

COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURES

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**TUESDAY 24 MARCH 2015
ROOM 21, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr Trevor Clarke MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Jim Allister MLA
Mr Samuel Gardiner MLA
Mr Kieran McCarthy MLA
Mr Barry McElduff MLA
Mr Alban Maginness MLA
Lord Morrow MLA
Mr George Robinson MLA

In attendance: Alison Ross (Clerk)
Neil Currie (Assistant Clerk)
Dee Papacosta (Clerical Officer)

1.01pm The meeting opened in public session.

1. Apologies

Mr Gerry Kelly MLA
Mr Sammy Douglas MLA

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

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

3. Matters Arising

The Committee considered the response from the Speaker in relation to maintaining order in the Chamber.

1.05pm Mr McCarthy joined the meeting.

Agreed: It was agreed that further clarification was required and to write back to the Speaker requesting this. It was also agreed that the draft letter should be circulated to Members for comments before issue to the Speaker.

4. 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 use the services of the external legislative draftsman for the drafting of Standing Orders to implement the recommendations in Part 1 of the inquiry report.

The Committee considered a letter from the Attorney General for Northern Ireland (AGNI) in relation to the recommendations in Part 1 of the inquiry report.

Agreed: It was agreed to send an acknowledgment letter to the AGNI.

Agreed: In taking forward Part 2 of the inquiry, it was agreed to write to stakeholders to obtain their views on the viability of the pilot procedure used to manage the draft affirmative Statutory Rule laid by the AGNI.

5. Review of Public Petitions Procedures

The Committee noted the written submission from the junior Ministers in relation to the Review of the Public Petitions Procedures.

The Committee considered a briefing paper outlining some options and resource implications for the introduction of a facility to submit petitions electronically.

Agreed: It was agreed that representatives from the Information Systems Office and Communications Office should attend a future meeting to brief Members on the proposals for an e-petitions system.

Agreed: It was agreed to give further consideration to the issues in the briefing paper at the next meeting.

6. Forward Work Programme

Agreed: It was agreed that the Clerk should obtain an update in writing regarding implementation of the Stormont House Agreement.

The Committee was content with the Forward Work Programme.

7. Correspondence

a) The Committee considered correspondence from the Speaker regarding the

lack of female representation within the team of Speaker, Principal Deputy Speaker and Deputy Speakers.

Agreed: It was agreed that the Clerk should commission research into the position in other legislatures, and to consider the matter further at the next meeting.

b) The Committee noted correspondence from the Carnegie UK Trust in relation to a new report on improving wellbeing in Northern Ireland.

8. Any other Business

None.

9. Date, time and place of next meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on 28 April 2015 at 1.00pm in Room 21, Parliament Buildings.

1.41pm The Deputy Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Gerry Kelly
Chairperson, Committee on Procedures

28 April 2015