

**Committee on Standards and Privileges**

**Report on  
a complaint against  
Mr Phil Flanagan MLA**

**Together with the Report of the Assembly Commissioner for Standards and  
the Minutes of Proceedings of the Committee**

**Ordered by The Committee on Standards and Privileges to be printed on 20 January 2014  
Report: NIA 154/11-15 Standards and Privileges Committee**



# Committee Powers and Membership

1. The Committee on Standards and Privileges is a Standing Committee of the Northern Ireland Assembly established in accordance with paragraph 10 of Strand One of the Belfast Agreement and under Assembly Standing Order Nos. 51 and 57.
2. The Committee has power:
  - to consider specific matters relating to privilege referred to it by the Assembly;
  - to oversee the work of the Assembly Clerk of Standards;
  - to examine the arrangement for the compilation, maintenance and accessibility of the Register of Members' Interests and any other registers of interest established by the Assembly, and to review from time to time the form and content of those registers;
  - to consider any specific complaints made in relation to the registering or declaring of interests referred to it;
  - to consider any matter relating to the conduct of Members;
  - to recommend any modifications to any Assembly code of conduct as may from time to time appear to be necessary.
3. The Committee is appointed at the start of every Assembly, and has power to send for persons, papers and records that are relevant to its enquiries.
4. The membership of the Committee is as follows:
 

Mr Alastair Ross (Chairperson)  
 Ms Anna Lo (Deputy Chairperson) <sup>1</sup>  
 Mr Steven Agnew  
 Mr Mervyn Storey <sup>2 3</sup>  
 Mr Cathal Boylan  
 Ms Paula Bradley <sup>4</sup>  
 Mr Colum Eastwood <sup>5</sup>  
 Mr Declan McAleer <sup>6 7 8 9</sup>  
 Mr Fra McCann  
 Mr Ian McCrea <sup>10</sup>  
 Mrs Sandra Overend <sup>11</sup>
5. The Report and evidence of the Committee are published by the Stationery Office by order of the Committee. All publications of the Committee are posted on the Assembly's website: ([www.niassembly.gov.uk](http://www.niassembly.gov.uk).)
6. All correspondence should be addressed to the Clerk to the Committee on Standards and Privileges, Committee Office, Northern Ireland Assembly, Room 254, Parliament Buildings, Stormont, Belfast BT4 3XX. Tel: 02890 520333; e-mail: [committee.standards&privileges@niassembly.gov.uk](mailto:committee.standards&privileges@niassembly.gov.uk)

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- 1 With effect from 01 October 2013 Mrs Anna Lo replaced Mr Kieran McCarthy.
  - 2 With effect from 07 May 2013 Mr Sydney Anderson replaced Mr David McIlveen.
  - 3 With effect from 16 September 2013 Mr Mervyn Storey replaced Mr Sydney Anderson.
  - 4 With effect from 15 April 2013 Ms Paula Bradley replaced Mr Jonathan Craig.
  - 5 With effect from 23 April 2012 Mr Colum Eastwood replaced Mr Patsy McGlone.
  - 6 With effect from 3 July 2012 Mr Alex Maskey replaced Mr Pat Doherty.
  - 7 With effect from 7 September 2012 Mr Francie Molloy replaced Mr Alex Maskey.
  - 8 With effect from 7 April 2013 Mr Francie Molloy resigned as a Member.
  - 9 With effect from 15 April 2013 Mr Declan McAleer replaced Mr Francie Molloy.
  - 10 With effect from 3 December 2012 Mr Ian McCrea replaced Ms Paula Bradley.
  - 11 With effect from 26 September 2011 Mrs Sandra Overend replaced Mr Michael Copeland.
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# Table of Contents

<b>Report</b>	1
<b>Appendix 1</b>	
Report by the Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards	7
<b>Appendix 2</b>	
Minutes of Proceedings of the Committee Relating to the Report	75



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# Report

## Introduction

1. The Committee on Standards and Privileges has considered a report from the Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards on his investigation into a complaint against Mr Phil Flanagan MLA by Mr Jim Allister MLA. The Commissioner's report and the complaint are appended to this report.

