

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY, 11 NOVEMBER 2015 SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Ms Michaela Boyle (Chairperson)
Mr John Dallat (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Roy Beggs
Mr Trevor Clarke
Mr Phil Flanagan
Ms Claire Hanna
Mr Edwin Poots
Mr Jim Wells

In Attendance: Ms Lucia Wilson (Assembly Clerk)
Mrs Karen Barry (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mrs Danielle Saunders (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Darren Weir (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Mr Conor Murphy

2.06pm *The meeting began in closed session with four Members present. The Committee did not have decision making quorum. In the absence of a decision-making quorum proceedings continued in line with Standing Order 49(5).*

1. Preparation Session on the NIAO report on DE: Sustainability of Schools – Discussions with NIAO Officials

2.16pm *Mr Clarke joined the meeting. The Committee gained decision making quorum*

Agreed: The Committee agreed to note the updated information provided by NIAO in relation to the cost of pupils in large and small primary schools.

2.17pm *The meeting moved into open session.*

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Mr Murphy.

3. Minutes of the meeting of 4 November 2015

Agreed: The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

4. Matters Arising

Inquiry into the NI Events Company

Agreed: The Committee agreed that they were content for the C&AG to produce the first draft of the Committee report into the NI Events Company for consideration

5. Correspondence

There was no new correspondence.

6. Evidence Session on DE: Sustainability of Schools

The Committee took oral evidence on the above inquiry from:

- Mr Paul Sweeney, Accounting Officer, DE
- Ms Jacqui Durkin, Director of Area Planning, DE
- Mrs Lorraine Finlay, Head of Area Planning, DE
- Mr Gregory Butler, Regional Managing Director for Southern East and Southern Region, Education Authority
- Mr Kieran Donnelly, Comptroller and Auditor General, NIAO
- Ms Alison Caldwell, Treasury Officer of Accounts, DFP

The witnesses answered a number of questions put by the Committee and agreed to provide additional information in writing.

2.22pm *Mr Flanagan joined the meeting*

2.33pm *Mr Beggs joined the meeting*

2.51pm *Mr Flanagan left the meeting*

2.54pm *Mr Flanagan re-joined the meeting*

3.01pm *Mr Wells left the meeting*

3.02pm *Mr Wells re-joined meeting*

3.12pm *Ms Hanna left the meeting*

3.31pm *Ms Hanna re-joined the meeting*

3.44pm *Mr Dallat left the meeting*

3.45pm *Mr Poots joined the meeting*

3.47pm *Mr Dallat re-joined the meeting*

4.15pm Ms Hanna left the meeting
4.46pm Mr Dallat left the meeting
4.56pm Mr Flanagan left the meeting

4.57pm Mr Flanagan re-joined the meeting
5.04pm Mr Dallat re-joined the meeting

5.27pm Mr Poots left the meeting
5.28pm Mr Poots re-joined the meeting

5.32pm The meeting moved into closed session.

The Committee discussed the evidence session with members of NIAO staff.

Mr Dallat, declared an interest as a member of the Board of Governors of St. Paul's College, Kilrea.

Mr Beggs, declared an interest as a member of the Board of Governors of Glynn Primary School.

Mr Clarke, declared an interest as a member of the Board of Governors of Creavery Primary School, Groggan Primary School and Randalstown Primary School.

Mr Poots, declared an interest as a member of the Board of Governors of Carr Primary School, Riverdale Primary School and Meadowbridge Primary School.

5.45pm Mr Beggs left the meeting

8. Any Other Business

Inquiry into the NI Events Company

Agreed: The Committee was content that the letter drafted to the Chief Constable in relation to the inquiry into the NI Events Company is issued.

Inquiry into NIHE: Land Disposals

Agreed: Members agreed potential witnesses to invite to the forthcoming evidence session on NIHE: Land Disposals in January 2016.

9. Date, time and place of next meeting

Members were informed that the next meeting of the Committee would be at 2.00pm on Wednesday 18 November in Room 29, Parliament Buildings.

5.57pm The meeting adjourned.

Ms Michaela Boyle (Chairperson)
Chairperson, Public Accounts Committee