



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

14 OCTOBER 2014

ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, 10.00AM

Present: Mr Patsy McGlone (Chairperson)
Mr Phil Flanagan (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Steven Agnew
Mr Sydney Anderson
Mr Gordon Dunne
Ms Megan Fearon
Mr Paul Frew
Mr William Humphrey
Mr Danny Kinahan
Mr Fearghal McKinney

In Attendance: Mr Jim McManus (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Angela McParland (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Nathan McVeigh (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Christopher Jeffrey (Clerical Officer)
Mr Peadar Ó Lamhna (Bursary Student)

The meeting began at 10.16am

1. Apologies

There were no apologies received.

2. Minutes of meetings held on Tuesday 7 October 2014.

Agreed: the Committee agreed the draft minutes of 7 October 2014.

Phil Flanagan joined the meeting at 10:19am

3. Chairperson's Business

Members considered a paper from the Committee Clerk summarising the issues that were raised by representatives of SDC Trailers when the Committee visited recently.

Agreed: to raise SDC Trailer's concerns with the Committee for Employment & Learning, the Committee for Education, the Committee for Finance and Personnel and Invest NI.

Agreed: to receive an oral briefing from Invest NI regarding the announcement of job losses at JTI.

Megan Fearon joined the meeting at 10:21am

Members considered correspondence to the Chairperson from the President of the Northern Ireland Chamber of Commerce and Industry with an offer to assist the Committee in its work on the economy.

Agreed: Assembly Research to contact the Chamber of Commerce in relation to the research on corporation tax related issues.

The Committee agreed to move to Agenda Item 5

5. Matters Arising

Members considered a response from DETI regarding the Renewable Heat Incentive SL1: testing for ammonia and odour.

Agreed: to seek further clarification from the Department.

Members noted a response from Invest NI regarding the inclusion of the print industry under manufacturing.

Members noted a response from DETI regarding the Programme for Government year 3 Quarter 1 progress report: definition of terms 'rebalancing' and 'rebuilding'.

Members considered correspondence from DETI entitled "EU Matters: Economic value of North/South projects.

Agreed: to receive an oral briefing from representatives of the Northern Ireland Contact Point Network.

Members considered a response from the Department of Finance and Personnel regarding the Alternative Dispute Resolution Directive.

Agreed: to forward this correspondence to the Consumer Council.

Members considered a response from the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Transport and Communications regarding this Committee's correspondence to the RTÉ Director General on the closure of the Clarkstown long wave transmitter.

Agreed: to write to the Joint Oireachtas Committee to thank the Committee for its interest in this matter and to ask for a copy of the transcript of the meeting.

Members considered the draft public notice of the public consultation for the Committee Stage of the Insolvency (Amendment) Bill.

Agreed: that the public notice is published in The Newsletter, The Irish News and The Belfast Telegraph on Monday 20th October.

Members considered a response from the Utility Regulator addressing the Committee's recent queries with regards to (i) the possible cancellation of the two remaining Generator Unit Agreements (GUAs) in Northern Ireland and (ii) the allocation of network and other related costs between grid customer groups and across jurisdictions.

Agreed: to ask the Department for its views on the appropriateness of the current allocation of network changes.

Members noted a response from the Assembly EU Affairs Manager clarifying communication that has taken place between local councils and the Assembly on collaborative working.

6. Written Briefing from DETI: Update on the Northern Ireland Broadband Improvement Project

Megan Fearon left the meeting at 10:34

Members considered the briefing paper received from the Department.

Agreed: to ask the Department for details, in map format, of the location of the 4% of premises where basic broadband will not be accessible and the 15% of premises where superfast broadband will not be accessible at the end of 2015.

Agreed: to ask the Department for information on each phase including when it is expected each phase will commence and end, what areas each phase will

cover and further, to receive an update from the engineer in charge of each phase.

Agreed: to ask the Department for information on its previous scheme, where funding was given to companies other than BT, to include details of the level of funding given to each organisation and the success of the scheme.

Agreed: to schedule oral briefings with DETI and BT.

Danny Kinahan joined the meeting at 10:38am

Members agreed to return to Agenda Item 4

4. Oral briefing: DETI: Agri-Food Strategy Board

The representatives joined the meeting at 10:40am.

Gordon Dunne left the meeting at 10:45am

Megan Fearon re-joined the meeting at 11:08am

Sydney Anderson left the meeting at 11:30am

Members received an oral briefing from Mr Tony O'Neill, Chairperson of the Agri-Food Strategy Board, Mr Diarmuid McLean, Head of Economic Policy Division, DETI and Mr John Simms, Head of Access and Agri-Food Branch, DETI.

Key issues discussed included: the implementation of the Going for Growth strategy. The proposed Action Plan for Going for Growth and the monitoring arrangements that will be put in place to measure the achievement of targets.

Agreed: to ask the Department that the Action Plan has clear targets which are measurable; interim targets; and baselines against which to measure and that regular monitoring reports are provided which contain the progress against each target and the steps to be taken where objectives are not on target.

Agreed: to forward the content of the Hansard report for this briefing to the Committee for Agriculture & Rural Development.

The representatives left the meeting at 11.30am.

Danny Kinahan left the meeting at 11:30am

Members agreed to proceed to Agenda Item 7

7. Written Briefing from DETI: Response to Electricity Policy Review Part II Security of Supply.

Members considered the Department's response to the Electricity Policy Review Part II.

Agreed: to receive an oral briefing from the Department on Part I and II of the Committee's Review.

Agreed: to forward the response to Manufacturing NI for comment.

Gordon Dunne re-joined the meeting at 11:46am.

8. Written Briefing from Consumer Council: Business Engagement Brief

Members considered the Business Engagement Brief and welcomed the report.

Agreed: to add the briefing paper to the Committee pages of the Assembly website.

9. Consultation: Adjustments to the Sustainability and Reporting Provisions for Biomass under the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation

Members considered the consultation paper on Adjustments to the Sustainability and Reporting Provisions for Biomass under the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation.

Agreed: to receive a summary of responses following the consultation.

10. Correspondence

Members noted correspondence:

- i. From the Committee for Finance and Personnel regarding the Presbyterian Mutual Society (PMS).
- ii. From the Public Accounts Committee regarding the Presbyterian Mutual Society.
- iii. From an individual to the Public Accounts Committee that this Committee was copied into regarding the Presbyterian Mutual Society.

Agreed: to write to the individual outlining the actions this Committee, the FSA and the Treasury Select Committee have taken in the previous mandate regarding the PMS and to acknowledge the actions of the Public Accounts Committee.

- iv. From the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN), based in Invest NI, providing details for members to register to receive information.

Agreed: to forward the email to members so that those who wish to may register.

- v. From the Committee for Finance and Personnel regarding an agreed terms of reference for a 'Review of the operation of the Barnett Formula'.

Fearghal McKinney joined the meeting at 11:54am

11. Any other business

The Committee discussed the following under Any Other Business:

- i) Grade A Office Accommodation

Agreed: to ask the Department for an urgent update on the current position of Grade A office space and to receive an explanation from the Department as to the reasons for the delay in the Committee receiving this information.

- ii) Proposed amendments to the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation

Agreed: to commission research on ROCs and issues regarding the current practice of PV panels being installed on domestic roofs.

12. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on **21 October 2014** at **10.00am** in the **Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.**

The meeting closed at 12:00pm

Mr Patsy McGlone
Chairperson
Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

21 October 2014