

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY
BUSINESS COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2014
IN ROOM 106, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

MINUTES

The meeting began at 12.33pm.

Present:

The Speaker
Mr S Dickson
Mr R McCartney
Mrs K McKeivitt
Mrs S Overend
Mr P Ramsey
Ms C Ruane
Mr R Swann
Mr P Weir

In attendance:

Ms L Gordon	Clerk of Business
Mr T Reaney	Clerk/Director General
Ms N Dunwoody	Clerk Assistant
Mr R Ramsey	Adviser to the Speaker
Ms F Leneghan	PS/Speaker
Mr C McNickle	Assistant Assembly Clerk

Observers:

Principal Deputy Speaker McLaughlin
Junior Minister Bell
Junior Minister McCann
Mr G Reid **OFMDFM**

1. Apologies

1.1 Apologies were noted from Mr Gerry Kelly.

2. Minutes of previous meeting

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 18 February were **agreed** and signed by the Speaker.

3. Matters arising

3.1 There were no matters arising.

4. **Finalisation of the Order Papers for the plenary meetings in week commencing 3 March 2014**

Executive Business

4.1 Members **noted** that an Assembly Consent Motion on the Draft Public Bodies (Abolition of the National Consumer Council and Transfer of the Office of Fair Trading's Functions in relation to Estate Agents etc) Order 2014 was scheduled for Monday 3 March.

4.2 Members **noted** that there was no change to Executive Committee Business, previously scheduled for Tuesday 4 March 2014.

Committee Business

4.3 Members **noted** that there was no change to Committee Business previously scheduled for Monday 3 March.

Private Members' Business

4.4 Members **noted** that there was no change to Private Members' Business previously scheduled for Monday 3 and Tuesday 4 March.

4.5 Junior Minister Bell advised that no further business was expected at this stage.

4.6 The draft Order Papers were **agreed**.

5. **Provisional arrangements for the plenary meetings in week commencing 10 March 2014**

Executive Business

5.1 Members **noted** that Question Time to the Minister for Employment and Learning and to the Minister of Finance and Personnel was scheduled for Monday 10 March.

5.2 Members **noted** that Question Time to the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and to the Minister of Justice was scheduled for Tuesday 11 March.

5.3 In addition, Members **noted** that, subject to Executive agreement, it was possible that the Consideration Stage of the Local Government Bill could be scheduled for Tuesday 11 March.

Committee Business

5.4 Members **noted** that there was no Committee Business requested for Monday 10 March or Tuesday 11 March.

Private Members' Business

5.5 Members **agreed** to schedule two Private Members' Motions on Monday 10 March and two on Tuesday 11 March.

5.6 Under the system of allocation, the selections for Monday 10 March lay with Sinn Féin and the DUP and the selections for Tuesday 11 March lay with the UUP and Sinn Féin.

5.7 The following motions were selected for Monday 10 March:

- 'Women in Politics' (Ms J McCann, Ms C Ruane, Ms B McGahan, Ms M Fearon and Mr R McCartney);
- 'Legal Highs' (Mr T Buchanan, Mr A McQuillan).

5.8 Ms Caitríona Ruane invited Members of all other parties to sign the motion on 'Women in Politics'.

5.9 The following motions were selected for Tuesday 11 March:

- 'Drawdown of European Union Funds' (Mr M Nesbitt, Mrs S Overend);
- 'BBC Spotlight Programme on Waste Disposal' (Mr R McCartney, Mr C Boylan, Mr B McElduff, Mr I Milne).

5.10 Members **agreed** that up to 1 hour 30 minutes should be allocated for each motion, with the usual speaking times.

5.11 Members **agreed** to schedule an Adjournment Debate on Tuesday 11 March. Under the system of allocation, the selection lay with the UUP and the following topic was selected:

- 'School absenteeism in North Antrim' (Mr R Swann).

5.12 Junior Minister Bell advised that the Minister of Finance and Personnel would not be available to respond to the motion on the 'Drawdown of European

Union Funds', but that all other Ministers were available. In relation to the EU motion, Mr Swann indicated that it called on the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister to take action. However, Junior Minister Bell advised that agreement on who would respond would be a matter for the Executive.

5.13 The provisional Order Papers were **agreed**.

5.14 Having agreed the provisional Order Papers, members returned to the issue of the possibility of the Consideration Stage of the Local Government Bill coming forward at the next meeting as business for Tuesday 11 March. The committee **noted** that, in practical terms for such a major Bill, this would give Members only two days' notice to table amendments, and **further noted** that the Bill would be likely to constitute the whole day's business.

5.15 It was, therefore, **agreed** that, should the Executive agree at its meeting on 27 February to schedule the Consideration Stage of the Local Government Bill on Tuesday 11 March, a revised provisional Order Paper should be issued on 27 February with only the following business scheduled:

- Question Time to the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and to the Minister of Justice;
- Consideration Stage of the Local Government Bill.

5.16 Members **agreed** that, should a revised provisional Order Paper be required, the Private Members' Business previously scheduled for Tuesday 11 March would be rescheduled at the next meeting of the Committee.

6. **Any other business**

6.1 Members **noted** that, due to the extended timings for earlier items of business, the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment might not be available later in the evening to respond to the Committee for Enterprise, Trade and Investment's motion on 'Financial Support to Expand Credit Union Services'.

7. **Date and Time of next meeting**

7.1 Members **agreed** to meet at approximately 12.30pm on Tuesday 4 March 2014 in Room 106.

The Speaker brought the meeting to a close at 12.45pm

**The Speaker
Chairperson**