



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

12 DECEMBER 2013

ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS 10.00AM.

Present:	Mr Patsy McGlone (Chairperson) Mr Phil Flanagan (Deputy Chairperson) Mr Gordon Dunne Ms Megan Fearon Mr Fearghal McKinney Mr Mitchel McLaughlin Ms Sandra Overend
In Attendance:	Mr Jim McManus (Assembly Clerk) Ms Angela McParland (Assistant Assembly Clerk) Mr Nathan McVeigh (Clerical Supervisor) Ms Jacqueline Holt (Clerical Officer)
Apologies:	Mr Steven Agnew Mr Sydney Anderson Mr Sammy Douglas Mr Paul Frew

The meeting began at 10.05am in public session.

1. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

The Chairperson welcomed Ms Megan Fearon to the Committee.

Agreed: to write to Maeve McLaughlin thanking her for her contribution to the Committee and wishing her well in her future endeavours.

2. Chairperson's Business

Members considered an invitation for the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson to attend the Software Testers' Academy Graduation on Monday 20 January 2014 in the Long Gallery.

Agreed: that the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson attend this event.

Members considered a short summary of a brief by D'Arcy Smith Associates regarding Horizon 2020.

Agreed: to forward the summary to the Department for comment.

Agreed: to issue a formal invitation to the Oireachtas Joint Committee for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation and agree an agenda at the planning meeting on Tuesday 14 January 2014.

Members considered an Assembly Research paper regarding evidence heard by the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development from the three main Northern Ireland banks.

Agreed: to include the paper in the evidence provided to the NI Affairs Committee for its inquiry into 'Banking Structure in Northern Ireland'.

3. Minutes of meeting held on Thursday 28 November 2013.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft minutes of 28 November 2013.

4. Matters Arising

Members considered responses in regards to the solar PV industry from Northern Ireland Electricity to issues raised by Glenfield Renewables in oral evidence to the Committee and from the Department to points raised by the Northern Ireland Solar Trade Association in written evidence to the Committee.

Agreed: to forward the response from Northern Ireland Electricity to Glenfield Renewables and the response from the Department to the Northern Ireland Solar Trade Association.

Members noted a letter from the Speaker regarding the oral evidence session the NI Affairs Committee will undertake on Tuesday 17 December as part of its inquiry into 'Banking Structure in Northern Ireland'.

Members noted a draft briefing note by Assembly Research to be presented to the NI Affairs Committee on 17 December.

Members considered a response from Invest NI providing further information on its half year performance as requested by the Committee and a suggestion for the Committee to participate in a trade mission.

Agreed: to accept the information provided on the half year performance of Invest NI.

Agreed: to consider Invest NI's proposal to participate in a trade mission at the planning meeting on Tuesday 14 January 2014.

Members noted correspondence from the Minister regarding the Museum of Free Derry.

Members considered correspondence from OFMDFM regarding the Committee's request for information concerning the Barosso Desk Officer Progress Reports.

Agreed: to write to OFMDFM asking for clarification that the Committee is requesting this information from the Barosso Desk Officers based on the progress reports they provided and that it would therefore be more appropriate for the Desk Officers to comment in detail on the progress they have made rather than individual departments.

Agreed: to raise the issue with the Minister during the oral evidence session to follow.

Members considered a response from OFMDFM to the Committee's request for a written briefing regarding Recommendation 25 on Renewable Energy.

Agreed: to write to OFMDFM asking how many buildings in the public estate have had new heating systems installed in the past three years, including any new builds, and how many of these had renewable technologies installed.

Members considered further information from the Department on the Selective Financial Assistance evaluation 2004/05 to 2010/11.

Agreed: to forward the information to Assembly Research in order to inform its paper on sub-regional economic data.

Members considered a redacted version of the Department's response to allegations by Lowlands Health and Energy Ltd.

Members noted no response has been received as yet from the Special European Union Programmes' Body.

Agreed: to forward the response to the complainant.

Members considered correspondence from the Department for Regional Development thanking the Committee for raising awareness of the support available for cost saving energy efficiency measures.

Agreed: to write to the Department for Regional Development asking it to keep the Committee informed on any developments.

Members considered an updated information paper from the Utility Regulator and the Department on the issue of security of electricity supply.

Agreed: to raise the issue with the Minister, during the oral evidence session to follow.

Agreed: to write to Northern Ireland Electricity and the Utility Regulator asking for further information on the two smaller interconnectors.

Agreed: to consider the responses at the planning meeting on Tuesday 14 January 2014 and decide upon further action.

5. Subordinate Legislation

SR 2013/261 The Weights and Measures (Specified Quantities) (Unwrapped Bread and Intoxicating Liquor) Order (Northern Ireland) 2013.

Members considered The Statutory Rule and an explanatory memorandum which is subject to negative resolution.

Agreed: That the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment has considered SR 2013/261 The Weights and Measures (Specified Quantities) (Unwrapped Bread and Intoxicating Liquor) Order (Northern Ireland) 2013 and has no objection to the rule.

SR 2013/281 The Gas (Applications for Licences and Extensions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013.

Members considered The Statutory Rule and an explanatory memorandum which is subject to negative resolution.

Agreed: That the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment has considered SR 2013/281 The Gas (Applications for Licences and Extensions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2013 and has no objection to the rule.

6. Exploris Aquarium – Strategic Case Study from Friends of Exploris

Members considered a Strategic Case Study for the Exploris Aquarium from Friends of Exploris.

Agreed: to enquire whether the Department has received the Case Study and if not to forward it to the Department, if permitted by Friends of Exploris.

Agreed: to enquire as to which Committees have already received the Case Study and to forward it to any other Committees, with the permission of Friends of Exploris.

