



Northern Ireland
Assembly

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

WEDNESDAY, 21 JANUARY 2015

ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Mr Robin Swann MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Sydney Anderson MLA
Mr David Hilditch MLA
Mr William Irwin MLA
Ms Anna Lo MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA
Ms Bronwyn McGahan MLA
Mr Pat Ramsey MLA
Ms Claire Sugden MLA

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

Apologies: None.

The meeting opened in public session at 10:01 am.

1. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

2. Chairperson's Business

- The Chairperson advised the Committee that an additional meeting has been arranged for Tuesday, 3 February at 12.45 to receiving a briefing from the Minister on the Budget 2015 – 16.

- The Chairperson advised the Committee that, as agreed at a previous meeting, an informal meeting has been arranged with Unite the Union, today at 2 pm in room 277 to discuss Budget cuts to the Higher Education sector.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 14 January 2015

Agreed: The minutes of the meeting on 14 January 2015 were agreed.

10:03 am Mr Fra McCann joined the meeting.

4. Matters arising

- The Committee noted a list of matters arising from the meeting on 14 January 2015.

5. Correspondence

The Committee considered the following items of correspondence:

- Departmental response providing an update on work undertaken by the Careers Service on higher education opportunities in the Republic of Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response.

- Correspondence from the Department for Employment and Learning to the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment regarding its US Trade Mission.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister regarding the Northern Ireland Public Service Ombudsperson Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Invitation from Queen's University Belfast to its Celebrating Science at Queen's Event.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from Chambre Public Affairs to An Evening with YouGov Pollster Peter Kellner.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from NIACRO to its Our Voice: Developing a Charter and policy framework for Children affected by Imprisonment of a Family Member Seminar on Wednesday 28th January, Parliament Buildings, at 12.30-13.30 pm.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

6. Forward Work Programme

The Committee noted the draft Forward Work Programme to 8 April 2015.

7. Briefing from The Commissioner for Older People - Report on Valuing an Ageing Workforce

10:06 am The representatives joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Ms Claire Keatinge, Commissioner for Older People Northern Ireland and Dr Ben Harris, Policy and Research Officer, Commissioner for Older People.

10:07 am Mr David Hilditch joined the meeting.

10:12 am Mr Thomas Buchanan joined the meeting.

10:13 am Mr William Irwin joined the meeting.

10:13 am Ms Claire Sugden joined the meeting.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

10:30 am Mr William Irwin left the meeting.

10:59 am Mr Robin Swann left the meeting.

10:59 am Mr Thomas Buchanan took the Chair.

11:00 am Mr Sydney Anderson left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward a copy of the Hansard to the Department for information and comment.

11:01 am The representatives left the meeting.

8. Briefing from NICVA - Economic Analysis of the Living Wage in Northern Ireland

11:01 am The representatives joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Mr Seamus McAleavey, Chief Executive, NICVA, Mr Eoin Rooney, Centre for Economic Empowerment Co-ordinator, NICVA and Mr Matthew Daas, Economist, Oxford Economics.

11:04 am Mr Robin Swann re-joined the meeting and took the Chair.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a research paper into the living wage in Northern Ireland.

11:46 am Ms Claire Sugden left the meeting.

11:47 am The representatives left the meeting.

9. Briefing from Assembly Research and Information Service - Self-Employment in Northern Ireland

11:48 am The researcher joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Mr Eoin Murphy, Researcher, Assembly Research and Information Service.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward a copy of the research paper to the Department for information and comment and requesting information on what research it has carried out on the high fluctuation of self-employment figures in Northern Ireland.

12:05 pm The researcher left the meeting.

10. Any other business

- The Committee considered a draft itinerary for its visit to The Seashell Trust and various other organisations in Manchester as part of its Inquiry into Post Special Educational Need Provision on 11 – 12 March 2015.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft itinerary.

The following members agreed that they would attend the visit:

- Mr Robin Swann
 - Mr Thomas Buchanan
 - Mr David Hilditch
 - Ms Anna Lo
 - Mr Fra McCann
 - Mr Pat Ramsey
- The Committee considered Members concerns regarding North West Regional College and the current situation there.

12:08 pm Ms Bronwyn McGahan left the meeting.

12:08 pm Ms Anna Lo left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Minister regarding the on-going issues at North West Regional College.

11. Date, time and place of next meeting

The Committee noted that the next meeting should be held on Wednesday, 28 January 2015 at 10:00 pm in Room 29 Parliament Buildings, Belfast.

12:10 pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Mr Robin Swann MLA
Chairperson, Committee for Employment & Learning

28 January 2015