap legislation and a Women's Employment Strategy to identify labour market issues facing women. This plan provides valuable research and evidence in relation to women's employment and gender parity and how such issues can be addressed.

# Appendix 1 – Committee for the Economy

The Committee has 9 members. The membership of the Committee throughout the current mandate was as follows:

- Dr Caoímhe Archibald MLA (Chairperson)
- Mr Matthew O'Toole (Deputy Chairperson)
- Mr Keith Buchanan MLA
- Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
- Mr Stephen Dunne MLA
- Mr Michael Nesbitt MLA
- Mr John O'Dowd MLA
- Ms Claire Sugden MLA
- Mr Peter Weir MLA

1 With effect from 10 February 2020 Mr John Stewart replaced Mr Alan Chambers

2 With effect from 8 February 2021 Mr Paul Givan replaced Mr Gary Middleton

3 With effect from 19 March 2021 Mr Gary Middleton replaced Mr Paul Givan

4 With effect from 12 April 2021 Mr Mervyn Storey replaced Mr Gordon Dunne

5 With effect from 1 June 2021 Mr Mike Nesbitt replaced Mr John Stewart

6 With effect from 21 June 2021 Mr Peter Weir replaced Mr Christopher Stalford

7 With effect from 21 June 2021 Mr Keith Buchanan replaced Mr Mervyn Storey

8 With effect from 5th July 2021 Mr Stephen Dunne replaced Mr Gary Middleton

9 With effect from 18th October 2021 Mr Matthew O'Toole replaced Ms Sinead McLaughlin



## Appendix 2 – Mandate facts and figures

### Committee meetings & visits

Session	Number of meetings held	Percentage minutes public / closed	Number of meetings held outside Parliament Buildings	Number of committee visits
2019/2020	30	Public – 96% Closed – 4%	0	1
2020/2021	40	Public – 93% Closed – 7%	0	0
2021/2022	25*	Public – 94% Closed – 6%	0	1

## Committee Bill Reports

<b>Session</b>	<b>Name of Bill</b>	<b>Committee report (Ordered to print)</b>
2021/2022	<b>Report on the Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Bill</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> November 2021
2021/2022	<b>Report on the Small-Scale Green Energy Bill</b>	28 <sup>th</sup> January 2022
2021/2022	<b>Report on the Domestic Abuse Safe Leave Bill</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> February 2022
2021/2022	<b>Report on the Employment (Zero Hours Workers and Banded Weekly Working Hours) Bill</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> March 2022
2021/2022	<b>Onshore Fracking (Prohibition) Bill</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> March 2022

## Committee Inquiries / Reviews / Micro inquiries

<b>Session</b>	<b>Name of report</b>	<b>Committee Report (ordered to print)</b>	<b>Date debated in Plenary (if applicable)</b>
2020/2021	<b>Energy Strategy Micro Inquiry Special Report</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2020	23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2020
	<b>Macro-Economic Outlook Micro Inquiry Special Report</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> December 2020	8 <sup>th</sup> December 2020
	<b>The Skills Strategy and Economic Output Micro Inquiry Special Report</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> March 2021	8 <sup>th</sup> March 2021
	<b>High Street Stimulus' Voucher Scheme and '10X Economy' Micro Inquiry Special Report</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> September 2021	NA

## Committee Motions Debated in Plenary (excluding Inquiries / Reviews / Membership changes)

Session	Motion	Date debated in Plenary
2019/2020		
2020/2021	<b>Motion to Extend Committee Stage - Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Bill</b>	28 <sup>th</sup> June 2021
2021/2022	<b>Motion to Extend Committee Stage - Small-Scale Green Energy Bill</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> November 2021
2021/2022	<b>Motion to Extend Committee Stage - Domestic Abuse (Safe Leave) Bill</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> January 2022
2021/2022	<b>Motion to Extend Committee Stage - Employment (Zero Hours Workers and Banded Weekly Working Hours) Bill</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> March 2022

## Statutory Rules

Session	Negative Resolution	Affirmative Resolution	Draft Affirmative	Confirmatory	Not laid	Total
2019/2020	10				2	12
2020/2021	18	2		11	2	33
2021/2022	6				4	10

## Witnesses

<b>Session</b>	<b>Number of Organisations who gave evidence to the committee</b>
2019/2020	54
2020/2021	55
2021/2022	29

## Appendix 3 - Expenditure for the period 1 September 2017 – XX March 2022

<b>Budget area</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>
Committee Travel - committee members and staff travel and subsistence in relation to visits and meetings outside Parliament Buildings		£388.39
Advertising	Includes the cost of advertising relating to:	£1688.57
External Consultancy	Includes costs associated with committee use of external consultants to assist in consideration of legislation, inquiries, etc.	£0
General expenses	Cost of refreshments for committee meetings, committee events, working lunches, seminars, room hire, witness expenses, and conference fees for members etc.	£1816.74
<b>All budget areas</b>	<b>All details</b>	<b>£3893.70</b>



You may re-use this publication (not including images or logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Northern Ireland Assembly Licence.

[Find out more about the Open Northern Ireland Assembly Licence.](#)

This Report can be made available in a range of formats including large print, Braille etc. For more information please contact:

<<Committee Name>>

<<Contact Name>>

Northern Ireland Assembly

Parliament Buildings

Ballymiscaw

Stormont

Belfast BT4 3XX

Telephone: 028 90 [Enter ext number]

Email: [Enter committee email address]

Twitter: @[enter Committee twitter handle]

---