



Northern Ireland
Assembly

COMMITTEE FOR EMPLOYMENT AND LEARNING MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY, 2 MARCH 2016

ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Mr Robin Swann (Chairperson)

Mr Sydney Anderson MLA
Mr Gerard Diver MLA
Mr Alex Easton MLA
Mr Phil Flanagan MLA
Ms Anna Lo MLA
Ms Bronwyn McGahan 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: Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Fra McCann MLA

The meeting opened in public session at 10:04 am

1. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

2. Chairperson's Business

The Committee discussed the Committee debate on its Inquiry into post Special Educational Need (SEN) Provision in education, employment and training for those with Learning Disabilities in Northern Ireland.

3. Minutes of the meeting held on 24 February 2016

Agreed: The minutes of the meeting on 24 February 2016 were agreed.

4. Matters arising

- The Committee noted a list of matters arising from the meeting on 24 February 2016.

5. Correspondence

The Committee considered the following items of correspondence:

- Correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel regarding a Departmental response to queries regarding the Draft Budget for 2016-2017.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure to the Minister for Employment and Learning regarding support for Libraries NI and use of their resources.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence.

- Correspondence from the Ulster University Local Association of the University and College Union requesting to brief the Committee on the redundancy process at the Ulster University.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule the briefing for 16 March 2016.

- Invitation from St. Angela's College, Sligo to an Education and The Law Conference.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Invitation from the Consumer Council NI to a consultation on their Draft Corporate Plan 2016-21 and Draft Forward Work Programme 2016-2017.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

6. Forward Work Programme

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

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a Departmental Briefing on its response to the recommendations of the Committee report on its Inquiry into post Special Educational Need (SEN) Provision in education, employment and training for those with Learning Disabilities in Northern Ireland for 16 March 2016.

7. SL1 - Statutory Paternity Pay, Statutory Adoption Pay and Statutory Shared Parental Pay (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016

The Committee considered SL1 - Statutory Paternity Pay, Statutory Adoption Pay and Statutory Shared Parental Pay (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016.

Agreed: The Committee was content with the proposal.

8. Legislative Consent Motion - Enterprise Bill - Departmental Briefing.

10:09 am The Departmental officials joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Mr Michael Gould, Assistant Director, Youth Policy and Strategy Division, Mrs Joyce Rutherford, New Initiatives Unit.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

10:17 am Ms Claire Sugden joined the meeting.

10:22 am Mr Alex Easton joined the meeting.

10:23 am The Departmental officials left the meeting.

9. Departmental Briefing - Careers Strategy

10:24 am The Departmental officials joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Ms June Ingram, Director of Skills & Industry Division, Ms Frances O'Hara, Head of Careers Service and Mr Nigel Keery, Careers Service Delivery.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for Education for information on the number of teachers who have availed of the Continual Professional Development programme and the numbers still to attend.

10:38 am Mrs Angela Rooney joined the meeting.

10:40 am Mr Sydney Anderson joined the meeting.

10:51 am The Departmental officials left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Assembly Commission urging it to consider producing guidance for Members who take on work experience students.

10:52 am Mr Alex Easton left the meeting.

The Committee suspended at 10:52 am.

The Committee reconvened at 11:18 am.

10. Departmental Briefing.- Steps 2 Success

11:18 am The Departmental officials joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Mrs Carol McCabe, Acting Assistant Director for Strategy and Policy Division, Ms Alison Lowry, Head of Programme Management & Development Branch, Mrs Angela Whiteside, Quality Improvement Advisor, and Mr Colin Woods, Head of Contract Management Branch.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with clarification on why the Minister didn't issue a press release to highlight the Department's validated statistics in relation to Steps 2 Success.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with information on the overall spend for the first 3 months cohort of the Steps 2 Success programme in regards to job entry.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with information on the number of clients who entered the Steps 2 Success programme under JSA early entry.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with details on the number of participants during the period 1 October 2014 to 30 June 2015 who have had their benefits sanctioned as a result of failure to participate in Steps 2 Success.

12:08 pm Ms Bronwyn McGahan left the meeting.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide the Committee with a full report on how each of the three contractors are complying with the key performance indicator 5.

Agreed: The Departmental officials agreed to provide information on the number of satisfaction survey forms issued to clients and the number returned.

The Committee considered correspondence regarding the withdrawal of a Steps 2 Success Sub-Contractor.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the correspondence

12:31pm The Departmental officials left the meeting.

11. Any other business

The Committee considered the final report on the Legislative Consent Motion for the Enterprise Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the final report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to publish the final report on the Committee webpage.

12. Date, time and place of next meeting

The Committee noted that the next meeting should be held on Monday, 9 March 2016 at 10:00 am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

12:32 pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

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

9 March 2016