



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

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

WEDNESDAY, 24 FEBRUARY 2016

ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

- Present:** Mr Robin Swann (Chairperson)
- Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Sydney Anderson MLA
Mr David Hilditch MLA
Ms Anna Lo MLA
Ms Bronwyn McGahan 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 Gerard Diver MLA
Mr Phil Flanagan MLA
Mr Fra McCann MLA
Ms Claire Sugden MLA

The meeting opened in public session at 10:19 am with the following Members present:

Mr Robin Swann (Chairperson), Mr David Hilditch, Ms Bronwyn McGahan and Ms Anna Lo.

In the absence of a decision-making quorum proceedings commenced in line with Standing Order 49(5), and the Committee moved to the first evidence session.

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item number 8

1. Departmental Briefing - Frequency of Student Support Payments

10:20 am The Departmental officials joined the meeting.

The Committee was briefed by Ms Sian Kerr, Acting Director of Higher Education Division, Mr Alan Russell, Higher Education Future Policy and Mr Jonathan O'Callaghan, Student Finance Branch.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

10:34 am Mr Sydney Anderson joined the meeting.

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item number 9.

2. Departmental Briefing – Part-Time and Postgraduate Student Finance

The Committee was briefed by Ms Sian Kerr, Acting Director of Higher Education Division, Mr Alan Russell, Higher Education Future Policy and Mr Jonathan O'Callaghan, Student Finance Branch.

The briefing was followed by a question and answer session.

Mr Robin Swann declared an interest as a graduate of the Open University.

10:49 am The Departmental officials left the meeting.

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item number 1.

3. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item number 2.

4. Chairperson's Business

- The Committee considered a paper from the Chairperson's Liaison Group regarding a pilot scheme allowing the use of mobile devices in public galleries of Committee rooms.
- The Committee considered a draft Press Release regarding the publication of the report on the Committee Inquiry into post Special Educational Need Provision in education, employment and training for those with Learning Disabilities.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to issue the press release as amended at the commencement of the Debate.

- The Chairperson advised Members that he and the Deputy Chairperson met with the Minister for Employment and Learning regarding a Legislative Consent Motion on the Enterprise Bill.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a briefing on Wednesday 2 March 2016 to consider the Legislative Consent Motion.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule an urgent meeting to consider a draft report on the Legislative Consent Motion if required.

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item number 3.

5. Minutes of the meeting held on 17 February 2016

Agreed: The minutes of the meeting on 17 February 2016 were agreed.

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item number 4.

6. Matters arising

- The Committee noted a list of matters arising from the meeting on 17 February 2016.

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item number 5.

7. Correspondence

The Committee considered the following items of correspondence:

- Departmental response regarding the briefing from the NEET Youth Forum

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the response and forward it to the NEET Youth Forum for information.

- Briefing paper from South West College on its joint briefing with Libraries NI.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the briefing paper.

- Correspondence from NICVA regarding its request to meet with the Chairperson and Clerk regarding legacy issues.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to schedule a meeting.

10:52 am Mr Thomas Buchanan joined the meeting.

- Correspondence from the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment regarding job losses at Bombardier.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for information on the impact of the job losses at Bombardier on its supply chain companies.

- Invitation from FALNI to attend the Belfast Festival of Learning.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

- Departmental invitation to the launch of the findings from the UK Commission's Employer Skills Survey 2015 Northern Ireland findings.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the invitation.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Department for a comparative analysis of the UK Commission's Employer Skills Survey 2015 and the Northern Ireland Skills Barometer.

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item number 6.

8. Forward Work Programme

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

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item number 7.

9. SR 2016-037 The Employment Rights (Increase of Limits) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016

The Committee considered SR 2016-037 The Employment Rights (Increase of Limits) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016.

Agreed: That the Committee for Employment and Learning has considered SR 2016-037 The Employment Rights (Increase of Limits) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016 and has no objection to the rule

The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 10.

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, 2 March 2016 at 10.00 am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

10:56 am *The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.*

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

2 March 2016