



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

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

WEDNESDAY, 17 FEBRUARY 2016

ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

- Present:** Mr Robin Swann (Chairperson)
- Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Sydney Anderson MLA
Mr Gerard Diver MLA
Mr Alex Easton MLA
Mr Phil Flanagan MLA
Mr David Hilditch MLA
Ms Bronwyn McGahan MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA
Ms Claire Sugden MLA
- In Attendance:** Mrs Cathie White (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Vincent Gribbin (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Johnny Lawless (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Briege Mullan (Clerical Officer)
Ms Amy Barr (Legislative Studies & Practice Student)
- Apologies:** Ms Anna Lo MLA

10:02 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 10 February 2016

Agreed: The minutes of the meeting on 10 February 2016 were agreed.

4. Matters arising

- The Committee noted a list of matters arising from the meeting on 10 February 2016.

5. Correspondence

The Committee considered the following items of correspondence:

- Copy Departmental correspondence to the Committee for Education regarding Essential Skills Qualifications.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel regarding a European Union Funding Programmes Briefing Paper.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from NICVA regarding the secretariat for the Voluntary and Community Sector Departmental Monitoring Groups.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to meet informally with NICVA.

- Correspondence from the CBI regarding Introducing Gender Pay Gap Reporting in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Invitation from the Department for Employment and Learning to an event to Celebrate United Youth.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from Queen's University Belfast, NICCY and the Public Health Agency to an Acquired Brain Injury Conference.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

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

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

10: 04 am Mr Phil Flanagan joined the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to include a request in its Legacy Report that a debate in Plenary should be broadcast using sign language in the next mandate.

6. Forward Work Programme

- The Committee noted the Forward Work Programme to 16 March 2016.

7. Briefing from SWC and Libraries NI

10:08 am The representatives joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Mrs Joanne Lucas, Cookstown Campus Manager, South West College and Ms Muriel Todd, Assistant Director, Libraries NI.

10:16 am Mr Fra McCann joined the meeting.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

10:29 am Mr Sydney Anderson joined the meeting.

10:35 am The representatives left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the witnesses requesting that they provide the briefing papers for the briefing.

8. Departmental Briefing - European Social Fund Update

10:35 am The Departmental officials joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Mr Colin Jack, Director of Strategy, European and Employment Relations Division, Mr Conor Brady, Head of European Unit and Ms Fiona White, Head of European Social Fund Delivery Branch.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

10:51 am Mr Alex Easton joined the meeting.

10:55 am Mr David Hilditch left the meeting.

11:02 am Ms Claire Sugden joined the meeting.

11:12 am Ms Bronwyn McGahan left the meeting.

Agreed: The officials agreed to provide the Committee with information on what engagement the Department has had with women's groups under ESF funding.

11:24 am Ms Bronwyn McGahan re-joined the meeting.

Agreed: The officials agreed to provide the Committee with information on FE Colleges ESF projects and whether any of the colleges had failed to gain full match funding.

11:32 am The Departmental officials left the meeting.

9. Departmental Briefing – Summary of Responses on the Consultation on Developing Modern, Efficient and Effective Employment Tribunals

11:32 am The Departmental officials joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Mr John McKeown, Acting Assistant Director, Strategy, European & Employment Relations Division and Dr Alan Scott, Head of Employment Relations Policy and Legislation Branch.

11:45 am Mr David Hilditch re-joined the meeting.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

11:55 am Ms Claire Sugden left the meeting.

11:56 am Mr Alex Easton left the meeting.

12:06 pm Mr Fra McCann left the meeting.

12:07 pm Mr Phil Flanagan left the meeting.

12:08 pm The Departmental officials left the meeting.

10. Any other business

The Committee considered the possible closure of Café One Eighty Degrees, Portadown due to a lack of funding.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Minister to express the Committee's concern about the possible closure of OneEighty Degrees Cafe and to request if there are any funding streams available to assist the Café.

The Committee considered the notification of over 1000 job losses at Bombardier in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a meeting with the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment and both Ministers regarding the job losses and what the two Departments can do to mitigate against the impact on the individuals affected.

11. Date, time and place of next meeting

The Committee noted that the next meeting should be held on Wednesday, 24 February 2016 at 10.00 am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

12:10 am The Committee moved into closed session.

12. Committee Inquiry into post Special Educational Need Provision in education, employment and training for those with Learning Disabilities - Consideration of Draft Report

The Committee considered the draft inquiry report.

The Committee noted a number of papers relevant to the Inquiry:

- Dolans Farm Visit Report
- Alternative Angles Visit Report
- Stakeholder Event with Young People - South Eastern Regional College
- Stakeholder Event with Young People - South West Regional College
- RaISE briefing paper- Foxes Academy

Agreed: The Committee agreed to include the papers in the Inquiry Report.

Agreed: That the Front Page, Table of Contents, Remit, Powers and Membership of the Committee and the List of Abbreviations stand part of the report.

Agreed: That the Executive Summary stands part of the report.

Agreed: That the List of Recommendations stands part of the report.

Agreed: That the Background and Committee Approach stands part of the report.

Agreed: That the Consideration of Evidence stands part of the report.

Agreed: That Appendix A: List of Submissions stands part of the report.

Agreed: That Appendix B: List of RaISe Research Papers stands part of the report.

Agreed: That Appendix C: List of Government and Academic Reports stands part of the report.

Agreed: That Appendix D: Minutes of Evidence stands part of the report.

Agreed: That Appendix E: Minutes of Proceedings stands part of the report.

Agreed: That Appendix F: Correspondence stands part of the report.

Agreed: That Appendix G: Other Papers stands part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to order the report to be published - Embargoed until the Commencement of the Debate in Plenary.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to forward a copy of the report to the Minister for Employment and Learning.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to Committee Chairpersons providing them with the recommendations relevant to their Committee and to SOLACE providing it with the recommendations relevant to Local Government .

12:22 pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Mr. Robin Swann MLA
Chairperson, Committee for Employment & Learning

24 February 2016