## The Complaint

2. Mr Allister's complaint of 25 July 2013 related to what he described as an "offensive and entirely inappropriate comment" which had been retweeted by Mr Flanagan on 22 July 2013. It was on that date that Prince George of Cambridge was born. There had been extensive media coverage of the impending birth. Against this backdrop Mr Flanagan had retweeted and marked as a favourite the following tweet from a comedian:

*"The news says that the duchess doll entered the hospital by the back entrance. If William had done the same we wouldn't have to suffer this balls."*

3. Mr Allister alleged that Mr Flanagan had breached the Code of Conduct and cited in his complaint the duty in the Code for Members to act in the interests of the community as a whole, as well as the principles of Promoting Good Relations and Respect.

## The Commissioner's investigation

4. The Commissioner decided that the complaint was admissible and undertook an investigation. As part of his investigation he interviewed separately Mr Flanagan and Mr Allister. The Commissioner established a number of facts relating to Mr Flanagan's retweeting of this comment. These established facts are set out in paragraph 8 of the Commissioner's report and include the following:
  - that on 22 July 2013 Mr Flanagan retweeted the comment in question;
  - that on 25 July 2013, following an approach from the Impartial Reporter, Mr Flanagan issued an apology in that newspaper for having retweeted the comment;
  - that at about the same time Mr Flanagan removed the tweet from his twitter feed; and
  - that Mr Flanagan has continuously maintained that he believed that the original tweet was an innocent joke about the royal birth and that he did not appreciate its alternative crude meaning until after the approach from the Impartial Reporter.
5. The Commissioner considered whether or not Mr Flanagan was acting as a Member when he retweeted the comment in question. This was significant because the Code of Conduct only applies to Members when they are acting in that capacity. Having weighed up all the evidence, including Mr Flanagan's account at interview, the Commissioner was not satisfied that Mr Flanagan had been acting in his official capacity. The Commissioner's consideration of this matter is set out at paragraphs 9 to 14 of his report.
6. The Commissioner went on to consider whether the retweeting of this comment would have been a breach of the Code of Conduct had Mr Flanagan been acting in his capacity as a Member. The Public Duty principle cited by Mr Allister in his complaint provides that Members have a general duty to act in the interests of the community as a whole. The Commissioner points out that the provision cannot impose an absolute duty. While in the Commissioner's view some would have found Mr Flanagan's actions disrespectful, and more would have

found them distasteful, he was not satisfied that they constituted a breach of the Code of Conduct. The Commissioner's consideration of this matter is set out at paragraphs 16 to 19 of his report.

7. Mr Allister cited the principle of Promoting Good Relations which provides for Members to act in a way that is conducive to promoting good relations by providing a positive example for the wider community to follow by acting justly and promoting a culture of respect for the law. The Commissioner considered Mr Flanagan's actions and was not satisfied that that they were likely to have any significant impact on community relations.
8. The final principle that Mr Allister cited in his complaint was that of Respect which makes clear that no person should be subjected to an unreasonable and excessive personal attack. The Commissioner considered this and said that while Mr Flanagan's retweet was offensive it was a crude 'joke' which demeaned Mr Flanagan rather than the Royal Family.
9. Mr Flanagan claimed that he initially believed the original tweet to be an innocent joke. The Commissioner commented that this explanation was hard to accept and at best extremely naïve. He went on to conclude, however, that while the explanation may in the eyes of some have cast doubt on Mr Flanagan's integrity, the Respect principle had not been breached.
10. The Commissioner also pointed out in his report that Mr Flanagan had issued an apology and deleted the retweet when initially approached by a reporter, and then apologised again when interviewed by him.

## The Committee's considerations

11. As per the Committee's usual procedure, Mr Flanagan was provided with an advance copy of the Commissioner's report. Mr Flanagan was informed that he was entitled to provide the Committee with his own comments in respect of any matter raised in the report. He was also informed that he could choose to give evidence to the Committee and answer in person any questions that members may have had. Mr Flanagan did not choose to avail himself of either opportunity.
12. The Committee on Standards and Privileges considered the report at its meeting on Wednesday 15 January 2014 when the Commissioner attended and answered members' questions. Having given careful consideration to all of the matters raised in report the Committee is satisfied that Mr Flanagan has not breached the Code of Conduct. **The complaint is not upheld.**
13. In the first instance the Committee accepts that Mr Flanagan was not acting in his capacity as a Member when he retweeted the comment in question. However, in coming to this conclusion, the Committee recognises that when Members use social media there will often be a difficulty in differentiating between personal and professional comments. This becomes problematic when considering complaints that comments have breached the Code of Conduct.
14. The Committee has commenced a review of the Assembly's Code of Conduct. As part of this review it will give consideration to the scope of the Code and whether it should apply to Members when it could reasonably be presumed that a Member was acting in that capacity. This would have the effect of broadening the scope of the Code.
15. The Committee also accepts that even had Mr Flanagan been acting in his capacity as a Member his conduct would not have amounted to a breach of the Code. Undoubtedly the comments were crass and Mr Flanagan's retweeting of them was ill-advised. However, the Committee recognises that when it was put to Mr Flanagan that the retweet was offensive he immediately deleted it from his timeline and apologised. This was an appropriate response. The Committee does not believe that it was in anyone's interest to prolong consideration of the matter any further.



