

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY
BUSINESS COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2015
IN ROOM 106, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

MINUTES

The meeting began at 1.01pm.

Present:

The Speaker (Chairperson)
Mr S Dickson
Mrs K McKeivitt
Lord Morrow
Mrs S Overend
Ms C Ruane
Mr R Swann
Mr P Weir

In attendance:

Dr A McGarel	Clerk of Business
Mr G McGrath	Director of Clerking and Reporting
Ms N Dunwoody	Clerk Assistant
Ms T Caul	Legal Services and Governance
Mr R Ramsey	Adviser to the Speaker
Ms F Leneghan	PS/Speaker
Mr G Ervine	Assistant Assembly Clerk

Observers:

Mr R Beggs	Deputy Speaker
Mr K Kerr	OFMDFM

1. **Apologies**

1.1 There was an apology from Mr Pat Ramsey.

2. **Minutes of previous meetings**

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 22 September were **agreed**.

3. **Matters arising**

3.1 There were no matters arising.

4. **Finalisation of the Order Papers for the plenary meetings in week commencing 05 October 2015**

- 4.1 Mr Weir proposed the same motion as that proposed at the meeting on 10 September; that the Assembly stands in recess until the conclusion of all-party talks, subject to further decision of the Business Committee.
- 4.2 All parties' views on the proposal remained the same so the proposal was **negatived**.

Assembly Business

- 4.3 Members **agreed** to schedule a motion from the DUP to change Committee Membership on Monday 05 October.
- 4.4 Members **agreed** to defer the appointment of Ministers of Enterprise, Trade and Investment; Health, Social Services and Public Safety; and for Social Development and Regional Development from Monday 05 October to Monday 12 October.

Executive Business

- 4.5 Members **noted** that the Final Stage of the Pension Schemes Bill, previously scheduled for Monday 05 October, was removed from business.
- 4.6 Members **noted** that there was no further change to Executive Committee Business previously scheduled for Monday 05 October.
- 4.7 Members **noted** that the following additional Executive Business was scheduled for Tuesday 06 October:
- Second Stage: Credit Unions and Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Bill (NIA Bill 56/11-16);
 - Further Consideration Stage: Insolvency (Amendment) Bill (NIA Bill 39/11-16).

Committee Business

- 4.8 Members **noted** that there were no requests for Committee Business for Monday 05 October.
- 4.9 Members **noted** that there were no requests for Committee Business for Tuesday 06 October.

Private Members' Business

- 4.10 Members **noted** that there were no changes to Private Members' Business for Monday 05 October.
- 4.11 Members **noted** that following last week's meeting, Sinn Féin and SDLP selected the following motions for Tuesday 06 October:
- 'Private Rental Sector' (Mr F McCann and Mr A Maskey)
 - 'Autism' (Mr F McKinney, Mr D Bradley, Ms C Hanna and Mr S Rogers)
- 4.12 Ms Ruane proposed that another Private Members' Motion was scheduled for Monday 05 October as Question Time was likely to be short. Mrs McKeivitt expressed support for this.
- 4.13 Mr Weir, Mr Swann and Mr Dickson indicated that they would not support adding further Private Members' Business to the draft Order Paper at this late stage. Private Members' Business therefore remained as drafted.
- 4.14 Mr Kerr advised that no further business was expected at this stage.
- 4.15 The draft Order Papers were **agreed**.
5. **Provisional arrangements for the plenary meetings in week commencing 12 October 2015**

Assembly Business

- 5.1 Members **agreed** that the Appointment of Ministers of Enterprise, Trade and Investment; Health, Social Services and Public Safety; and for Social Development and Regional Development is listed on the provisional Order Paper for Monday 12 October.

Executive Business

- 5.2 Members **noted** that the following Executive Business was scheduled for Monday 12 October:
- Question Time to the Minister for Employment and Learning and the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development.
- 5.3 Members **noted** that the following Executive Business was scheduled for Tuesday 13 October:

- Question Time to the Minister of the Environment and the Minister of Finance and Personnel.

Committee Business

- 5.4 Members **agreed** to schedule a motion from the Committee for Justice to extend the Committee Stage of the Justice (No. 2) Bill for Monday 12 October.
- 5.5 Members **agreed** to schedule a motion from the Committee for Health, Social Services and Public Safety on 'Review of Workforce Planning' for Tuesday 13 October.
- 5.6 Members **agreed** that up to 1 hour 30 minutes should be allocated for the motion, with the usual speaking times.

Private Members' Business

- 5.7 Further to the discussion on Private Members' Bills at last week's meeting; Members discussed the scheduling of the Second Stage of Mr John McCallister's Assembly and Executive Reform (Assembly Opposition) Bill.
- 5.8 Ms Ruane expressed concern at the Bill moving to Second Stage within four weeks of the first reading as this set a dangerous precedent for Private Members' Bills. She also noted that Mr McCallister's Bill will have a major impact on a number of departments and the additional time would allow for better scrutiny.
- 5.9 Mr Weir, Mrs McKeivitt, Mr Swann and Mr Dickson were content for the Second Stage to be scheduled, given the nature of the Bill and the current unusual circumstances.
- 5.10 The Committee **agreed** to forego the convention of allowing at least four weeks to elapse between the Introduction and Second Stage of Mr John McCallister's Bill, in view of the fact that the Bill largely refers to structures of the Assembly rather than matters falling within areas of Ministerial responsibility. The Bill was scheduled for Monday 12 October.
- 5.11 Members **agreed** to schedule the Second Stage of Mr Jim Allister's Civil Service (Special Advisers) (Amendment) Bill for Tuesday 13 October.
- 5.12 Members **agreed** to schedule one Private Members' Motion on Monday 12 October and one Private Members' Motion on Tuesday 13 October.
- 5.13 Under the system of allocation, the selection for Monday 12 October lay with UUP and the selection for Tuesday 13 October lay with DUP.

5.14 The DUP indicated that they would not be selecting a motion for debate. Therefore the selection for Tuesday 13 October lay with Sinn Féin. The following motions were selected:

- 'Equal Pay' (Mr L Cree, Mr M Nesbitt and Mr R Hussey)
- 'Tax Credits' (Mr A Maskey, Mr F McCann and Mr P Flanagan)

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

5.16 Members **agreed** to schedule an Adjournment Debate on Tuesday 13 October. Under the system of allocation, the selection lay with DUP. The DUP indicated that they would not be selecting a motion for debate; therefore the next selection fell to Alliance. Mr Dickson undertook to inform the Business Office of his party's selection following the meeting.

5.17 Mr Kevin Kerr indicated that Ministers were available to respond to the motions.

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

6. **Any other business**

6.1 The Chairperson informed Members that further to concerns raised at the meeting on 1 September 2015, the Business Office is reviewing its guidance on the process of tabling motions at the commencement of a new session and will produce a paper with proposals for consideration in October.

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

7.1 Members **agreed** to meet at 1.00pm on Tuesday 06 October 2015 in Room 106.

The Chairperson brought the meeting to a close at 1.15pm

The Speaker
Chairperson