

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY, 5 FEBRUARY 2014
ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Ms Michaela Boyle (Chairperson)
Mr Trevor Clarke
Mr Alex Easton
Mr Paul Girvan
Mr Ross Hussey
Mr Daithí McKay
Mr Adrian McQuillan
Mr Seán Rogers

In Attendance: Ms Lucia Wilson (Assembly Clerk)
Mr Trevor Allen (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mrs Danielle Saunders (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Darren Weir (Clerical Officer)
Miss Clare Rice (Bursary Student)

Apologies: Mr John Dallat (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Michael Copeland
Mr Chris Hazzard

2.07pm The meeting opened in public session

1. Inquiry into the PSNI: Use of Agency Staff – Consideration of Draft Report

2.09pm Mr Girvan joined the meeting

2.09pm Mr Hussey declared an interest in this item of business as Chairperson of Policing Board's Audit & Risk Management Board.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to defer final consideration of the draft report to the meeting of 12 February 2014.

2. Apologies

Apologies are listed above.

3. Minutes of the meeting on 29 January 2014

Agreed: The minutes of the last meeting were agreed.

4. Matters Arising

2.12pm Mr Clarke joined the meeting

Request for information pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 2000

Agreed: The Committee noted a request for information pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and agreed to consider a draft response to the request at the meeting of 12 February 2014.

2.18pm The meeting moved to closed session

5. Inquiry into the Agri-Foods and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) – Northern Ireland Assembly Research paper

The Committee received a briefing from Assembly Research and Information Services (RaISe) on intellectual property rights.

2.23pm Mr Easton left the meeting

2.29pm Mr Easton re-joined the meeting

6. Inquiry into the Agri-Foods and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) – Correspondence

The Committee noted requested correspondence from Mr Noel Lavery, Accounting Officer, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, and also noted that additional information will be provided for consideration by the Committee at its meeting on 19 February 2014.

7. Inquiry into the Agri-Foods and Biosciences Institute (AFBI) – Consideration of Draft Report

The Committee considered the draft report on the inquiry into the Agri-Foods and Biosciences Institute (AFBI)

Introduction

Paragraphs 1 to 7 read and agreed

AFBI Financial Management

Paragraphs 8 and 9 read and agreed

Paragraphs 10 and 11 read, amended and agreed

2.37pm Mr Clarke left the meeting

2.50pm Mr Hussey left the meeting

3.02pm Mr McQuillan left the meeting; the meeting became inquorate

3.04pm The meeting suspended

3.15pm The meeting resumed in closed session with the following Members present:

Ms Michaela Boyle (Chairperson)
Mr Alex Easton
Mr Paul Girvan
Mr Daithí McKay
Mr Seán Rogers

Paragraphs 12 to 16 read, amended and agreed

Recommendation 1 read and agreed

Recommendation 2 read, amended and agreed

Efficiency and Effectiveness of Scientific Testing

Paragraphs 17 and 18 read, amended and agreed

Recommendation 3 read, amended and agreed

Paragraph 19 consideration deferred to the meeting of 19 February 2014

Management of the DARD funded R&D Programme

Paragraph 20 read, amended and agreed

Paragraphs 21 and 22 read and agreed

Paragraphs 23 to 25 read, amended and agreed

Recommendation 4 read, amended and agreed

Paragraph 26 read and agreed

Paragraphs 27 and 28 read, amended and agreed

Paragraph 29 read and agreed

Corporate governance within AFBI and oversight of the Institute by DARD

Paragraphs 30 to 32 read and agreed

Paragraph 33 read and agreed

Recommendation 5 read and agreed

Paragraph 34 read and agreed

Recommendation 6 read and agreed

Consideration of the Executive Summary

Executive Summary read agreed, subject to amendment to reflect agreed changes to the main report.

Consideration of Summary of Recommendations

Summary of recommendations read, amended and agreed.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to defer final consideration of the report to the meeting of 19 February 2014.

8. Any other business

Members noted an invitation to an informal lunch meeting with students of the University of Ulster on 17 February 2014 and agreed to contact the Committee Clerk to indicate attendance.

9. Date, time and place of next meeting

Members noted that the next meeting of the Committee will take place on Wednesday 12 February 2014 at 2.00pm in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

4.25pm the meeting adjourned

Mr Seán Rogers
Acting Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee