

For Norma Heaton.

NORTHERN IRELAND FORUM FOR POLITICAL DIALOGUE

STANDING COMMITTEE E

THE NORTHERN IRELAND ECONOMY

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 7 NOVEMBER 1996

AT 11.00 AM IN COMMITTEE ROOM 2, INTERPOINT

Present:

- Mr John Gorman**
- Mr Dermot Nesbitt**
- Mr Bob Stoker**
- Mr Jim Clarke**
- Mrs May Steele**
- Mr St Clair McAllister**
- Mr Eric Smyth**
- Mr Mervyn Carrick**
- Mr Sean Neeson**
- Mr Cedric Wilson**
- Mr Malachi Curran**
- Mr David Adams (on behalf of Mr Gary McMichael)**

In attendance: **Mr Nigel Carson**

1. **ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON**

Mr Dermott Nesbitt was proposed by Mr Bob Stoker and seconded by Mr Jim Clarke. There being no other nominations Mr Nesbitt took the chair.

2. **ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON**

Mr St Clair McAllister was proposed by Mr Eric Smyth and seconded by Mr Mervyn Carrick. There being no other nominations Mr McAllister was elected.

3. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chairman asked members to consider how the Committee should address its Terms of Reference.

The Committee agreed that it wished to bring its formation to the attention of the public at large and discussed a number of approaches. It was agreed that a press release would be issued the following day when the Forum has formally agreed to the membership of the Committee and should incorporate a statement from the Chairman of the Forum.

It was further agreed that there should be an opportunity for a photo-call but, in view of the absence of Mr Nesbitt the following day, that it should be postponed until Friday 15 November.

4. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee discussed how it should approach its work. There was support for the need to take an overview of the economy, perhaps carry out a SWOT review, the need to address the various aspects of the economy, ie, industrial, retail, manufacturing, imports, exports and the service sector. In addition it was agreed that the Committee should be able to react quickly to specific economic problems; such rapid response would be the best way for the Committee to demonstrate its effectiveness. It was also accepted that there was some potential for overlap with the economic aspects of other Committees' work, eg, work on Education, Agriculture and Fisheries. This would require co-ordination with the relevant Committees.

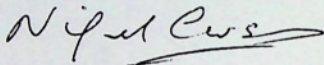
It was agreed that in the first instance the Committee should identify the issues to focus on and set priorities. Members should be prepared to put their parties' views forward at the next meeting. Secondly the Committee needs to be clear about timescale perhaps setting short, medium and long-term objectives. Thirdly, the Committee will have to decide who it wishes to meet and which experts it might wish to invite to address it (including trades union representatives) and finally to determine how it should go forward with taking the views of the public at large, eg, through advertisement or mailshot.

5. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be at 11.00 am on Thursday 14 November. Mr Clarke tendered his apologies.

6. **THOSE ATTENDING ON BEHALF OF MEMBERS**

The Committee agreed to accept Mr David Adams attending on behalf of Mr Gary McMichael, Mr P Osborne attending on behalf of Mr Steve McBride and Mr P Roche attending on behalf of Mr Cedric Wilson.



NIGEL CARSON

Forum Secretary