



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

THURSDAY, 14 JUNE 2012

**CAUSEWAY HOTEL, 40 CAUSEWAY ROAD, BUSHMILLS, CO.
ANTRIM, BT57 8SU**

Present: Mr Alban Maginness (Chairperson)
Mr Daithí McKay (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Steven Agnew
Mr Gordon Dunne
Mr Phil Flanagan
Mr Paul Frew
Mr Patsy McGlone
Mr Stephen Moutray
Mr Robin Newton
Ms Sandra Overend

In Attendance: Mr Jim McManus (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Kate McCullough (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
Mr David McKee (Clerical Supervisor)
Mr Christopher McNickle (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Ms Jennifer McCann

The meeting began at 10.39am in public session.

1. Apologies

Apologies are detailed above.

The Chair thanked Jennifer McCann for her service to the Committee and congratulated her on her appointment as Junior Minister.

2. Minutes of meeting held on 31 May 2012

Agreed: The draft minutes of the meeting on 31 May were agreed.

3. Chairperson's Business

Members noted invitations to the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson from Northern Ireland Tourist Board to the Irish Open at Royal Portrush golf course.

Members noted an invitation from the Chairperson of the Committee for OFMDFM to the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson to attend the next OFMDFM Committee's European Advisory Panel meeting. The Committee sought approval to invite a Department official, a representative of Invest NI and InterTradeIreland.

Agreed: to forward the invitation to Department.

Members noted four newspaper articles regarding the launch of the Committee's report on the Inquiry into Research & Development.

The Chairperson informed members of his meeting with the Engineering Policy Group Northern Ireland (EPGNI). The organisation has agreed to respond to the Inquiry report.

Agreed: to explore ways for EPGNI to engage with the Committee in the future.

Agreed: to commission Assembly Research and Information Services to conduct research on the engineering sector in Northern Ireland.

4. Matters Arising

Members noted a response from Invest NI on the reasons why the Business Improvement Training Programme (BITP) was withdrawn from the EU European Regional Development Fund designation.

Members discussed a response from the Committee for Social Development on the Green New Deal.

Phil Flanagan joined the meeting at 10.50am.

Agreed: to write to the Committee for Social Development to seek its views on the decision not to proceed with the Green New Deal and whether they it has asked the Department for a copy of the economic appraisal.

Agreed: to write to the Construction Employers Federation (CEF) seeking their views on the decision not to proceed with the Green New Deal.

Members discussed a response from the Utility Regulator to Conal McDevitt MLA on NISEP funding of Solar PV schemes.

Agreed: to ask the Utility Regulator to keep the Committee informed on the progress of this matter.

Sandra Overend joined the meeting at 10.56am.

Gordon Dunne joined the meeting at 11.00am.

Members discussed a response from the Department on measures, responsibilities and procedures following the recent tragic accident at a disused quarry.

Agreed: to forward the Department's response to the Committee for the Environment.

5. Giant's Causeway Visitor Experience

The Chair suspended the meeting at 11.12am to consider a request from the BBC to record a portion of the meeting for the evening news.

The Chair re-opened the meeting at 11.16am.

Officials joined the meeting at 11.17am.

Members received an oral briefing from Alan Clarke, Chief Executive and Aine Kearney, Director of Product Development.

Key issues discussed included realistic and sustainable increase in tourist figures, national Trust objections to proposed development at Runkerry, the need of a tourism strategy for NI.

Patsy McGlone left the meeting at 11.42am.

Steven Agnew left the meeting at 12.15pm.

Agreed: to discuss the issue of the National Trust's legal challenge to the development of the Runkerry golf resort at next week's meeting.

Officials left the meeting at 12.40pm.

6. Electricity Market Reform (EMR) and Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation (NIRO) Consultation

Officials joined the meeting at 12.41pm.

Members received an oral briefing from Alison Clydesdale, Principal Officer and Michael Harris, Deputy Principal, Renewable Electricity Policy and Legislation, DETI.

Key issues discussed included reason for changes to the timescale for the NIRO, fuel fossil plans and response to consultation on EMR

Daithí McKay left the meeting at 12.52pm.

Members noted an invitation from the Department to an Electricity Market Reform Seminar.

Agreed: for Assembly Research and Information Services to attend and report back to the Committee.

Officials left the meeting at 1.00pm.

7. June Monitoring Round 2012

Members discussed the written briefing.

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

8. Committee for Finance and Personnel response into Inquiry into Public Procurement in Northern Ireland

Members discussed the written briefing.

Agreed: to consider a draft response to the Committee for Finance and Personnel at next week's meeting.

Agreed: to write to the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to seek an update on progress with the implementation of recommendation 22 on the establishment of a public procurement brokerage service.

9. HSENI Draft Operating Plan 2012-13

Members noted the written briefing.

10. Updates on the Report on the Inquiry into Renewable Energy & the Strategic Energy Framework (SEF) Implementation Plan

Members discussed the written briefing.

Agreed: to request a copy of the Department's Cost Benefit Analysis paper on energy vires.

Agreed: to write to the Utility Regulator to obtain his views on the NIE charging documentation.

Agreed: to ask the Environment Committee for its views on the additional guidance to PPS18 when it becomes available.

11. EU Regional Aid Post 2013

Members noted the written briefing.

12. Correspondence

Members noted the following items of correspondence:

- i. Response from the Department to Lord Whitty's report "Energising Northern Ireland".
Agreed: to forward to the Committee for Social Development for information and to the Consumer Council.
- ii. Email from the WWF on hydraulic fracturing.
- iii. Letter from NIRIG to the Chair requesting a meeting with the Committee on the treatment of curtailment in Tie-Break situations.

Agreed: to request a written briefing from NIRIG.

- iv. Email from the Green Energy Store to Steven Agnew MLA regarding solar PV systems.
Agreed: to consider the correspondence at next week's meeting.
- v. Correspondence from the Committee for OFMDFM on the Race Relations Order 1997.
Agreed: to forward to the Department for a response.
- vi. Correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel on the Budget Process.
- vii. Correspondence from the Department regarding SL1 Control of Asbestos Regulation.

13. Any other business

There were no other items of business.

14. Date, time and place of next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on **Thursday 21 June at 10.30am, Senate Chamber, Parliament Buildings**

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 1.07pm.

Mr Alban Maginness
Chair
Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

21 June 2012