

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

WEDNESDAY, 1 JUNE 2016, THE SENATE CHAMBER, PARLIAMENT
BUILDINGS

Present: Mr Robin Swann MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Daniel McCrossan MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Robbie Butler MLA
Mr Gordon Dunne MLA
Mr Alex Easton MLA
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA
Mrs Michelle Gildernew MLA
Ms Carla Lockhart MLA
Mr Trevor Lunn MLA
Mr Oliver McMullan MLA

Apologies: Mr Declan Kearney MLA

In Attendance: Ms Lucia Wilson, Assembly Clerk
Ms Elaine Farrell, Assistant Assembly Clerk
Ms Karen Barry, Clerical Supervisor
Mr Darren Weir, Clerical Officer

2.01 pm The meeting began in closed session

1. Committee Protocols

The clerk briefed Members on Committee protocols and procedures.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the approach it would take to its first inquiry.

2.22 p.m. Mr Easton left the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee noted the paper on Outcomes of an Effective Committee; and agreed to discuss this further at the Strategic Planning meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the protocol on conduct and courtesy at committee meetings.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to hold its Strategic Planning Session before the start of summer recess.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the arrangements for the operation of the Committee Twitter account.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the protocol on press releases.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the approach for protective markings with a 6 month review to be considered.

2.34 p.m. The meeting moved into open session.

2. Apologies

The apologies are noted above.

3. Declaration of Interests

No Declaration of Interests was declared.

4. Committee Membership

Noted: The Committee noted the Committee Membership details.

5. Staff Contact Details

Noted: The Committee noted the staff contacts details.

6. Introduction/Procedures

Noted: The Committee noted the papers on the Guide to the Powers and Operations of Standing Committees for Chairpersons and Members.

Noted: The Committee noted the papers on the Role and Functions of the Committee Office.

Noted: The Committee noted the paper on the Role of the Public Accounts Committee.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to move to agenda item 8 next.

7. Northern Ireland Audit Office First Day Brief

The following officials joined the meeting at 2.37 p.m.

Mr Kieran Donnelly, Comptroller and Auditor General
Mr Eddie Bradley, Assistant Auditor General
Ms Kerry Harkin, Assembly Liaison Officer

2.41 p.m. Mr Easton rejoined the meeting.

3.04 p.m. Mrs Gildernew left the meeting.

The officials briefed the Committee and this was followed by a question and answer session.

8. Treasury Officer of Accounts First Day Brief

The following officials joined the meeting at 3.09 p.m.

Ms Alison Caldwell, Treasury Officer of Accounts
Ms Julie Sewell, Public Audit and Accountability Branch

The officials briefed the Committee and this was followed by a question and answer session.

3.16 p.m. Mr Dunne left the meeting.

9. Legacy Report

Agreed: The Committee noted the Committee Legacy Report and agreed to give further consideration to issues raised within the report at a forthcoming Strategic Planning meeting.

3.23 p.m. The meeting moved into Closed Session

3.23 p.m. Mr Dunne rejoined the meeting.

3.24 p.m. Mr Butler left the meeting.

3.27 p.m. Mr Butler rejoined the meeting.

10. Draft Forward Work Programme

Agreed: The Committee noted the Northern Ireland Audit Office Report list and agreed that Managing Legal Aid would be its first Inquiry.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to write to the Accounting Officer in the Department of Justice to request that he attends the meeting on 8 June to give evidence to the Committee.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to request a briefing from the Northern Ireland Audit Office on 8 June 2016, on future potential inquiries.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft Forward Work Programme.

11. Any Other Business

There was no further business to discuss.

12. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting of the Public Accounts Committee will take place on Wednesday 8 June 2016 at 2.00 p.m. in the Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings.

3.31 pm The meeting adjourned.

Mr Robin Swann (Chairperson)
Public Accounts Committee