



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee for Finance

Minutes of Proceedings

1 April 2025

Meeting Location: Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings, Belfast

Present: Diane Forsythe MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Steve Aiken MLA

Phillip Brett MLA

Gerry Carroll MLA

Jemma Dolan MLA

Paul Frew MLA

Deirdre Hargey MLA

Eoin Tennyson MLA

Apologies: Matthew O'Toole MLA (Chairperson)

In Attendance: Peter Hall Committee Clerk

Clairita Frazer Assistant Assembly Clerk

Tom Armstrong Assistant Assembly Clerk

Stephen Magee Clerical Supervisor

Heather Graham Clerical Officer

The meeting commenced at 1:05pm in public session.

1. Apologies

As above.

2. Declaration of Interests

None.

3. Budget 2025/26 – Oral Briefing from Departmental Officials

Agreed: Members agreed that the oral briefing should be reported by Hansard.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Department of Finance on the Chancellor's Spring Statement; Impact on Executive Funding, Department of Finance briefing papers on the draft Budget position and related publications on the draft Budget 2025-26. The supporting papers would also be included in the Committee's compilation report on the draft Executive Budget 2025/26.

The following officials joined the meeting at 1.06pm

Joanne McBurney Deputy Secretary Public Spending; and

Maryann Smith Head of Central Expenditure Division.

The officials briefed the Committee on the 2025-26 Budget and on the Chancellor's Spring Statement. The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

Phillip Brett joined the meeting at 1.11pm.

Steve Aiken declared an interest as a former Chief Executive.

A number of issues were discussed including anticipated adjustments at the June Monitoring Round, accountancy professions in the NICS, the challenging nature of final budget positions and 5-year Departmental plans.

Phillip Brett left the meeting at 1.33pm.

The deputy Chairperson thanked the officials and they left the meeting at 1.38pm.

4. Any Other Business

Agreed: The Committee agreed a Media Operational Notice and Press Release which would be issued as part of the Committee's external visit and meeting to Kilkeel on 2nd April 2025.

5. Date and Time of next meeting

The next Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday 2 April 2025 at 2:00pm in the Kilmorey Arms Hotel, Kilkeel.

The meeting was adjourned at 1.39pm.

Matthew O'Toole

Chairperson, Committee for Finance

9 April 2025