16. It is at least questionable whether it is in the public interest for a Member's 'joke' to be investigated as an alleged breach of the Code of Conduct. Any investigation requires time and resources which could be used in other ways. The Committee has repeatedly made clear that all Members should be free, within the law, to express any political opinion that they may hold and that the Assembly should not seek to prevent or limit any political opinion being expressed legally. Of course some might argue that offensive comments are a separate matter (even when expressed as a joke) and should be treated differently.
17. The Committee will therefore as part of its review of the Code of Conduct give consideration to what extent, if at all, restrictions should ever be placed on members' right to free speech.





Northern Ireland  
Assembly

Appendix 1

# Report by the Assembly Commissioner for Standards



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**Northern Ireland  
Assembly**

COMMISSIONER FOR STANDARDS  
Room 283  
Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw  
Stormont  
Belfast BT4 3XX

Tel: 028 9052 1211  
Email: [standardscommissioner@niassembly.gov.uk](mailto:standardscommissioner@niassembly.gov.uk)

**Mr Paul Gill  
Clerk to the Standards and Privileges Committee  
Room 254  
Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw  
Stormont  
BELFAST  
BT4 3XX**

**12 December 2013**

Dear *Paul*

**COMPLAINT AGAINST PHIL FLANAGAN MLA**

Please find attached my report on the complaint by Jim Allister QC MLA against Phil Flanagan MLA.

**Yours sincerely**

**DOUGLAS BAIN CBE TD Advocate  
Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards**

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**Report by the**  
**Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards**  
**on a complaint by**  
**Mr Jim Allister QC MLA against Mr Phil Flanagan MLA**

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**CONTENTS**

	<b>PAGE</b>
The Complaint .....	1
Relevant Code of Conduct Provisions .....	1
The Investigation .....	1
Findings in Fact .....	2
Reasoned Decision .....	4
Conclusion .....	8
 Annexes	
A – Documents	
B – Most Relevant Code Provisions	

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**The Complaint**

1. By letter dated 25 July 2013 Mr Jim Allister QC MLA made a complaint that Mr Phil Flanagan MLA had contravened certain provisions of the Code of Conduct when, on 22 July 2013, he retweeted text which Mr Allister asserted was “*offensive and entirely inappropriate*”.<sup>1 2 3 4</sup>
2. The provisions of the Code that Mr Allister asserted had been contravened were –
  - that part of the supporting text to the Public Duty principle setting out the general duty to act in the interests of the community as a whole;
  - the Promoting Good Relations principle;
  - the Respect principle.
3. The complaint, together with the other documents on which I have relied in considering this matter, is at Annex A.

**Most Relevant Provisions of the Code**

4. The provisions of the Code most relevant to this complaint are at Annex B.

**The Investigation**

5. On 8 August 2013 I determined that the complaint was admissible. I wrote to both parties and to your Clerk advising them of my decision.<sup>5 6 7</sup>
6. The same day, to avoid any risk of prejudice, I suspended my consideration of the complaint pending confirmation from the PSNI of

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<sup>1</sup> Document 1  
<sup>2</sup> Document 2  
<sup>3</sup> Document 3  
<sup>4</sup> Document 4  
<sup>5</sup> Document 5  
<sup>6</sup> Document 6  
<sup>7</sup> Document 7

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whether there was any police investigation into Mr Flanagan's alleged conduct. By letter dated 11 September 2013 the PSNI advised me that no such investigation was ongoing or contemplated.<sup>8</sup>

7. Thereafter I interviewed Mr Flanagan<sup>9</sup> and Mr Allister<sup>10</sup>. I also spoke by telephone to Mr Terry McHugh, the author of the text in question.<sup>11</sup> I downloaded other relevant documents from the internet and considered the law in relation to the communication of offensive material.

