

COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURES

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

TUESDAY 28 APRIL 2015
ROOM 21, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

Present: Mr Gerry Kelly MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Jim Allister MLA
Mr Sammy Douglas MLA
Mr Samuel Gardiner MLA
Mr Barry McElduff MLA
Mr Alban Maginness MLA
Lord Morrow MLA
Mr George Robinson MLA

In attendance: Alison Ross (Clerk)
Nick Mitford (Senior Assistant Clerk)
Neil Currie (Assistant Clerk)

1.01pm The meeting began in closed session.

1. Apologies

Mr Kieran McCarthy MLA

2. Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2015

Agreed: Members agreed the draft minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2015.

3. Matters Arising

The Committee considered the draft letter to the Speaker in relation to maintaining order in the Chamber.

1.05pm Mr McElduff joined the meeting.

1.10pm Mr Maginness joined the meeting.

1.11pm Mr Douglas joined the meeting.

1.35pm Mr Allister joined the meeting.

Mr Clarke proposed that the Committee issues the draft letter in the meeting papers.

The Committee divided on the proposal. Ayes 7; Noes 2

Ayes

Noes

Jim Allister
Trevor Clarke
Sammy Douglas
Samuel Gardiner
Alban Maginness
Lord Morrow
George Robinson

Gerry Kelly
Barry McElduff

The proposal accordingly was agreed to.

1.38pm Mr Clarke left the meeting.

4. Review of Standing Order 21 – Adjournment Debates

The Committee considered a briefing paper and legal advice in relation to Standing Order 21(1) which relates to adjournment debates.

Agreed: It was agreed not to propose any amendments to Standing Order 21(1).

1.39pm The meeting moved into public session.

5. Inquiry into the extent to which Standing Orders should permit the Attorney General to participate in proceedings of the Assembly

Agreed: It was agreed to defer consideration of the viability of the pilot procedure used to manage the draft affirmative Statutory Rule laid by the AGNI until all stakeholder responses had been received.

The Clerk was asked to prepare an options paper for the next meeting in relation to the management of Statutory Rules laid by the AGNI subject to the negative resolution procedure.

6. Review of Public Petitions Procedures

1.40pm Michael Cochrane from the Information Systems Office and Tracey Wilson from the Communications Office gave a presentation on the proposals for an e-petitions system and answered Members' questions.

1.57pm Mr Allister left the meeting.

1.58pm Mr McElduff left the meeting.

2.09pm The Chairperson thanked Mr Cochrane and Ms Wilson for their briefing and they left the meeting.

2.12pm Mr Robinson left the meeting.

Agreed: It was agreed to give further consideration to Phases 1 – 3 of the e-petitions process at the next meeting, and to defer consideration of Phase 4 to the next meeting.

7. Female representation within the team of Speaker, Principal Deputy Speaker and Deputy Speakers

2.15pm Ray McCaffrey from the Research and Information Service gave an overview of his briefing paper on female Presiding Officers/Speakers in other legislatures, and answered Members' questions.

Mr McCaffrey agreed to provide the Committee with additional information in relation to the procedure used in the House of Commons for the election of Deputy Speakers by ballot.

2.21pm The Chairperson thanked Mr McCaffrey for his briefing and he left the meeting.

Agreed: It was agreed to give further consideration to this matter at the next meeting.

8. Forward Work Programme

The Chairperson advised Members that, as agreed at the last meeting, he had written to the First Minister and deputy First Minister in relation to implementation of the Stormont House Agreement, however, a response had not been received.

The Chairperson advised Members that it is likely to be after the summer recess before the Committee considers proposed amendments to Standing Orders in relation to the Public Services Ombudsperson Bill.

The Committee was content with the Forward Work Programme.

9. Correspondence

There was no other correspondence.

10. Any other Business

None.

11. Date, time and place of next meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on 26 May 2015 at 1.00pm in Room 21, Parliament Buildings.

2.24pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Gerry Kelly
Chairperson, Committee on Procedures

26 May 2015