

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY, 26 MARCH 2014
ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Ms Michaela Boyle (Chairperson)
Mr John Dallat (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Trevor Clarke
Mr Michael Copeland
Mr Alex Easton
Mr Paul Girvan
Mr Chris Hazzard
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 Ross Hussey

2.06pm The meeting opened in public session

1. Apologies

Apologies are listed above.

2. Minutes of the meeting on 19 March 2014

Agreed: The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

3. Matters Arising

Request for information pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 2000

Agreed: The Committee considered and agreed the response to a request for information pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Internal review of a request for information pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Committee noted a request for an internal review of the information provided following a previous request for information pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 2000. An update on the outcome of the review will be provided to the Committee at a later date.

Request for information from the Department for Regional Development pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 2000

The Committee noted a request to the Department for Regional Development for information pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

2.09pm the meeting moved to closed session

Meeting with Mr Sid McDowell, Vice-Chairman of the Lyric Theatre Board

Agreed: The Committee noted correspondence and papers to date in advance of the attendance of Mr Sid McDowell at the Committee meeting on 2 April 2014 and agreed to write to Mr McDowell in the terms discussed.

*2.11pm Mr Clarke joined the meeting
2.15pm Mr Rogers left
2.16pm Mr Hazzard joined the meeting
2.20pm Mr Rogers re-joined the meeting
2.21pm Mr Girvan left the meeting
2.25pm Mr Copeland left the meeting
2.26pm Mr Clarke left the meeting
2.31pm Mr Clarke re-joined the meeting
2.32pm Mr Copeland re-joined the meeting
2.38pm Mr Girvan re-joined the meeting
2.39pm Mr Clarke left the meeting
2.40pm Mr Clarke re-joined the meeting*

4. Inquiry into NI Water's Response to a Suspected Fraud and Inquiry into DRD: Review of a Whistleblower Complaint – Consideration of Draft Report

The Committee noted correspondence from the whistleblower concerned with the inquiry into DRD: Review of a Whistleblower Complaint.

2.49pm the meeting suspended

2.54pm the meeting resumed in closed session with the following members present

*Ms Boyle
Mr Dallat
Mr Clarke
Mr Copeland
Mr Easton
Mr Girvan
Mr Hazzard
Mr McQuillan
Mr Rogers*

The Committee considered the draft report on the above inquiries.

Forward Section

Paragraphs 1 to 3 read and agreed

2.55pm Mr McQuillan left the meeting

2.56pm Mr McQuillan left the meeting

Paragraphs 4 to 6 read and agreed

Paragraph 7 deleted

Paragraphs 8 read and agreed

Paragraphs 9 and 10 read, amended and agreed

Paragraph 11 read and agreed

3.05pm Mr Copeland left the meeting

Paragraph 12 read and agreed; moved to replace deleted paragraph 7

3.06pm Mr Easton left the meeting

Paragraph 13 read, amended and agreed

NI Water's response to a suspected fraud – body of report

Paragraphs 1 to 5 read and agreed

Paragraphs 6 and 7 read and agreed

3.11pm Mr Hazzard left the meeting

Paragraphs 8 to 14 read and agreed

Paragraph 15 deferred to the meeting of 2 April 2014

Paragraph 16 read and agreed

3.15pm Mr Copeland re-joined the meeting

3.18pm Mr Clarke left the meeting

3.20pm Mr Clarke re-joined the meeting

Paragraph 17 read and agreed

Paragraphs 18 and 19 read and agreed

Paragraph 20 deferred to the meeting of 2 April 2014

3.27pm Mr Copeland left the meeting

3.27pm Mr McQuillan re-joined the meeting

Paragraphs 21 to 22 read and agreed

Recommendation 1 read and agreed

Paragraphs 23 to 28 read and agreed

Paragraph 29 deferred to the meeting of 2 April 2014

Paragraphs 30 to 32 read and agreed

Recommendation 2 read and agreed

Paragraph 33 read and agreed

Paragraph 34 read, amended and agreed

Recommendation 3 read and agreed

Paragraph 35 read and agreed

3.35pm Mr Easton re-joined the meeting

3.35pm Mr Clarke left the meeting

3.36pm Mr McKay joined the meeting

Paragraph 36 read, amended and agreed
Paragraph 37 read and agreed
Paragraphs 38 to 41 read and agreed

3.42pm Mr Girvan left the meeting

Paragraph 42 read, amended and agreed
Recommendations 4 and 5 read and agreed
Paragraph 43 read and agreed
Paragraph 44 read, amended and agreed
Recommendation 6 read, amended and agreed

NI Water's response to a suspected fraud – Executive Summary

Paragraphs 1 to 3 read and agreed
Paragraph 4 deferred to the meeting of 2 April 2014
Paragraphs 5 to 15 read and agreed
Paragraph 16 read, amended and agreed

NI Water's response to a suspected fraud – Summary of Recommendations

Recommendations 1 to 5 read and agreed
Recommendation 6 read, amended and agreed

DRD: Review of a Whistleblower Complaint – body of report

Paragraphs 1 and 2 read and agreed
Paragraph 3 read, amended and agreed
Paragraphs 4 and 5 read and agreed
Paragraphs 6 to 9 read and agreed
Recommendation 1 read and agreed
Paragraphs 10 to 13 read and agreed
Recommendation 2 read and agreed
Paragraphs 14 to 25 read and agreed
Recommendation 3 read and agreed
Paragraphs 26 to 31 read and agreed

4.01pm Mr Girvan re-joined the meeting

Paragraphs 32 to 37 read and agreed
Recommendation 4 read and agreed
Annex A read and agreed

DRD: Review of a Whistleblower Complaint – Executive Summary

Paragraphs 1 to 8 read and agreed

4.08pm Mr McKay left the meeting

Paragraphs 9 to 18 read and agreed

DRD: Review of a Whistleblower Complaint – Summary of Recommendations

Recommendations 1 to 4 read and agreed

Agreed: The Committee agreed to defer final consideration of the draft report on the above inquiries until the meeting of 2 April 2014.

5. Any other business

Members noted that, on account of the pending elections, no meeting has been scheduled for 21 May 2014.

6. Date, time and place of next meeting

Members noted that the next meeting of the Committee will take place on Wednesday 2 April 2014 at 1.00pm in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

4.13pm the meeting adjourned

Ms Michaela Boyle
Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee