

COMMITTEE FOR FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY, 10 JUNE 2015
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Mr Daithí McKay MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Dominic Bradley MLA
M Michaela Boyle MLA
Mrs Judith Cochrane MLA
Mr Leslie Cree MBE, MLA
Mr Paul Girvan MLA
Mr John McCallister MLA
Mr Ian McCrea MLA
Mr Adrian McQuillan MLA

In Attendance: Mr Shane McAteer (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Phil Pateman (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mrs Clairita Frazer (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Miss Heather Graham (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Máirtín Ó Muilleoir MLA
Mr Jim Wells MLA

The meeting commenced at 10:30am in public session.

Agreed: that agenda items 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 03 June 2015

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.

Correspondence from Cerberus Capital Management

Members considered a response from Cerberus Capital Management regarding the Committee's request for alternative dates on which representatives of Cerberus would be available to brief the Committee.

Dominic Bradley joined the meeting at 10:32am

Michaela Boyle joined the meeting at 10:32am

Agreed: that the Chairperson will write to express the Committee's concern and disappointment at Cerberus not making itself available to brief members before summer recess.

Review of the Operation of the Barnett Formula – draft motion

The Committee noted that a final draft of the Committee's report on the Review would be considered at next week's meeting. However, for procedural reasons, it would be necessary to agree a draft motion for plenary debate today in order that this could be scheduled before summer recess.

Members considered a draft motion for the debate.

Agreed: that the motion for a plenary debate on the Committee's report on its Review of the Operation of the Barnett Formula, as drafted, will be tabled in the Business Office and that the debate will proceed subject to the Committee agreeing its report on 17 June 2015.

4. Northern Ireland Public Sector Voluntary Exit Schemes – Assembly Research Briefing

The Committee noted an Assembly Research briefing paper on the Northern Ireland Public Sector Voluntary Exit Schemes.

5. Northern Ireland Public Sector Voluntary Exit Schemes – Briefing from the Public Sector Restructuring Steering Group

The Committee received a briefing on the Northern Ireland Public Sector Voluntary Exit Schemes from the following officials:

- Dr Malcolm McKibbin, Head of the Northern Ireland Civil Service, Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMDFM);

- Dr Colin Sullivan, Director, Strategic Policy and Reform Directorate, DFP; and
- Colin Lewis, Director of Corporate HR, DFP.

Agreed: that DFP will provide the figures for targeted headcount reductions and applications to date, broken down by grade, for the NICS scheme and each of the other public sector schemes, which will be shared with other Assembly committees as applicable.

Judith Cochrane joined the meeting at 10:59am

6. Legal Complaints and Regulation Bill – Briefing from DFP

The Committee received a briefing on the Legal Complaints and Regulation Bill from the following departmental officials:

- Oswyn Paulin, Head of Legal Services, DFP; and
- Michael Foster, Legal Advisor, DFP.

Adrian McQuillan left the meeting at 11:26am

Paul Girvan joined the meeting at 11:35am

Ian McCrea left the meeting at 11:39am

Michaela Boyle left the meeting at 11:41am

John McCallister left the meeting at 11:43am

In line with normal protocol for the consideration of draft Committee reports, the Committee moved to closed session at 11:45am

7. Review of the Operation of the Barnett Formula – Consideration of Draft Report – (Closed Session)

Members considered a further working draft of the Committee report on the Review of the Operation of the Barnett Formula.

Michaela Boyle rejoined the meeting at 11:47am

Judith Cochrane left the meeting at 11:55am

Ian McCrea rejoined the meeting at 12:00pm

Agreed: that members will provide any follow up comments on the draft report to the Committee staff by Noon on Friday 12 June 2015.

The Committee returned to open session at 12:01pm for the remainder of the meeting.

8. Subordinate Legislation

SL1 – The Funded Public Service Pension Schemes (Reduction of Cash Equivalents) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015

Agreed: that the Committee has considered DFP's proposal for subordinate legislation under SL1 The Funded Public Service Pension Schemes (Reduction of Cash Equivalents) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015 and has no objection to the policy implications of the proposed legislation at this stage.

9. Correspondence

Members noted the following items of correspondence:

- DFP – 2015-16 Main Estimates and accelerated passage of the Budget (No. 2) Bill (Northern Ireland) 2015;
Agreed: to invite the Minister to attend with officials at next week's session on the Main Estimates 2015-16 and Budget (No.2) Bill (Northern Ireland) 2015.
- DFP – Ministerial letter regarding the introduction of Primary Legislation;
- DFP – PCSP Scheme Amendment & NICS Compensation Scheme Amendment;
- DFP – Savings Delivery Plan up to 31 March 2015;
- DFP – Employer Contributions to Public Service Pension Schemes;
- DFP – Rating of online retailers;
- DFP – Purchase of Government Office Accommodation;
- Committee for Enterprise, Trade & Investment – NISRA briefing on Economic Data;
- Quarry Products NI – Lough Neagh Sand Extraction; and
- Queen's University Belfast – Economic Debate – Invitation.

10. Committee Work Programme

Members considered a draft of the Committee work programme.

Agreed: to schedule a briefing on the outcome of the feasibility study into the Northern Ireland Investment Fund.

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

11. Any other business

There was no other business.

12. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Finance and Personnel Committee will be held on Wednesday, 17 June 2015 at 10:00am, Room 30, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12:10pm.

Mr Daithí McKay MLA
Chairperson
Committee for Finance and Personnel
17 June 2015