



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

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

WEDNESDAY, 23 SEPTEMBER 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 Assembly Clerk)
Mr Johnny Lawless (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Marion Johnson (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Phil Flanagan MLA

10:00 am The meeting opened in public session.

1. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

2. Chairperson's Business

None

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2015

Agreed: The minutes of the meeting on 16 September were agreed.

4. Matters arising

The Committee noted a list of matters arising from the meeting on 16 September 2015.

5. Correspondence

The Committee considered the following items of correspondence:

- Correspondence from the Examiner of Statutory Rules providing a copy of his first report of the 2015-2016 session.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from Phil Flanagan MLA regarding the proposed Committee visit to a social enterprise farm.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a visit to the Social Farm in the Forward Work Programme.

- Correspondence from the Committee for the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister providing a copy of the NI Human Rights Commission Report on UK Compliance with International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Departmental correspondence providing details on the Consultation on University Enrolment Methodology.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from the Association of Hispanists of Great Britain and Ireland regarding the closure of the School of Modern Languages at the Ulster University.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence and request an Assembly Research briefing on the types of courses cut and how heavily they were subscribed along with information on methods of gaining funding from relevant sectors for running courses.

- Minister for Employment and Learning Notice of Intention to make an Oral Statement to the Northern Ireland Assembly - Launch of the Consultation on the Disability Employment Strategy

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Information on the Level Ground Coffee Shop, Dundonald.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a visit to the Coffee Shop in its forward work programme as part of its Inquiry.

6. Forward Work Programme

- The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme to 9 December 2015.

7. Consideration of the Committee for Employment and Learning End of Session Report 2014-2015

Agreed: The Committee agreed to publish the Committee's End of Session Report on the Committee website.

8. Departmental Briefing - European Social Fund Update

10:06 am The Departmental officials joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Ms Heather Cousins, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Mr Colin Jack, Director of Strategy, European and Employment Relations Division, Ms Sheila McNeill, Deputy Director of Strategy, European and Employment Relations Division and Mr Conor Brady, Head of European Unit.

10:09 am Mr Sydney Anderson joined the meeting.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

10:19 am Ms Claire Sugden joined the meeting.

10:21 am Mr William Irwin joined the meeting.

10:23 am Mr David Hilditch joined the meeting.

Agreed: The officials agreed to provide the Committee with details of how many organisations that were unsuccessful in their applications for ESF 2014-2020 funding asked for feedback.

Agreed: The officials agreed to provide the Committee with a copy of the correspondence between the Department and the European Commission on the possibility of organisations using ESF 2007-2013 funding for redundancy payments for staff where they had been unsuccessful in the ESF 2014-2020 process.

10:59 am Mr Pat Ramsey left the meeting.

Agreed: The officials agreed to provide the Committee with a list of acceptable teacher training qualifications for ESF tutors.

Agreed: The officials agreed to provide the Committee with a breakdown of the technical assistance funding for ESF 2007-2013 used for funding salaries for the 2014-2020 programme.

11:11 am The Departmental officials left the meeting.

9. Briefing from the Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minorities - Voices for Change Report 2014

11:11 am The representatives joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Mr Patrick Yu, Director and Mr Luke Kelly, Policy Officer.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

11:29 am Mr Thomas Buchanan left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward a copy of the Report and the Hansard to the Department for comment and give particular attention to the issue of re-designating ESOL as an essential skill.

12:00 pm The representatives left the meeting.

10. Any other business

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing on the DEL Assured Skills Programme in the Forward Work Programme.

11. Date, time and place of next meeting

The Committee noted that the next meeting should be held on Wednesday, 30 September 2015 at 10.00 am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

12:01pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Mr Robin Swann MLA
Chairperson, Committee for Employment & Learning

30 September 2015