

COMMITTEE FOR FINANCE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**WEDNESDAY, 08 JUNE 2016
ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mrs Emma Little Pengelly (Chairperson)
Ms Claire Hanna (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Jim Allister MLA
Mr Jonathan Bell MLA
Mr Paul Girvan MLA
Mr Gerry Mullan MLA
Mr John O'Dowd MLA
Ms Caitríona Ruane MLA
Mr Philip Smith MLA

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| In Attendance: | Mr Jim McManus | (Assembly Clerk) |
| | Ms Kate McCullough | (Assistant Assembly Clerk) |
| | Mr Phil Pateman | (Assistant Assembly Clerk) |
| | Mr Joe Westland | (Clerical Supervisor) |
| | Miss Heather Graham | (Clerical Officer) |

Apologies: Mr Ross Hussey MLA
Mr Jim Wells MLA

The meeting commenced at 2:08pm in public session.

1. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

2. Draft Minutes of Proceedings of 1 June 2016

Members considered the draft minutes of proceedings from 1 June 2016.

Agreed: The minutes were approved with a minor amendment.

3. Matters Arising

Members considered the protocol for dealing with correspondence.

Agreed: To amend the protocol for Members consideration.

Members considered the summary table of requests for information from the DoF which provided an update on any matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

Agreed: To provide members with a copy of the letter to the DoF regarding further papers concerning NAMA.

4. Department of Finance Overview, Priorities and Business Plan 2016/17 – Briefing from Minister of Finance and department officials

2:08pm: Minister and departmental official joined the meeting

Mr John O'Dowd as the former Minister of Education and Mr Johnathan Bell former Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment declared an interest in relation to this agenda item.

Members received evidence on the work of the Department and its Priorities and Business Plan for 2016/17 from:

- **Máirtín Ó Muilleoir, Minister of Finance**
- **David Sterling, Permanent Secretary, Department of Finance**

Issues considered included: fiscal matters, innovation and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Department for Finance.

This session was recorded by Hansard

Paul Girvan left the meeting at 3:35pm

3:35pm: Minister and departmental official left the meeting

5. Main Estimates and Budget (No.2) Bill – Briefing from Department of Finance

3:40pm: Departmental officials joined the meeting

Members received evidence on the Main Estimates and Budget (No.2) Bill from the following departmental officials:

- **Emer Morelli, Head of Supply, Public Spending Directorate, Department of Finance**
- **Peter Jakobsen, Supply Officer, Public Spending Directorate, Department of Finance**
- **Barry Armstrong, Public Spending Directorate**

Issues considered included: the Statement of Excesses, the need for accelerated passage for the Bill and underspend.

This session was recorded by Hansard

Paul Girvan rejoined the meeting at 3:37pm

Jonathan Bell left the meeting at 3:37pm

Claire Hanna left the meeting at 3:37pm

Jonathan Bell rejoined the meeting at 3:40pm

Claire Hanna rejoined the meeting at 3:45pm

4:02pm: Departmental officials left the meeting

Agreed: That the Committee for Finance is satisfied that there has been appropriate consultation with it on the public expenditure proposals contained in the Budget (No. 2) Bill (NI) 2016 and is content to grant accelerated passage to the Bill in accordance with Standing Order 42(2)

Agreed: To forward to the Speaker a letter advising of the Committee's decision to grant accelerated passage to the Budget (No. 2) Bill (NI) 2016

Agreed: To ask the Department for an outline of the Budget process.

6. Overview of Public Expenditure System – Briefing from Department of Finance

4.05pm: Departmental officials joined the meeting

Members received a briefing on the Public Expenditure System, from the following departmental officials:

- **Mike Brennan, Budget Director, Department of Finance**
- **Joanne McBurney, Head of Central Expenditure Division**

Issues considered including: borrowing and savings resulting from the Voluntary Exit Scheme, the timeframe for scrutiny of the Executive budget in September, the management of expectations for the Programme for Government, strategic delivery of services.

Caitriona Ruane left the meeting at 4:49pm

Agreed: Officials to provide an accurate figure for accruals.

4:57pm: Departmental officials left the meeting

7. Correspondence

The Committee considered the following correspondence:

- NIABT Invitation to the NIATB briefings entitled ‘Insight into New Assembly Committees’

Agreed: To inform the committee office if members are attending the briefings

- NIIRTA Request to meet re Small Business Rate Relief Scheme

Agreed: To ask the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson to meet NIIRTA informally.

The Committee noted the following correspondence:

- NILGA Introduction to NILGA

8. Committee Work Programme

The Committee noted the work programme which will be published on the Committee’s website.

Agreed: To develop a matrix of papers received during the previous mandate on NAMA.

Agreed: To seek legal advice on addressing the NAMA issue.

Agreed: To ask for evidence from the National Crime Agency on the progress to date.

9. Any Other Business

Agreed: To include Memorandum of Understanding on the budget process as a substantive item at the next meeting.

10. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Finance and Personnel Committee will be held on Wednesday, 15 June 2016 at 2:00pm, Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 5:05pm.

Mrs Emma Little Pengelly MLA
Chairperson
Committee for Finance
15 June 2016