

COMMITTEE FOR FINANCE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY, 15 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 Ross Hussey MLA
Mr Gerry Mullan MLA
Mr John O'Dowd MLA
Ms Caitríona Ruane MLA
Mr Philip Smith MLA

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)
	Mr Damien Martin	(Clerk Assistant)

Apologies: Mr Jim Wells MLA

The meeting commenced at 2:03pm in public session.

1. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

2. Draft Minutes of Proceedings of 8 June 2016

Members considered the draft minutes of proceedings from 8 June 2016.

Agreed: that the minutes will be published on the Assembly website.

Agreed: To determine why it takes a number of days to upload Committee proceedings to the website.

3. Matters Arising

Protocol for dealing with correspondence

Agreed: The protocol will be updated and circulated to members.

Letter to Department of Finance regarding the release of further papers concerning NAMA

Members noted the letter to the Department of Finance regarding the release of further papers concerning NAMA.

Review of the Sale of the National Asset Management Agency (NAMA) property loan portfolio in Northern Ireland

Members considered a secretariat paper detailing correspondence received by the predecessor Committee in relation to the sale of the NAMA loan portfolio in NI.

Agreed: To write to the authors including the Department to receive confidential documents considered by the previous Committee and to retrieve documents from the previous mandate re NAMA.

Table of requests for information from the Department of Finance

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

4. June Monitoring Round: Departmental Position – Oral evidence from the Department of Finance.

Departmental officials joined the meeting at 2.20pm

Mr Jim Allister proposed the following:

‘That this Committee should not take evidence from the officials on the Departmental June Monitoring Round and to move to agenda item 5.’

The question was put on Mr Allister's proposal.

The Committee divided:

Ayes	Noes	Abstained
Jim Allister	Emma Little Pengelly	Claire Hanna
Ross Hussey	Jonathan Bell	Philip Smith
	Paul Girvan	
	Gerry Mullan	
	John O'Dowd	
	Caitríona Ruane	

The proposal fell.

Jim Allister left the meeting at 2.25pm

Members received evidence on the Department's position on the June Monitoring Round from the following officials:

- Brigitte Worth, Finance Director, Corporate Services Group, Department of Finance
- Paula Magee, Enterprise Shared Services, Department of Finance
- Kathryn Hill, Head of Business Planning & Corporate Governance, Department of Finance
- Alfie Wong, Corporate Services Group, Department of Finance

Issues discussed included cross-cutting programmes, the transformation project and release of assets.

Ross Hussey left the meeting at 2.55pm

Agreed: To write to the Department seeking a written briefing on digital transformation specifically the 'Tell us Once' initiative.

Agreed: To ascertain from the Department what, if any, consideration has been given to utilising sites gifted to the Executive as opposed to purchasing properties that are leased by the public sector and to receive an analysis of sites owned and assessment of need for these.

Agreed: To receive an update from the Department of savings and detail of assets released for the 2015/16 year, the number of staff that have been relocated to date and the number of staff within the directorate working on this project.

This session was recorded by Hansard.

Departmental officials joined the meeting at 3.04pm

Jim Allister joined the meeting at 3.04pm

Claire Hanna left the meeting at 3.05pm

5. Overview of the work of the Strategic Policy Division – Oral evidence from Department of Finance.

Members received evidence on the work of the Strategic Policy Division from the following officials:

- Tony Simpson, Director of Strategic, Department of Finance
- Victor Dukelow, Deputy Director of Strategic Policy, Department of Finance
- Alan Ramsey, Strategic Policy Division, Department of Finance

Issues discussed included corporation tax, the HMRC consultation and fiscal powers.

Departmental officials left the meeting at 3.57pm

Agreed: To schedule into the forward work programme an evidence session with HMRC in relation to its draft guide for staff on the NI corporation tax regime.

Agreed: to write to the Minister to establish if, in seeking to negotiate the second round effects in relation to Corporation Tax, this is within the scope of the Fresh Start Agreement.

6. Memorandum of Understanding on the Budget Process.

Members considered the ongoing development of the memorandum of understanding on the budget process between the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Department for Finance.

Agreed: To ask the Department for details of the Minister's intentions in respect of the Draft MoU.

Caitríona Ruane left the meeting at 4.01pm

Caitríona Ruane joined the meeting at 4.10pm

7. Correspondence

The Committee considered the following correspondence:

- Construction Employers Federation - Request to meet and brief the Committee

Agreed: To write to the CEF and inform them that the Committee will engage with them when considering relevant business.

- Committee for the Executive Office – Report on Public Bodies and Public Appointments for 2014-15

8. Committee Work Programme

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

Agreed: To bring forward from the 29 June to the 22 June 2016 the evidence session on the outcome of the June Monitoring Round by the Department of Finance.

Agreed: To schedule briefings and research into a number of key areas for the autumn work programme.

9. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

10. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Finance and Personnel Committee will be held on Wednesday, 22 June 2016 at 2:00pm, Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 4:20pm.

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