



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**THURSDAY, 26 JANUARY 2012
ROOM 30, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

- Present:** Mr Alban Maginness (Chairperson)
Mr Phil Flanagan
Mr Paul Frew
Ms Jennifer McCann
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:** Mr Daithí McKay (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Steven Agnew
Mr Gordon Dunne
Dr Alasdair McDonnell
Mr Stephen Moutray

The meeting began at 10.43am in public session.

1. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

2. Minutes of meeting held on 19 January 2012

Agreed: The draft minutes of the meeting on 19 January were agreed.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Chair welcomed Jennifer McCann MLA to the Committee and thanked Sue Ramsey MLA for her contributions to the Committee.

Members noted correspondence from Action Renewables inviting the Chair to an awards luncheon on 20 March 2012 in the Titanic Building.

Paul Frew left the meeting at 10.45am.

Members considered a draft response to the Committee for OFMDFM regarding the draft Programme for Government.

Agreed: Content with the response and to forward the response to the Committee for OFMDFM.

4. Matters Arising

Members noted a response from the Department on the Renewable Heat Incentive.

Members noted a letter from GT Energy regarding key issues that the organisation believes must be addressed in the NI Renewable Heat Incentive for future development of geothermal projects in NI.

Agreed: To forward GT Energy's letter to the Department for its views and comments on the organisation's suggestions.

Members noted a press article on the price of electricity, raised at last week's meeting.

Members noted a draft response to the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development on the DARD draft business plan.

Agreed: Content with the response and to forward the response to the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development.

5. Campaigning for Tourism – NITB: Oral briefing

NITB Officials joined the meeting at 10.49am.

Members received an oral briefing from Alan Clarke, Chief Executive and Kathryn Thomson, Chief Operating Officer, NITB. Key issues discussed included the "Campaigning for Tourism" initiative and plans for NI tourism in 2012.

Paul Frew returned to the meeting at 10.50am.

Robin Newton left the meeting at 10.56am.

Agreed: To receive the targets for number of tourists and tourism spend in 2012 when they become available.

NITB Officials left the meeting at 11.51am.

6. Electricity Market Reform: Written briefing

Members discussed the written briefing.

Agreed: To receive an oral briefing from the Utility Regulator on the proposals.

Agreed: To forward the papers from the Department to the economist John Simpson and to invite him to provide an oral briefing regarding his views on the issue.

Agreed: Committee Office to circulate a report to members by the Department of Communications, Energy and Natural Resources in the Republic of Ireland on the North/South Interconnector.

7. Forward Work Programme

Members discussed the Forward Work Programme.

Agreed: To defer the briefing on the Renewable Heat Incentive and gas network extension project to the 22 March, as requested by the Department.

Members noted correspondence from the Department regarding scheduling of oral briefings for the Research & Development Inquiry.

Agreed: To accept the Department's proposals in relation to the sequence of sessions for DETI, Invest NI and InterTradeIreland.

8. Correspondence

Members noted the following items of correspondence:

- i. Correspondence from the Committee for Education on the Draft Programme for Government.
- ii. Correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel on Savings Delivery Plans.
- iii. Correspondence from Powerstar on Voltage Optimisation.
- iv. Invitation from the NI Assembly Business Trust to a briefing on social media on 14 February 2012

9. Any other business

Members discussed correspondence to Invest NI from a member of the public.

Agreed: To forward the correspondence to the Department for confirmation that Invest NI follows the appropriate procedures in the recruitment process.

The Chair updated members on his meeting with representatives from the Irish League of Credit Unions and the Ulster Federation of Credit Unions. Members noted the Clerk's briefing paper with a summary of the meetings, a letter from Dundonald Credit Union Limited and this Committee's response to the Treasury/FSA credit union consultation.

Agreed: To defer the item to next week's meeting.

10. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on **Thursday 2 February at 10.30am, Room 30, Parliament Buildings.**

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 12.06pm.

Mr Alban Maginness
Chair
Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

2 February 2012