**Findings in Fact**

8. I found the following facts established -
- i. That Prince George of Cambridge was born on 22 July 2013. For some days prior to the birth there had been a 'media circus' outside the front door of the hospital where the Duchess was confined.
  - ii. That on 22 July 2013 Mr Flanagan retweeted a tweet from Terry McHugh, a comedian. He also 'favourited' the tweet.<sup>12 13</sup>
  - iii. That the text was as follows:  
*"The news says that the duchess doll entered the hospital via the back entrance. If William had done the same we wouldn't have to suffer this balls."<sup>14</sup>*
  - iv. At that time Mr Flanagan had approximately 3,600 followers who received the text in question as a result of his action.<sup>15</sup>
  - v. That this tweet was one of a number visible on Mr Flanagan's tweeter feed that was critical of or poked fun at the Royal Family.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Document 8

<sup>9</sup> Document 9

<sup>10</sup> Document 10

<sup>11</sup> Document 11

<sup>12</sup> Document 2

<sup>13</sup> Document 9

<sup>14</sup> Document 2

<sup>15</sup> Document 12

<sup>16</sup> Document 12

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- vi. That Mr Flanagan made extensive use of twitter and received more than 11,000 tweets between his election in 2011 and the date of this incident. These tweets were by no means all related to politics and covered a wide range of subjects, including GAA, as well as politics.<sup>17 18</sup>
- vii. That Mr Flanagan's 'handle' did not include 'MLA' or anything else to indicate that he was a Member.<sup>19 20</sup>
- viii. That the 'bio' part of Mr Flanagan's twitter feed described him as –  
“*Sinn Fein MLA for Fermanagh and South Tyrone.*”  
The contact telephone number given there was for his consistency office in Enniskillen.<sup>21 22 23</sup>
- ix. That on 25 July 2013, following an approach from the Impartial Reporter, Mr Flanagan issued an apology for publication in that newspaper.<sup>24</sup>
- x. At about the same time Mr Flanagan caused the tweet in question to be removed from his tweeter feed.<sup>25</sup>
- xi. That Mr Flanagan had no settled criteria for deciding which of the tweets he received he would retweet. He tended to retweet if he believed that the subject matter was interesting or amusing. At the time he retweeted it he considered the tweet in question to be amusing.<sup>26</sup>
- xii. That Mr Allister did not make a complaint to the PSNI about Mr Flanagan's conduct.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Document 9

<sup>18</sup> Document 12

<sup>19</sup> Document 9

<sup>20</sup> Document 12

<sup>21</sup> Document 9

<sup>22</sup> Document 12

<sup>23</sup> Document 10

<sup>24</sup> Document 9

<sup>25</sup> Document 9

<sup>26</sup> Document 9

<sup>27</sup> Document 10

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- xiii. That there has been no PSNI investigation into whether Mr Flanagan's actions constituted a contravention of section 127(1)(a) of the Communications Act 2003.<sup>28</sup> That provision makes it an offence to send a message that is grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character.
- xiv. That throughout Mr Flanagan has maintained that he believed the tweet was an innocent joke about the royal birth and that he did not appreciate its alternative crude meaning until after the approach from the Impartial Reporter.<sup>29</sup>
- xv. That in July 2013 Mr McHugh's twitter feed did not include the warning –  
*"elected representatives should retweet me with caution."*  
Mr McHugh added these words as a joke only after the controversy about the retweeting of his royal birth 'joke' became public<sup>30</sup>.

**Reasoned Decision**

- 9. The first issue in this complaint is whether, at the relevant time, Mr Flanagan was acting in his capacity as a Member. If he was, then his conduct would be within the scope of the Code but if, when he retweeted the text, he was not so acting then his conduct would not be within the scope of the Code. As the Code makes clear it  
*"aims to cover the conduct of all Members with respect to anything members say or do as an elected Member of the Assembly. It does not, however, cover the conduct of Members in any other capacity including conduct in their private or family life."*
- 10. When asked about this issue Mr Allister's view was that Mr Flanagan was acting in his capacity as a Member. In support of that position Mr Allister drew attention to the fact that the 'bio' part of Mr Flanagan's twitter feed described him as "*Sinn Fein MLA for Fermanagh and South Tyrone*" and that the contact telephone shown there was the number of

