

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY
BUSINESS COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 17 MAY 2016
IN ROOM 106, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

MINUTES

The meeting began at 1.01pm.

Present:

The Speaker (Chairperson)
Mr A Attwood
Mr T Clarke
Mr S Dickson
Mr G Kelly
Mr C McGrath
Ms C Ní Chuílin
Mrs S Overend
Mr R Swann
Mr P Weir

In attendance:

Dr A McGarel	Clerk of Business
Mr T Reaney	Clerk/Chief Executive
Mr G McGrath	Director of Parliamentary Services
Mr D Martin	Clerk Assistant
Mr P Gill	Clerk Assistant
Ms T Caul	Director of Legal Services and Governance
Mr R Ramsey	Adviser to the Speaker
Ms F Leneghan	PS/Speaker
Mr G Ervine	Assistant Assembly Clerk

Observers:

1. Apologies

1.1 There was an apology from Ms C Ruane.

2. Minutes of previous meetings

2.1 The minutes of the informal Whip's meeting held on Tuesday 10 May were **agreed.**

3. Matters arising

3.1 There were no matters arising.

4. **Party Seating Allocation in the Chamber**

4.1 Members **ratified** the party seating arrangements in the Chamber agreed by those present at the informal Whip's meeting on 10 May 2016.

4.2 Mr Swann informed Members that the UUP believed the seating arrangements should be revised to take into account an opposition.

4.3 Mr Weir informed Members that the DUP are happy with the current seating allocations.

4.4 Ms Ní Chuílin informed Members that Sinn Féin are content to re-visit the current seating allocations as necessary.

4.5 The Speaker informed Members that the Business Committee can revisit the seating arrangement in the event of a formal opposition being created.

5. **Finalisation of the Order Paper for the 2nd Plenary Sitting**

Assembly Business

5.1 Members **agreed** to schedule a motion to suspend Standing Order 20(1) for the 2nd Plenary Sitting, should the sitting take place on Monday 23 May or Tuesday 24 May.

5.2 Members **agreed** that Business Committee Members will continue to move business motions in turn, as they have in previous mandates.

5.3 Members **agreed** to schedule a motion from Sinn Féin to change Committee Membership for the 2nd Plenary Sitting.

Filling of the Office of Minister of Justice

5.4 Members **noted** the proposed arrangements for filling the office of Minister of Justice for the 2nd Plenary Sitting.

5.5 Members **agreed** that there will be no opportunity for debate; however, the Member who rises to make a nomination may say a few words in support of their nomination.

5.6 Mr Attwood informed Members that the SDLP do not support this process of filling the Office of Minister of Justice as they believe the Minister of Justice should be included under the normal d'Hondt process of appointing Ministers.

Appointment of Ministers

- 5.7 Members **noted** the proposed arrangements for the appointment of Ministers.

Establishment of Statutory Committees

- 5.8 Members **noted** the proposed arrangements for the establishment of Statutory Committees.
- 5.9 Members **agreed** to schedule a motion to establish Statutory Committees for the 2nd Plenary Sitting.

Appointment of Chairpersons and Deputy Chairpersons of Statutory Committees

- 5.10 Members **noted** the proposed arrangements for the appointment of Chairpersons and Deputy Chairpersons of Statutory Committees.

Appointment of Chairpersons and Deputy Chairpersons of Standing Committees

- 5.11 Members **noted** the proposed arrangements for the appointment of Chairpersons and Deputy Chairpersons of Standing Committees.
- 5.12 The draft Order Paper was **agreed**.
- 5.13 As a date for the 2nd sitting is not yet confirmed, Members **agreed** to confirm the final Order Paper by email prior to issue.
- 5.14 Members **noted** that while ideally an Order Paper should be issued a few days in advance of a sitting there is no timeframe specified in Standing Orders.

6. Draft Question Time Rota

- 6.1 Members **agreed** the Question Time Rota until summer recess 2016.

7. Any other business

- 7.1 The Speaker **informed** Members that they will receive a paper on proposed speaking lists for discussion at the next meeting.

7.2 The Speaker encouraged parties to put forward names for appointment to the Assembly Commission as soon as possible, noting that this would need to be tabled in time for next week's Business Committee meeting.

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

8.1 Members **agreed** to meet at 1.00pm on Tuesday 24 May 2016 in Room 106, unless notified otherwise.

The Chairperson brought the meeting to a close at 1.27pm

**The Speaker
Chairperson**