



**Northern Ireland  
Assembly**

**COMMITTEE FOR ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT**

**MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**THURSDAY, 15 DECEMBER 2011  
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

- Present: Mr Alban Maginness (Chairperson)  
Mr Daithí McKay (Deputy Chairperson)  
Mr Steven Agnew  
Mr Gordon Dunne  
Mr Phil Flanagan  
Mr Paul Frew  
Mr Mike Nesbitt  
Mr Robin Newton
- In Attendance: Mr Jim McManus (Assembly Clerk)  
Ms Sohui Yim (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr David McKee (Clerical Supervisor)  
Ms Michelle McDowell (Clerical Officer)
- Apologies: Dr Alasdair McDonnell  
Mr Stephen Moutray

*The meeting began at 10.41am in public session.*

**1. Apologies**

Apologies are detailed above.

**2. Minutes of meeting held on 8 December 2011**

*Agreed:* The draft minutes of the meeting on 8 December were agreed.

**3. Chairperson's Business**

Members offered their condolences to the Minister on the death of her father.

*Agreed:* to write to the Minister expressing their condolences.

Members noted a report from the FSA on the regulation of credit unions in Northern Ireland and a letter from the FSA to the Chair relating to the report.

*Agreed:* for the Chair and the Deputy Chair to meet with the Irish League of Credit Unions and the Ulster Federation of Credit Unions to discuss any outstanding issues.

Members discussed a response from the Department in relation to extending the group membership provision to Northern Ireland.

*Agreed:* to write to the Minister to request that this legislation be given a high priority in the Department's legislative programme.

Members noted an invitation to the Chair from the Northern Ireland Renewables Industry Group to give the keynote address at its conference on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> January.

#### **4. Matters Arising**

Members noted a letter from Ian Paisley MP regarding the Committee's visit to Ballymena Council last week.

Members discussed the concerns raised by Ballymena Borough Council in relation to a project by GT Energy to develop geo-thermal energy in the area.

*Agreed:* to write to GT Energy to request more information on their concerns and to receive clarification from the Department on the issues raised in the Council's letter.

#### **5. Draft Economic Strategy**

*DETI Officials joined the meeting at 10.52am.*

Members received an oral briefing from David Thomson, Deputy Secretary, Phil Rodgers, Principal, Strategic Policy Unit and Alistair Pyper, Deputy Principal, Strategic Policy Unit, DETI. Key issues discussed included

*Gordon Dunne joined the meeting at 11.11am.*

*Agreed:* for the Department to provide information on the potential role of credit unions in the economic strategy.

*Agreed:* to write to Professor Barnett to request his view on how successfully the Independent Review of Economic Policy has been implemented.

*DETI Officials left the meeting at 11.24am.*

#### **6. January Monitoring Round**

Members discussed the written briefing.

*Agreed:* to raise the issue of late papers from the Department at the next meeting of the Chairperson's Liaison Group and to question officials on the issue of January Monitoring on 12 January 2012.

*Phil Flanagan left the meeting at 11.25am.*

## 7. Better Regulation Strategy – Annual Report

Members noted the written briefing.

## 8. HESNI Proposals for Health and Safety (Fees) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012

Members noted the written briefing.

## 9. Correspondence

Members noted the following items of correspondence:

- i. Correspondence from DETI regarding Sickness Absence rates in the NICS.

*Agreed:* To return to the issue of sickness absence rates in the New Year.

- ii. Correspondence from the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development regarding the Reservoirs Bill.

- iii. A letter to the Chair from the Minister regarding Insolvency Rules for Building Societies and correspondence from the Committee for Justice on a Joint SL1 on insolvency rules for building societies.

*Agreed:* To forward the Minister's letter to the Committee for Justice and the Committee for Finance & Personnel for information and to welcome the legislation as it is designed to act in the interests of depositors and to achieve the best results for creditors.

- iv. A response from DETI to the Environment Committee on Renewable District Heating Schemes and Renewable Fuel Targets.

- v. A letter to the Clerk from Craigavon Industrial Development Organisation (CIDO) inviting the Committee to visit their Innovation Centre in Portadown.

*Agreed:* To schedule this visit for next year.

- vi. A response from the Department in relation to the following issues raised by the Committee on energy matters:

- a) Proposed changes to the NIRO in 2012
- b) Gas Network Extension
- c) Update on progress of the recommendations in the Renewable Energy Inquiry
- d) Electricity Market Reform seminar
- e) Anaerobic Digestion
- f) Draft Onshore Renewable Electricity Action Plan

**10. Any other business**

Members noted the InterTradeIreland report on cross-border co-operation in the agri-food sector.

*Agreed:* To return to this item of business in the New Year.

**11. Date, time and place of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on **Thursday 12 January at 10.30am, Room 30, Parliament Buildings.**

*The Chair adjourned the meeting at 11.33am.*

**Mr Alban Maginness**  
**Chair**  
**Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment**

**12 January 2012**