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<sup>28</sup> Document 8

<sup>29</sup> Document 9

<sup>30</sup> Document 11

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his constituency office in Enniskillen. Mr Allister further asserted that in the absence of any disclaimer on the twitter feed indicating which tweets were private and which were tweeted by Mr Flanagan as a Member it was reasonable to assume that all the tweets were by Mr Flanagan in his capacity as a Member. Mr Allister further suggested that the warning on Mr McHugh's twitter feed should have put Mr Flanagan on his guard about retweeting any of the tweets. However, as that warning was added to Mr McHugh's site only after Mr Flanagan had retweeted the text that suggestion is ill conceived.

11. Against that Mr Flanagan told me, and I have found this as fact, that he made extensive use of twitter and that "*by no means all his tweets related to politics*". They related also to a wide range of subjects including the GAA. Mr Flanagan told me that he retweeted the text in a private capacity and not in his capacity as a Member. He drew attention to the fact that his 'handle' did not include 'MLA' or anything else to indicate that he was a Member.
12. I agree with Mr Allister that a person viewing the 'bio' part of Mr Flanagan's twitter feed might reasonably assume that all his tweets and retweets there were those of Mr Flanagan as a Member. Had the Code provided that the acts or omissions of Members which could reasonably be presumed to have been in a person's capacity as a Member were within the scope of the Code then there would have been no doubt that the conduct complained of was within the scope of the Code. But the Code does not so provide. Rather the provision is to the effect that the conduct must in fact be in the person's capacity as a Member.
13. In the apology he issued Mr Flanagan stated that he had retweeted the text "*in a split second error of judgment*". That is consistent with what he told me at interview about his decisions to retweet generally. I am satisfied that he gave no consideration to the capacity in which he was acting before retweeting the text in question.
14. Having had due regard to all these factors I am not satisfied that when Mr Flanagan retweeted the text, he was, in fact, acting in his capacity as a Member. It follows that the conduct complained of is outwith the scope of the Code and that, accordingly, the complaint cannot be upheld.

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Page 5

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15. I now consider whether the retweeting of the offensive text would, had it been within the scope of the Code, have constituted a breach of the Code provisions set out in the complaint.

*Public Duty principle*

16. Mr Allister alleges a breach of that part of the Public Duty principle relating to acting in the interests of the community as a whole. That provision cannot impose an absolute duty. Members will not infrequently act in a way that is contrary to the interests of some individuals: there are winners and losers as a result of almost any action. I am not satisfied that Mr Flanagan's actions, albeit some will have found them disrespectful and more will have found them distasteful, constitute a breach of this part of the Code. I note that the associated text to this part of the Code draws attention to the fact that the electors are the final arbiters in this area.
17. Although Mr Allister did not allege it, I have considered whether Mr Flanagan breached the Public Duty principle to uphold the law by retweeting a grossly offensive tweet. So doing would have contravened section 127(1)(a) of the Communications Act 2003. I note that, although at interview Mr Allister opined that it was not for him to decide whether the tweet was offensive or grossly offensive, in his complaint letter he described it merely as "*offensive and entirely inappropriate*". I note also the fact that Mr Allister did not report Mr Flanagan's conduct to the police. That is entirely consistent with his complaint that the text was "offensive" rather than grossly offensive. Given Mr Allister's knowledge of the law and strongly held views on this matter I have no doubt that had he considered the tweet was grossly offensive he would have reported Mr Flanagan's conduct to the police with a request that they investigate it for a contravention of section 127(1)(a) of the Communications Act 2003.
18. At interview Mr Flanagan maintained his position that, at the time he retweeted it, he believed the text to be an innocent joke about the royal birth. He did not, he asserted, appreciate the crude interpretation of the text until it was brought to his attention by a reporter from the Impartial Reporter. Given that this was one of a number of tweets about the royal family Mr Flanagan had tweeted in the proceeding few days and the

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obvious crude meaning of the text I find Mr Flanagan's account hard to accept and at best extremely naive. I have not the slightest doubt that almost all of those who read his retweet, or the media reports of it, would have placed on it its obvious crude and offensive meaning.

