



COMMITTEE FOR ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

24 NOVEMBER 2015

SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, 10:00am

Present:

Mr Patsy McGlone (Chairperson)
Mr Conor Murphy (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Steven Agnew
Mr Adrian Cochrane-Watson
Mr Gordon Dunne
Mr Paul Givan
Mr William Humphrey
Mr Fearghal McKinney
Lord Morrow
Mr Máirtín Ó Muilleoir

In Attendance:

Mr Jim McManus (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Angela McParland (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Michael Greer (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Marion Johnson (Clerical Officer)
Ms Briege Mullan (Clerical Officer)

Apologies:

None

The meeting began at 10:16am

1. Apologies

No apologies were recorded.

2. Draft Minutes of Meeting of 17th November 2015

Agreed: the Committee agreed the draft minutes of 17th November 2015.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Committee considered a draft letter from the Chairperson to the Speaker and a copy of a letter sent to the Minister from the law firm Carson McDowell.

Agreed: to forward the letter to the Speaker.

Agreed: to ask the Minister to copy his response to Carson McDowell to the Committee.

The Chairperson reminded members of the visit next week to Kingspan Environmental Headquarters, Portadown.

The Chairperson informed members that a joint informal meeting with the Minister for Employment and Learning has been arranged for 1st December 2015.

Agreed: members to inform the Committee Office of their availability to attend.

The Chairperson informed members of correspondence from Bell & Company regarding Cerberus and Capita. The Committee noted that some of the issues raised by Bell & Company may fall within the Terms of Reference of the Committee for Finance & Personnel's current inquiry.

Agreed: to receive and oral briefing from Bell & Company and invite members of the Committee for Finance & Personnel to attend.

The Chairperson informed members that papers for November Monitoring Round were included in tabled papers.

Agreed: to consider November monitoring under Any other Business.

4. Legislation: The Credit Unions and Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Bill – Draft Report

Members considered The Credit Unions and Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Bill draft report.

Agreed: the committee agreed to move onto formal agreement of the Report.

5. Legislation: The Credit Unions and Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Bill – Formal Agreement of the Report

The Committee formally scrutinised each paragraph of the report.

Question put and agreed: that the Executive Summary at paragraphs 1-14 stands part of the report.

Question put and agreed: that the Introduction at paragraphs 15-19 stands part of the report.

Question put and agreed: that the Summary of the draft Bill, as presented to the Committee at Committee Stage, at paragraphs 20-41 stands part of the report.

Question put and agreed: that the Summary of Consideration of the Bill at paragraphs 42-88 stands part of the Bill.

Question put and agreed: that the Summary of Consideration of Other Issues at paragraphs 89-96 stands part of the report.

Question put and agreed: that the Clause-by-Clause Scrutiny of the Bill at paragraphs 97-105 stands part of the report.

The Committee formally scrutinised each appendix of the report.

Question put and agreed: that the following papers should be appended to the Committee's report:

Minutes of proceedings
Minutes of evidence (Official Reports)
Written submissions and other papers
Memoranda and papers from DETI
Research papers
List of witnesses

Agreed: the Chairperson to approve an extract from today's minutes which reflects the read-through of the report which will be published alongside the report but replaced by the full minutes of the meeting when they become available.

Agreed: that the report in its entirety will be published on the Committee web pages, once it has been laid in the Business Office.

6. Oral Briefing from DETI and British Telecom (BT): Northern Ireland Broadband Improvement Project

The officials joined the meeting at 10:30am

Members received a briefing from Mr Mike Thompson, Head of Tourism, Telecoms and GSNI Policy Division, DETI, Mr Alan Preston, Principal, Telecoms Branch, DETI, Mr Frank McManus, Head of Wholesale Sales and Service, BT and Mr Allen Irwin, Head of Major Bids, Wholesale, BT.

Key areas discussed included the Northern Ireland Broadband Improvement Project; issues relating to broadband speeds; cost of access to BT infrastructure by mobile network operators; and issues relating to the location of BT cabinets due to planning policy.

The representatives from BT agreed to forward further information of when and why full planning permission is required for cabinets, why BT is not always able to re-arrange the network to accommodate people who have low broadband and the reasons for costs for access to BT infrastructure by mobile network operators.

Paul Givan joined the meeting at 10:46am

Conor Murphy left the meeting at 10:48am

Máirtín Ó Muilleoir joined the meeting at 10:50am

Stephen Agnew left the meeting at 10:56am

Adrian Cochrane-Watson joined the meeting at 10:57

Máirtín Ó Muilleoir left the meeting at 11:00am

Gordon Dunne left the meeting at 11:06am

Fearghal McKinney joined the meeting at 11:08am

The officials left the meeting at 11:26am

7. Oral Briefing from Ofcom Northern Ireland: Mobile Coverage

The representatives joined the meeting at 11:27am

Adrian Cochrane-Watson left the meeting at 11:28

Members received a briefing from Mr Jonathan Rose, Director, Ofcom Northern Ireland and Mr Huw Saunders, Director of Network Infrastructure, Ofcom Northern Ireland.

Key issues discussed included mobile voice and data coverage issues in Northern Ireland; cost of access to BT infrastructure by mobile network operators; and issues relating to the location of BT cabinets due to planning policy.

The representatives left the meeting at 12:00noon

8. Matters Arising

Members considered correspondence from Action Renewables regarding the proposed early closure of the Renewables Obligation to onshore wind projects.

Agreed: to invite Action Renewables to brief the Committee.

Members noted correspondence from Renewables NI regarding the proposed early closure of Renewables Obligation (NIRO) to onshore wind projects.

Agreed: to invite Renewables NI to brief the Committee alongside Wind NI and Simple Power.

Members discussed a copy of correspondence from the Department to the Committee for Employment and Learning regarding a research paper on labour market productivity in Northern Ireland and the National Living Wage project.

Agreed: to ask the Department to keep the Committee informed on the progress of the project.

Members noted correspondence from Invest NI on the work of the International Advisor.

9. Written Briefing from Consumer Council: Food Policy

Members considered a written briefing from the Consumer Council on Food Policy.

Agreed: to forward to the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development for information.

10. Written Briefing from Queen's University Belfast: To Remain or Leave – Northern Ireland and the EU Referendum

Members considered a report from Queen's University Belfast: To Remain or Leave – Northern Ireland and the EU Referendum.

Agreed: to forward the report to the Committee Specialist Advisor in advance of next week's briefing.

11. Correspondence

Members noted correspondence from the Committee for Employment and Learning regarding the Employment Support and Training Agency.

Members noted correspondence from the Department for Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) on their public consultation on Proposals for a Successor to DARD's Tackling Rural Poverty and Social Isolation Framework 2011-15.

12. Any Other Business

November Monitoring Round

Members considered a Departmental briefing paper on the November Monitoring Round.

Agreed: to receive an oral briefing from officials.

13. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on Tuesday 1st December 2015 at 10.00am in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12:04pm

Mr Patsy McGlone
Chairperson
Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

1st December 2015