7. Small Scale Feed in Tariff Analysis – Written Briefing from DETI

Members considered a written briefing from the Department regarding Small Scale Feed in Tariff Analysis.

Agreed: the Committee to consider the papers again as part of the Committee Stage of the Energy Bill.

Agreed: to ask the Department if this paper will inform the Energy Bill.

8. Update on Research Agenda – Written Briefing from DETI

Members noted a written briefing from the Department providing an update on its Research Agenda.

9. Consumer Council Annual Report and Accounts – Written Briefing from DETI

Members considered The General Consumer Council for Northern Ireland Annual Reports and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2013.

Megan Fearon left the meeting at 10.33am

Agreed: to receive an oral briefing from the Consumer Council on its work.

10. Update on Renewable Heat Incentive – Written Briefing from DETI

Members considered a written briefing from the Department updating the Committee on the Northern Ireland Renewable Heat Incentive.

Agreed: to receive an oral briefing from the Department on this topic at a future meeting.

11. January Monitoring Round - Oral Briefing from DETI

Officials joined the meeting at 10.36am

Members received an oral briefing from Trevor Cooper, Head of DETI Finance Division and Bernie Brankin, Principal Officer, DETI Finance Division.

Key issues discussed included: new bids and the return of money.

Megan Fearon returned to the meeting at 10.46am

Gordon Dunne left the meeting at 10.49am

Agreed: the Department to provide the Committee with information on what is meant by ‘unconventional gas exploration’; to clarify if this relates to what is being done with the RoI Environment Agency; a written update on the SBRI Nitrates project; further detail on HSENI posts; further detail on what areas of expertise the Capital grant for the Super Connected Cities programme is being focused on; further detail on capital spend and on the depreciation costs of assets coming to the end of their useful life and, if shown to be predictable, an explanation from the Department as to why this was not factored into the initial budget; confirmation as to whether there is any intention to review PfG targets at this point in the mandate; and to provide an estimated final payment for period 2002 and 2008 regarding Harland and Wolff Asbestos claims.

Agreed: to write to the Department of Finance and Personnel asking for further information from SEUPB on draw down of EU monies.

Gordon Dunne returned to the meeting at 10.56am

Fearghal McKinney joined the meeting at 11.00am

Representatives left the meeting at 11.07am

The meeting was suspended at 11.12am

The meeting recommenced in public session at 11.19am

Members agreed to move to agenda item 13

13. Correspondence

Members noted the following items of correspondence for action;

- i. From the Department of Energy and Climate Change inviting the Committee to an open workshop on Monday 13 January as part of a series of stakeholder events on the Balance of Competence Energy Review.

Agreed: that members inform the Committee office by 19 December if they wish to attend this event.

- ii. From the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development in relation to the Lough Neagh Cross Departmental Working Group.

Agreed: to ask the Clerk of the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development to provide a copy of the report to the Committee when it becomes available.

- iii. From the Utility Regulator regarding the Competition Commission's provisional determination on Northern Ireland Electricity's price control.

Agreed: to receive an oral briefing from the Utility Regulator following the final determination from the Competition Commission.

- iv. From CBI and the Department regarding the Simple Power submission.

Agreed: to forward the responses to Simple Power.

- v. From Roy Beggs MLA in relation to a consultation paper on the proposed Scrap Metal Dealers Bill (NI).

Agreed: Members will respond individually to the consultation.

Agreed: to write to Roy Beggs MLA that Members will respond individually to the consultation.

- vi. Members noted correspondence from Assembly Research regarding Competitive EU Funding.

Megan Fearon left the meeting at 11.22am

- vii. Members noted correspondence from the Minister regarding the Westminster Minister for Employment Relations and Consumer Affairs seeking consent to order finalising changes to the landscape of consumer bodies.

- viii. Members noted correspondence from the Minister regarding the Westminster Minister for Employment Relations and Consumer Affairs seeking agreement to the application to Northern Ireland of two sets of consumer rights regulations.

- ix. From Social Enterprise NI in regards to arranging a showcase day for the Committee.

Agreed: to consider this correspondence at the planning meeting on Tuesday 14 January 2014.

- x. Members noted correspondence from the Chairperson of the Finance and Personnel Committee to the Ulster Bank.

- xi. Members noted correspondence from the Minister to the Chairperson regarding an informal consultation launched by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

Members noted the following items of correspondence;

- xii. From the Chairperson of the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure to the Minister regarding the Lough Neagh Fishermen's Association.
- xiii. From the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure to the Minister requesting an oral briefing on the Northern Ireland Tourist Board's Tourism Event Strategy 2020.

14. Any other business

There were no additional items of business.

15. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on **16 January 2014** at **10.00am** in **Room 30, Parliament Buildings**.

Members agreed to move to agenda item 12.

The meeting was suspended at 11.26am

The meeting recommenced in public session at 11.31am with the following members present:

*Patsy McGlone
Phil Flanagan
Gordon Dunne
Megan Fearon
Fearghal McKinney
Mitchel McLaughlin
Sandra Overend*

12. Economic Strategy and Programme for Government - Oral Briefing from the Minister

Officials joined the meeting at 11.31am

Members received an oral briefing from Arlene Foster, Minister, Graeme Hutchinson, Head of DETI Economic Policy Division and Philip Rodgers, Head of DETI Economic Policy Unit.

Key issues discussed included: the Economic Strategy and Programme for Government targets and achievements.

Agreed: that the Minister provide information to the Committee on the outcomes of the meeting with Invest NI regarding 'Prime Office Space' when published.

Representatives left the meeting at 12.28pm

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 12.28pm

Mr Patsy McGlone
Chairperson
Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

16 January 2014