19. Whilst I have no difficulty in concluding that the tweet was offensive, I am not, having regard to these matters and the judicial interpretation of 'offensive' and 'grossly offensive' satisfied that this tweet was "grossly offensive" and so against the law. That being so, I do not consider that the Public Duty principle was breached.

*Good Relations principle*

20. Turning to the alleged contravention of the Good Relations principle I am not satisfied that Mr Flanagan's actions were capable of having any significant impact on community relations. As he pointed out at interview those who found his retweet distasteful were by no means restricted to the PUL community. I do not consider that the Good relations principle was breached.

*Respect principle*

21. The supporting text to the Respect Principle makes clear that no person should be subjected to "*an unreasonable and excessive personal attack*". Whilst Mr Flanagan's retweet was offensive it was an offensive 'joke'. It would be unjustified to regard it as an unreasonable and excessive personal attack on any member of the royal family. To do so would be to give it weight that it does not merit. It was a crude and offensive joke in bad taste which demeans Mr Flanagan rather than the Royal Family. No complaint has been received from any of those who were the subject of the joke or from anyone on their behalf. Whilst the 'joke' and Mr Flanagan's explanation of it may have lessened the confidence and trust of some in Mr Flanagan's integrity, there is no reason to suppose that his actions have had any wider impact. I do not consider that the Respect principle was breached
22. I note that shortly after being approached by a reporter about his retweet, Mr Flanagan issued an apology and that when pressed at interview a more fulsome apology was forthcoming. I note also that he

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removed the retweet in question from his twitter feed following the approach from the reporter. Had his conduct been in breach of the Code these actions might have provided a degree of mitigation.

23. Accordingly, even had I been satisfied that the retweeting of the 'joke' was within the scope of the Code, I would not have found that Mr Flanagan had breached the provisions of the Code specified in the complaint.

**Conclusion**

24. I find this complaint has not been made out.

**DOUGLAS BAIN CBE TD Advocate**  
**Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards**

**12 December 2013**

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Page 8

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**ANNEX A**

**DOCUMENTS**

<b>Document No</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	Complaint
2	Screen print - Impartial Reporter 25 July 2013
3	Screen print - UTV 25 July 2013
4	Screen print - Belfast Daily 25 July 2013
5	Letter - Bain:Flanagan 29 July 2013
6	Letter - Bain:Allister 29 July 2013
7	Letter - Bain:Gill 29 July 2013
8	Letter - Demsey:Bain 11 September 2013
9	Phil Flanagan MLA - Note of Meeting 14 October 2013
10	Jim Allister QC MLA - Note of Meeting 7 November 2013
11	Note of telephone call - Bain: McHugh 13 November 2013
12	Phil Flanagan MLA - Extract Twitter Feed

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**ANNEX B**

**MOST RELEVANT CODE PROVISIONS**

**‘Scope**

It is important to note that this Code aims to cover the conduct of all Members with respect to anything that Members say or do in their capacity as an elected Member of the Assembly. However, it does not, for example, cover:

- The conduct or activities of Members in their private and family life;’

**‘Principles of conduct**

Members shall observe the following principles of conduct, which include principles based upon the general principles of conduct identified by the committee on Standards and Public Life as applying to holders of public office and further principles agreed by the Assembly:

**Public duty**

Members have a duty to uphold the law and to act on all occasions in accordance with the public trust placed in them.

Members have a general duty to act in the interests of the community as a whole.

Members have a special duty to their constituents and are responsible to the electorate who are the final arbiter of their conduct as public representatives.’

**‘Promoting good relations**

Members will act in a way that is conducive to promoting good relations by providing a positive example for the wider community to follow by acting justly and promoting a cultural of respect for the law.’

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**'Respect**

It is acknowledged that the exchange of ideas, and opinions on policies may be robust but this should be kept in context and not extend to individuals being subjected to unreasonable and excessive personal attack. Members should keep in mind that rude and offensive behaviour may lower the public's regard for, and confidence in, Members of the Assembly itself. Members should therefore show respect and consideration for others at all times.'

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JA/JA/General/5975

Mr Douglas Bain  
Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards  
Room 283  
Parliament Buildings  
Stormont  
Belfast  
BT4 3XX

25<sup>th</sup> July 2013

Dear Mr Bain,

I write to make a formal complaint against Phil Flanagan MLA following his conduct on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> July.

By re-tweeting an offensive and entirely inappropriate comment it is my belief that Mr Flanagan has breached the Assembly Code of Conduct and as such requires investigation.

