

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY
BUSINESS COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 04 NOVEMBER 2014
IN ROOM 106, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

MINUTES

The meeting began at 12.39pm.

Present:

- Mr R Beggs (Acting Chairperson)**
- Mr S Dickson**
- Mr G Kelly**
- Lord Morrow**
- Mrs S Overend**
- Mr P Ramsey**
- Ms C Ruane**
- Mr P Weir**

In attendance:

Dr A McGarel	Clerk of Business
Dr G McGrath	Director of Clerking and Reporting
Ms N Dunwoody	Clerk Assistant
Mr H Widdis	Director of Legal Services
Mr R Ramsey	Adviser to the Speaker
Ms F Leneghan	PS/Speaker
Mr C McNickle	Assistant Assembly Clerk

Observers:

- Principal Deputy Speaker McLaughlin**
- Deputy Speaker Dallat**
- Junior Minister Bell**
- Mr A Rogers** **OFMDFM**

1. Apologies

1.1 Apologies were noted from Mrs Karen McKeivitt and Mr Robin Swann.

2. **Minutes of previous meeting**

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 21 October were **agreed** and signed by the Acting Chairperson.

3. **Matters arising**

3.1 There were no matters arising.

4. **Finalisation of the Order Papers for the plenary meetings in week commencing 10 November**

Assembly Business

4.1 The Acting Chairperson reminded Members that, following the unsuccessful Election of Speaker on Monday 13 October, the Office of Speaker remained vacant and that Standing Order 6 requires the Assembly to proceed to elect a Speaker as soon as may be.

4.2 Mr Weir expressed the view that his party's position on the matter remained unchanged and that as this issue was being addressed during all-party talks it would not be in a position to elect a Speaker during the week commencing Monday 10 November. Mrs Overend and Mr Dickson also confirmed that their party positions had not changed and agreed with the view that an election should not take place on Monday 10 November. Ms Ruane expressed the view that the vacancy brought the Assembly into disrepute and further expressed her disappointment that, as the position of the Speaker remained vacant, the next meeting of the Inter-parliamentary Association would take place without an elected Speaker as Chairperson of the Association.

4.3 Following discussion, Ms Ruane formally **proposed** that the Election of Speaker should be scheduled on Monday 10 November.

4.4 Members **voted** on the proposal as follows:

For - 43 votes

Against - 58 votes

4.5 The proposal was, therefore, **negatived**.

4.6 Members **agreed** to schedule a motion from Sinn Féin to change Committee Membership on Monday 10 November.

Executive Business

- 4.7 Members **noted** that the First Stage of the Pensions Bill was scheduled for Monday 10 November, subject to the Deputy Speakers' consideration.
- 4.8 Members **noted** that a motion regarding the Draft Pollution Prevention and Control (Industrial Emissions) (Amendment) regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014, was no longer scheduled for Tuesday 11 November.

Committee Business

- 4.9 Members **noted** that there was no change to Committee Business previously scheduled for Monday 10 November.
- 4.10 Members **noted** that there was no Committee Business scheduled for Tuesday 11 November.

Private Members' Business

- 4.11 Members **noted** that there was no Private Members' Motions scheduled for Monday 10 November and Tuesday 11 November.
- 4.12 Mr Alan Rogers advised that no further business was expected at this stage.
- 4.13 The draft Order Papers were **agreed**.

5. **Provisional arrangements for the plenary meetings in week commencing 17 November 2014**

Executive Business

- 5.1 Members **noted** the following business was scheduled for Monday 17 November:
- Question Time to the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and to the Minister of Justice;
 - Statement from the Minister of the Environment on the British Irish Council meeting held in Environment sectoral format;
 - Final Stage: Education Bill;
 - Motion from the Minister for Social Development regarding the Pensions (2012 Act) (Consequential and Supplementary Provisions) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2014.

5.2 Members **noted** the following business was scheduled for Tuesday 18 November:

- Question Time to the Minister for Regional Development, the Minister for Social Development and to the Assembly Commission;
- Second Stage: Pensions Bill.

Committee Business

5.3 Members **noted** that there were no requests for Committee Business for either day.

Private Members' Business

5.4 Members **agreed** to schedule one Private Members' Motion on Monday 17 November and one Private Members' Motion on Tuesday 18 November.

5.5 Under the system of allocation, the selections lay with Sinn Féin and the DUP and the following motions were selected:

- 'Health Budget' (Ms M McLaughlin, Mr C Hazzard, Mr D McKay and Ms R McCorley);
- 'Commonwealth Youth Games' (Miss M McIlveen, Mr W Irwin, Mr D Hilditch and Mr W Humphrey).

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

5.7 In addition Members also **agreed** to schedule an all-party motion on the 'Commissioner for Older People for Northern Ireland's Report 'Appreciating Age' (Mr P Ramsey, Mr R Swann, Mr S Dickson, Ms C Ruane and Mr P Weir) on Tuesday 18 November.

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

5.9 Members **agreed** to schedule an Adjournment Debate on Tuesday 18 November. Under the system of allocation, the selection lay with the DUP and the following topic was selected:

- 'Fish Kill in the Six Mile Water' (Mr P Girvan).

5.10 Junior Minister Bell advised that all Ministers were available to respond to business.

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

6. **Correspondence**

6.1 Members **noted** correspondence, dated 23 October 2014, from the Chairperson of the Committee on Procedures regarding the management of a Statutory Rule to be laid by the Attorney General.

7. **Any other business**

7.1 The Acting Chairperson drew Members' attention to an article published in the Belfast Telegraph on Thursday 16 October 2014 that referenced information that had been provided to the Business Committee. The Acting Chairperson reminded Members that meetings of the Business Committee take place in closed session to allow sensitive discussions to take place and that papers provided to the Committee should also be considered confidential.

7.2 The Acting Chairperson reminded Whips of the ruling that small electronic devices, such as mobile phones and tablets may be used discreetly in the Chamber, but not laptops.

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

8.1 Members **agreed** to meet at approximately 12.30pm on Tuesday 11 November 2014 in Room 106.

The Acting Chairperson brought the meeting to a close at 12.50pm

Mr Mitchel McLaughlin
Principal Deputy Speaker
The Acting Chairperson