



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

21 APRIL 2015

ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, 10.00AM

Present:

Mr Patsy McGlone (Chairperson)
Mr Phil Flanagan (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Steven Agnew
Mr Gordon Dunne
Ms Megan Fearon
Mr Paul Frew
Mr Paul Givan
Mr Fearghal McKinney
Mr Máirtín Ó Muilleoir

In Attendance:

Mr Jim McManus (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Angela McParland (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Christopher Jeffrey (Clerical Officer)
Mr Peadar Ó Lamhna (Bursary Student)

Apologies:

Mr William Humphrey
Mr Danny Kinahan

The meeting began at 10:12am

1. Apologies

Apologies were noted as above.

2. Draft Minutes of Meeting of 14 April 2015

Agreed: the Committee agreed the draft minutes of 14 April 2015 as amended.

3. Chairperson's Business

Members considered correspondence from the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Transport and Communications regarding an informal meeting in Parliament Buildings on Thursday 18 June 2015.

Agreed: members were content with the proposed date and the Committee Office is to contact members to confirm attendance.

Members considered correspondence from the Joint Oireachtas Committee on Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation regarding an informal meeting to be held in Leinster House on either Tuesday 16 June or Tuesday 23 June.

Agreed: the Clerk to contact the Clerk of the Oireachtas Committee to seek alternative dates as both dates offered are sitting days in the Assembly.

Members considered correspondence from the Minister regarding the launch of the strategy entitled 'Enabling Success: A Strategy to Tackle Economic Inactivity in Northern Ireland' which was launched by way of an oral statement in the Assembly on Monday 20 April 2015.

Members noted a request from The Consumer Council Northern Ireland for a meeting between its newly appointed Chairperson and the Committee Chairperson.

Agreed: the Committee is content that a meeting be arranged.

4. Oral Briefing from the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) Northern Ireland : Inquiry into Economic Growth and Job Creation in a Reduced Tax Environment

The representatives joined the meeting at 10:14am

Members received a briefing from Mr Roger Pollen, Head of External Affairs, Mr Wilfred Mitchell, Policy Chairman and Ms Carolyn Brown, Policy Manager, FSB Northern Ireland.

Key issues discussed included: the importance of small businesses to the Northern Ireland economy, corporation tax, access to finance, infrastructure, planning, procurement, rates, small business rates relief, business support, energy regulation policy development, jobs, EU funding, EU regulation, employment & law review/Enterprise & Regulatory Reform Bill, the establishment of a network of small business advice centres, cuts in skills and education budgets.

Steven Agnew joined the meeting at 10:24am

Megan Fearon joined the meeting at 10:41am

Megan Fearon left the meeting at 11:02am

Patsy McGlone left the meeting at 11:27am

Phil Flanagan took the Chair at 11:27am

Patsy McGlone resumed the Chair at 11:31am

The Representatives left the meeting at 11:45 am

Fearghal McKinney left the meeting at 11:45 am

5. Oral Briefing from DETI, InterTradeIreland and Invest NI: Inquiry into Economic Growth and job Creation in a Reduced Tax Environment

The representatives joined the meeting at 11:46am

Members received a briefing from Mr Alastair Hamilton, Chief Executive, Invest NI, Mr William McCulla, Director, Corporate Finance and Property Solutions, Invest NI, Mr Thomas Hunter McGowan, Chief Executive, InterTradeIreland and Mr Chris Stewart, Deputy Secretary, Policy Group, DETI.

Key issues discussed included: economic strategy, corporation tax, Grade A Office space, EU membership, European funding programme, businesses access to EU, I-SEM, cost of electricity, policy framework for renewable energy, opportunities in services sector, challenges in energy sector, health and life sciences sector, sub-regional targets, regional imbalance in jobs, InterTradeIreland Funding for Growth scheme, nonbank funding.

Steven Agnew left the meeting at 11:53am

Paul Givan joined the meeting at 11:56 am

Máirtín Ó Muilleoir joined the meeting at 12:01pm

Máirtín Ó Muilleoir left the meeting at 1:10pm

Phil Flanagan left the meeting at 12:44 pm

The representatives left the meeting at 1.20pm

As the meeting became inquorate to take decisions under Standing Order 49 (5) at 1:20pm, the Chairperson suspended the meeting under Standing Order 46 (6) until Tuesday 28 April 2015 with the remaining items of business to be discussed at that meeting.

Mr Patsy McGlone
Chairperson
Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

28 April 2015