Please find enclosed relevant evidence.

The Code of Conduct clearly states:

Members have a general duty to act in the interests of the community as a whole.

**Promoting Good Relations**

Members will act in a way that is conducive to promoting good relations by providing a positive example for the wider community to follow by acting justly and promoting a culture of respect for the law.

**Respect**

It is acknowledged that the exchange of ideas, and opinions on policies may be robust but this should be kept in context and not extend to individuals being subjected to unreasonable and excessive personal attack. Members should keep in mind that rude and offensive behaviour may lower the public's regard for, and confidence in, Members and the Assembly itself. Members should therefore show respect and consideration for others at all times.

James H Allister QC MLA, 38 Henry Street, Harryville, Ballymena, Co Antrim BT42 3AH

Tel: 028 25 640250

Accordingly, I ask you investigate.

Yours sincerely,

James H Allister QC MLA

**News Articles Confirming Breach**

<http://www.impartialreporter.com/news/roundup/articles/2013/07/25/401767-mla-sorry-over-royal-birth-tweet/>

<http://www.u.tv/News/Flanagan-sorry-for-Royal-baby-tweet/6da0a6e6-ec63-4e5a-897d-5433047b545c>

<http://www.belfastdaily.co.uk/2013/07/25/sinn-fein-mla-forced-to-apologise-over-lewd-royal-baby-tweet/>



2

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### MLA sorry over Royal birth tweet

Published: 25 Jul 2013 17:15

0 comments

SINN Fein assembly member Phil Flanagan has been forced to apologise after sharing a sexually vulgar tweet about the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge on his Twitter page.



MLA Phil Flanagan said he only saw the potential double meaning of the tweet in hindsight

The Fermanagh-south Tyrone MLA 'retweeted' the crude comment to his 3,600 plus followers on Monday evening before news was announced of the birth of the Royal couple's first child

The unsavoury tweet written by user @Threepwood2012 and shared on the social-networking site by Mr Flanagan and others read "The news says that duchess doll entered the hospital via a back entrance. If William had done the same we wouldn't have to suffer this balls."

Mr Flanagan also 'favoured' the tweet which was just one of several tweets visible on his Twitter page that poked fun at, or was critical of, the Royal family, but by far the most offensive

Yesterday (Wednesday) the politician and father-of-two apologised saying he retweeted the tweet "in a split second error of judgement."

In a statement to The Impartial Reporter, Mr Flanagan said: "In a split second error of judgement, I misconstrued the meaning of this tweet and re-tweeted it to my followers in that context. I innocently believed that this joke was about an expectant father being spotted entering the hospital through the front door, leading to a two day media circus with no news to report."

He added, "In hindsight, I can now understand the potential double meaning that some may read into this, but this was not my intention. I apologise for any offence that this may have caused anyone."

It is not known if by retweeting the remark Mr Flanagan breached the MLA Code of Conduct which states: "Members should keep in mind that rude and offensive behaviour may lower the public's regard for, and confidence in, Members and the Assembly itself. Members should therefore show

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1450

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## UTV Live News – Latest stories, videos and pictures

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# Flanagan sorry for Royal baby tweet

Published Thursday, 25 July 2013



Tweet 2

**A Sinn Féin MLA has apologised for re-tweeting a lewd comment about the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.**



The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge leave hospital with their newborn son. (© Getty)

Fermanagh and South Tyrone representative Phil Flanagan favoured and shared the Tweet with his 3,600-plus followers on Monday.

John's he go

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KEEP

Help for w

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- » 'Torrer
- » Simon
- » Comm
- » Men a

### BLOGS



He apologised in a statement to the Impartial Reporter newspaper.

Two Hill

"In a split second error of judgement, I misconstrued the meaning of this tweet and re-tweeted it to my followers in that context," Mr Flanagan said.

**I innocently believed that this joke was about an expectant father being spotted entering the hospital through the front door, leading to a two day media circus with no news to report**

Mos

Phil Flanagan

1.

"In hindsight, I can now understand the potential double meaning that some may read into this, but this was not my intention.

"I apologise for any offence that this may have caused anyone."

2. Pet

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Mr Flanagan was criticised on the social networking site after he shared the tweet.

It was posted ahead of the news that the Royal couple had given birth to their first child, who has been named George Alexander Louis.

