

COMMITTEE FOR FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**WEDNESDAY, 28 MAY 2014
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr Daithí McKay (Chairperson)
Mr Dominic Bradley (Deputy Chairperson)
Ms Michaela Boyle MLA
Mr Leslie Cree MBE, MLA
Mr Paul Girvan MLA
Mr Adrian McQuillan MLA
Mr John McCallister MLA
Mr Ian McCrea MLA
Mr Peter Weir MLA

In Attendance: Mr Shane McAteer (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Phil Pateman (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Sean McCann (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr Joe Westland (Clerical Supervisor)
Miss Heather Graham (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Mitchel McLaughlin MLA
Mrs Judith Cochrane MLA

The meeting commenced at 10:07 in public session.

Agreed: that agenda items 4, 5 and 6 are covered by Hansard and the Official Report published on the Assembly's website.

1. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

2. Draft Minutes of Proceedings of 14 May 2014

Agreed: that the minutes are published on the Assembly website.

3. Matters Arising

Table of requests for information from the Department of Finance and Personnel (DFP)

The Committee noted the summary table of requests for information from DFP which provided an update on any matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

4. Main Estimates 2014-15 and Budget (No.2) Bill – Briefing from DFP

The Committee received a briefing from the Department on the Main Estimates 2014-15 and Budget (No.2) Bill from the following officials:

- Peter Jakobsen, Central Expenditure Division (CED), DFP;
- Jeff McGuinness, CED, DFP;
- Joanne McBurney, Head of Supply, CED, DFP; and
- Brigitte Worth, Finance Director, DFP.

The session was recorded by Hansard.

Agreed: that the Committee is satisfied that there has been appropriate consultation with it on the public expenditure proposals contained in the Budget (No. 2) Bill (NI) 2014 and is content to grant accelerated passage to the Bill in accordance with Standing Order 42(2).

Agreed: that a letter would be sent to the Speaker reflecting the above decision.

Agreed: to write to DFP on behalf of the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development seeking an urgent response providing more detail on the provision contained within the Budget (No.2) Bill relating to the Reservoirs Bill, which is currently being scrutinised by that Committee.

Agreed: to copy the DFP briefing paper on the Main Estimates 2014-15 and Budget (No. 2) Bill to the other statutory committees to inform their contributions to the forthcoming Supply Resolution debate.

Paul Girvan joined the meeting at 10:10

Adrian McQuillan joined the meeting at 10:10

John McCallister joined the meeting at 10:25

5. June Monitoring Round – Briefing from DFP

The Committee received a briefing from on DFP's June Monitoring Round return from the following departmental officials:

- Brigitte Worth, Finance Director, DFP; and
- Janis Marynowski, Head of Financial Management.

The session was recorded by Hansard.

Agreed: that the Department will provide further detail on its assessment of the anticipated risks and savings for each of the projects associated with its bid in the June monitoring round.

Agreed: that the Department will provide more detailed information on the basis for the calculation of the anticipated £2.4m surrender to contribute towards the costs of non-delivery of Welfare Reform.

Peter Weir left the meeting at 10:35

Peter Weir re-joined the meeting at 10:40

6. Renewable Energy in Public Sector Buildings - Briefing from DFP

The Committee received a briefing on Renewable Energy in Public Sector Buildings from the following DFP officials:

- Jim McCreesh, Head of Office Estates, DFP; and
- Susan Dorman, Building Standards, DFP.

The session was recorded by Hansard.

Agreed: to copy the DFP paper to the Enterprise, Trade and Investment Committee for information, giving the cross-cutting interest in the matter.

Agreed: to seek a follow up written explanation from DFP for the late receipt of the paper for this briefing session, including details of when the paper was submitted to the Minister for clearance.

Agreed: to commission comparative research into the approaches by government bodies in other jurisdictions to energy efficiency and renewable energy in public buildings.

Ian McCrea left the meeting at 10:55

Ian McCrea re-joined the meeting at 11:00

Dominic Bradley left the meeting at 11:08

Peter Weir left the meeting at 11:11

Peter Weir re-joined the meeting at 11:15

John McCallister left the meeting at 11:19

7. SR 2014/139 Land Registry (Fees) Order (Northern Ireland) 2014

The Committee noted that, while the Report of the Examiner of Statutory Rules was not yet available, he had indicated informally that he has no points to raise by way of technical scrutiny in relation to the Rule.

Agreed: that the Committee has considered SR2014/139 The Land Registry (Fees) Order (Northern Ireland) 2014 and recommends that it be affirmed by the Assembly.

Agreed: to write to DFP for an urgent response on the methodology used in determining the level of increases in the Land Registry fees.

8. Correspondence

Members noted the following correspondence:

- DFP: Letter to the Committee regarding equal pay settlement;
- DFP: Response to Civil Service Pensioners Alliance;
- Member of public: Northern Ireland Office and PSNI Equal Pay

Agreed: to forward the correspondence to DFP for its assessment of the issues raised, including whether these would be addressed within the Minister's recent recommendation to the Executive.

- Omagh Chamber of Commerce: Small Business Rates

Agreed: to schedule a briefing with the Omagh Chamber of Commerce on the Small Business Rate Relief Scheme.

- Member of public: Banking and Finance
- Payments Council: Current Account Switch Service

Agreed: to schedule a briefing from the Payments Council on this matter.

9. Committee Work Programme

Members considered a draft of the Committee work programme.

Agreed: that the Committee work programme will be updated to reflect decisions taken today and published on the Committee's website

10. Any Other Business

Members noted that the Assembly Commission's 2014 Survey of Services is now underway and that the closing date for survey responses is 6 June.

11. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Finance and Personnel Committee will be held on Wednesday 04 June 2014 at 10:00am, Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 11:24.

**Mr Dominic Bradley MLA
Deputy Chairperson
Committee for Finance and Personnel
04 June 2014**