



Northern Ireland
Assembly

**COMMITTEE FOR EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING
MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

WEDNESDAY, 22 OCTOBER 2014

PARKANAUR COLLEGE, DUNGANNON

Present: Mr Robin Swann MLA (Chairperson)

Mr Phil Flanagan MLA
Mr David Hilditch MLA
Ms Anna Lo MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA
Ms Bronwyn McGahan MLA
Mr Pat Ramsey MLA

In Attendance: Mrs Cathie White (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Vincent Gribbin (Assistant Clerk)
Mr Johnny Lawless (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Noreen Hayward (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr William Irwin MLA
Ms Claire Sugden MLA

The meeting opened in public session at 10:21 am.

1. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

2. Chairperson's Business

The Chairperson advised Members that an informal meeting has been arranged with the University of Ulster, Queen's University Belfast and the Open University to discuss the implications of budget cuts for the HE Sector on 4 November 2014 at 4:00 pm in Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson advised Members that he met with John M D'Arcy, National Director, The Open University on 14 October 2014.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to host a dinner in the Private Members Dining Room, Parliament Buildings on 11 December 2014.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2014

Agreed: The minutes of the meeting on 15 October 2014 were agreed.

4. Matters arising

- The Committee noted a list of matters arising from the meeting on 15 October 2014.

5. Correspondence

The Committee considered the following items of correspondence:

- Correspondence from the Committee for Education providing a copy of the Education and Training Inspectorate's Report on Transition arrangements for Special Schools

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the report and include it in the Committee Inquiry report into Post Special Educational Need Provision in Northern Ireland.

- Departmental response to Committee correspondence requesting a breakdown of qualification statistics.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response.

- Correspondence from Historical Royal Palaces requesting to brief the Committee on the future plans for Hillsborough Castle.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to Historical Royal Palaces to ascertain if they wish to brief the Committee on the issue of the closure of the Praxis café.

- Correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel regarding Cross Departmental Savings Delivery Plans.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Departmental response to Committee correspondence regarding subsidies for electrical courses fees.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response and forward it to the Electrical Training Trust for information.

- Correspondence from the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment regarding SDC Trailers.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence and forward it to the Department for comment.

- Assembly Research and Information Service briefing paper providing additional information on the European Union Commission Work Programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the research paper.

- Departmental response providing details of the predictions of a dip for drawdown of funding from the Horizon 2020 programme.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response.

- Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) response providing further labour market statistics for Parliamentary Constituency or District Council Area.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response.

- Correspondence from a student regarding the briefings on the Hardship Fund.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response.

- Departmental response to Committee correspondence regarding budget cuts for arms-length bodies.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response.

- Departmental response to queries following Ingeus briefing.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response.

- Draft Press Release – Committee visit to Parkanaur College.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to issue the press release.

- Invitation from the Labour Relations Agency to a Public Board Meeting and Lecture

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from Queen's University Belfast to its Research Impact Showcase and Publication Launch.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from NOW to attend its Graduation Celebration 2014.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from Belfast Met to its Supported Learning Showcase.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from Children in Northern Ireland to the launch of the Child Poverty Alliance Report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

6. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted the draft Forward Work Programme to 10 December 2014.

7. Committee Inquiry into post Special Educational Need Provision in education, employment and training for those with Learning Disabilities - Briefing from Parkanaur College

10:27 am The representatives joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Mr Wilfred Mitchell OBE, Chief Executive, Parkanaur College, Mr Tom O'Sullivan, Horticultural Tutor, Parkanaur College, Mr Eamon Connolly, Residential Care Manager, Parkanaur College, Mrs Mary Canavan, Senior Tutor, Parkanaur College, Ms Katherine Corey, Deputy Head, Seashell Trust and Ms Sarah Leonard, Student, Parkanaur College.

10:48 am Mr David Hilditch joined the meeting.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

11:03 am Mr Phil Flanagan left the meeting.

11:25 am Ms Carol Hue, Aspire joined the meeting.

11:41 am Mr Fra McCann left the meeting.

Bronwyn McGahan declared an interest as having a family member who works part-time at Parkanaur Manor House.

Agreed: The representatives agreed to reflect on the terms of reference of the Committee inquiry and provide a coordinated response.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to visit the Seashell Trust as part of its inquiry into Post Special Educational Need Provision.

11:45 am The representatives left the meeting.

8. Departmental Briefing - Economic Inactivity

11:46 am The Departmental officials joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Ms Yvonne Croskery, Director of Youth Policy and Strategy Division and Mr Philip Rodgers, Head of Apprenticeships and Economic Inactivity.

11:52 am Mr Fra McCann re-joined the meeting.

12:02 pm Mr David Hilditch left the meeting.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

Agreed: The officials agreed to provide the Committee with details on targets for the number of young people with disabilities on apprenticeship programmes.

Agreed: The officials agreed to provide statistics on the numbers of people who are part-time employed and also claiming benefits.

12:16 pm Mr Pat Ramsey left the meeting.

12:17 pm Mr David Hilditch re-joined the meeting.

12:22 pm The Departmental officials left the meeting.

9. Departmental Briefing - Review of Youth Training

12:23 pm The Departmental officials joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Ms Yvonne Croskery, Director of Youth Policy and Strategy Division, Ms Carol Magill, Head of New Initiatives Unit, Mr David Broadhurst, Head of Review of Youth Training and Mr Michael Armstrong, Review of Youth Training Branch.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

Agreed: The officials agreed to provide a report on the study visits undertaken as part of the review of youth training.

12:48 pm The Departmental officials left the meeting.

10. Any other business

None.

11. Date, time and place of next meeting

The Committee noted that the next meeting should be held on Wednesday 19 November 2014 at 10.00 am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

12:48 pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Mr Robin Swann MLA
Chairperson, Committee for Employment & Learning

19 November 2014