



**Northern Ireland
Assembly**

COMMITTEE FOR ENTERPRISE, TRADE AND INVESTMENT

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

16 FEBRUARY 2016

ROOM 29, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS, 10:00am

- Present:
- Mr Patsy McGlone (Chairperson)
 - Mr Conor Murphy (Deputy Chairperson)
 - Mr Steven Agnew
 - Mr Adrian Cochrane-Watson
 - Mr Gordon Dunne
 - Ms Megan Fearon
 - Mr Paul Givan
 - Mr William Humphrey
 - Mr David McIlveen
 - Mr Fearghal McKinney
 - Mr Máirtín Ó Muilleoir
- In Attendance:
- Mr Jim McManus (Assembly Clerk)
 - Ms Angela McParland (Assistant Assembly Clerk)
 - Mr Michael Greer (Clerical Supervisor)
 - Ms Briege Mullan (Clerical Officer)
- Apologies: None

The meeting began at 10:12am

1. Apologies

Apologies as noted above.

2. Draft Minutes of Meeting 9th February 2016

Agreed: the Committee agreed the draft minutes of 16th February 2016, subject to Adrian Cochrane -Watson's name being added to the list of Members present.

3. Chairperson's Business

The Committee considered correspondence to the Chairperson from North Belfast Advice Partnership regarding the closure of its debt advice facility.

Agreed: to ask the Department for Social Development for clarification around funding to be made available for debt advice and debt counselling facilities.

Steven Agnew joined the meeting at 10:13am

4. Oral Briefing from Ulster University Economic Policy Centre: Economic Forecast and Overview of Current Work Programme

The representative joined the meeting at 10:14am

Members received a briefing from Professor Neil Gibson, Director, Ulster University Economic Policy Centre.

Megan Fearon joined the meeting at 10:29am

Adrian Cochrane-Watson joined the meeting at 10:44am

William Humphrey left the meeting at 11:02am

The Chairperson suspended the meeting at 11:04am due to the Final Stage debate in Plenary for the Credit Unions and Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Bill.

The meeting resumed at 11:16am with the following Members present:

Patsy McGlone

Conor Murphy

Steven Agnew

Gordon Dunne

Megan Fearon

William Humphrey

David McIlveen

Máirtín Ó Muilleoir

Key issues discussed included the work of the Centre over its first 3 years and challenges to the economy.

Adrian-Cochrane Watson returned to the meeting at 11.22am

The representative left the meeting at 11:36am

Members agreed to move to Agenda Item 6

Máirtín Ó Muilleoir left the meeting at 11:38am

Gordon Dunne left the meeting at 11:38am

Meagan Fearon left the meeting at 11:38am

6. Matters Arising

Members considered the Explanatory Memorandum and related correspondence regarding the Renewable Heat Incentive Schemes (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016.

Agreed: to ask the Department why only a short Explanatory note was provided to the Committee in advance of last week's meeting despite the full Explanatory Memorandum having been sent to the Assembly Business office, and for details of the reasons for the amendments contained in the revised Explanatory Memorandum.

Agreed: to ask the Department to copy the Committee into its response to the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development.

Members discussed correspondence from RTÉ regarding the Committee's request for a briefing on access to the RTÉ Online player service for customers in Northern Ireland.

Agreed: to receive a briefing from RTÉ on 15th March 2016.

7. Written Briefing from Cerberus: Issues Raised by Bell & Company

Members noted correspondence from Cerberus in response to the Committee's request for a briefing to address issues raised by Bell and Company.

The Committee noted that David McIlveen had submitted papers to the Clerk which he had received from a member of the public but had later asked that they were withdrawn at the request of the individual.

Agreed: to await the Assembly Research paper before going forward.

8. Written briefing from Tourism NI: Retention and Disposal Schedule

Members noted the Tourism NI Retention and Disposal Schedule.

9. Consultation: Early Closure of the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation to New Onshore Wind

Members considered correspondence regarding the proposed early closure of the Northern Ireland Renewables Obligation to new onshore wind.

Agreed: to ask the Minister to provide an oral briefing to the Committee on 1st March 2016 regarding the Department's current policy on renewable energy and any future commitments of the Department for the Economy.

Agreed: to forward to the Minister, all correspondence received from stakeholders on the issue.

Máirtín Ó Muilleoir returned to the meeting at 11.47am

10. Consultation: Insolvency (Amendment) Rules

Members noted correspondence from the Minister regarding the Insolvency (Amendment) Rules.

11. Draft End of Mandate (Legacy) Report

Members the first draft End of Mandate (Legacy) Report.

Agreed: all the key areas to be covered are included in the report.

12. Correspondence

Members considered correspondence from the Minister regarding the Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015 – Proposed Consequential Amendments to Northern Ireland Reports on Conduct of Directors Rules.

Agreed: to ask the Department for clarification regarding whether the intention is to create a new criminal offence by way of these proposed regulations or if this already exists.

Agreed: to ask the Department for a copy of the circulated draft of the proposed regulations.

Members noted correspondence from British Telecom (BT) in response to questions raised by the Committee.

Members noted correspondence from the Committee for Finance and Personnel regarding EU Funding Programmes: Peace IV and INTERREG V.

Members noted a press release from Power NI informing of price cuts.

13. Any Other Business

There were no additional items of business.

14. Date, Time and Place of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will take place on Tuesday 23rd February 2016 at 10.00am, Room 29.

The Committee agreed to move to Agenda Item 5

5. Oral Briefing from DETI: Horizon 2020

The representatives joined the meeting at 11:50am

Gordon Dunne returned to the meeting at 11:50am

Members received a briefing from Mr Ciaran McGarrity, Head of Innovation Policy Unit and Mr Neil Wallace, Deputy Principal, Innovation Policy Unit.

Key issue discussed was the ongoing progress of the Horizon 2020 programme.

Paul Givan joined the meeting at 11.56am

Paul Givan left the meeting at 12:02pm

Máirtín Ó Muilleoir left the meeting at 12:06pm

William Humphrey left the meeting at 12:08pm

The representatives left the meeting at 12:15pm

The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 12:15pm

Mr Patsy McGlone
Chairperson
Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment

23rd February 2016