He will be third in line to the throne and will be styled as the Prince of Cambridge.

TUV leader Jim Allister later confirmed that he had submitted a formal complaint about the tweet.

"While hardly surprising, it is nonetheless unwarranted and I would argue it was a breach of the Code of Conduct that all MLAs are bound by," the North Antrim MLA said.

MOS

"Therefore, I have today sent a letter of formal complaint to the Assembly Commissioner for investigation."

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John in Creggan wrote (3 days ago):

@Gerard Belfast. One word ELECTED unlike a royal. Oh how the Unionists love democracy.

4

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## SINN FEIN MLA FORCED TO APOLOGISE OVER LEWD ROYAL BABY TWEET

July 25, 2013

**A Sinn Fein MLA has had to issue an apology after he re-tweeted a lewd comment about the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.**

Fermanagh and South Tyrone politician Phil Flanagan both favoured and shared the Tweet with his 3,900-plus followers on Monday.

However, he has now issued a statement of apology to his local impartial Reporter newspaper.

Mr Flanagan, a former Sinn Fein press officer who is also a father of two children, was criticised on the social networking site after he shared the tweet.

The tweet was posted ahead of the news that the Royal couple had given birth to their first child, who has been named George Alexander Louis.

In a split second error of judgement, I misconstructed the meaning of this tweet and re-tweeted it to my followers in that context. Mr Flanagan said in his statement.

I innocently believed that this joke was about an expectant father being spotted entering the hospital through the front door, leading to a two day media circus with no news to report.

In hindsight, I can now understand the potential double meaning that some may read into this, but this was not my intention.

I apologise for any offence that this may have caused anyone.



Sinn Fein MLA Phil Flanagan forced to apologise over Royal couple lewd tweet.

- Night of Shame: Two Alliance Offices Targeted
- Catholic Church and Orange Order At Odds
- Police Arrest Man Over Threats To Kill
- Three Arrested Over Assault
- Guns and Ammo Seized In West Belfast Murder



5

**COMMISSIONER FOR STANDARDS**  
Room 283  
Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw  
Stormont  
Belfast  
BT4 3XX

Tel: 028 9052 1211  
Email: standardscommissioner@niassembly.gov.uk

**Mr Phil Flanagan MLA**  
**Sinn Féin**  
**7 Market Place**  
**ENNISKILLEN**  
**Co Fermanagh**

**29 July 2013**

Dear Mr Flanagan

**COMPLAINT AGAINST YOU BY MR JIM ALLISTER QC MLA**

I write to advise you that I have received a complaint (copy enclosed) from Mr Jim Allister QC MLA that by re-tweeting a tweet regarding the birth of Prince George of Cambridge you breached certain provisions of the Members' Code of Conduct. I have decided that the complaint is admissible. I enclose a copy of it.

I have now started my investigation and now afford you the opportunity to furnish me with any information which you believe would assist me in my investigation. Such information might include any press release you issued regarding the matter or any other steps taken to clarify your position regarding the message re-tweeted. You are, however, under no obligation to provide anything at this time. At a later stage of my investigation I may formally require you to provide me with information and documents. It is also likely that I will meet with you to obtain your response to the allegations against you and any matters that arise in the course of my investigation.

In the meantime I enclose a note outlining the procedure for my investigation and for any interviews. It also draws attention to certain statutory provisions.

Yours sincerely

**Douglas Bain CBE TD Advocate**  
**Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards**

**Enc**

PROTECTIVE INVESTIGATION

**COMMISSIONER FOR STANDARDS PROCEDURES AND  
STATUTORY PROVISIONS**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This note is intended to outline the procedure and practice for handling complaints. It also gives information on certain relevant statutory provisions.
- 1.2 For further details of these matters please refer to sections 24-33 of the Assembly Members' (Independent Financial Review and Standards) Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 ('the Act') and to the Assembly Members' (Independent Financial Review and Standards) Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (General Procedures) Direction 2012 ('the General Procedures Direction').

**2. Action on Receipt of Complaint**

- 2.1 I will normally acknowledge receipt of a complaint within five working days.
- 2.2 When doing so I will send the complainant a copy of this note.
- 2.3 As Commissioner for Standards my first task is to consider whether the complaint meets the admissibility criteria set out in the General Procedures Direction.
- 2.4 If I am satisfied that a complaint is admissible I will start my investigation (see section 3 below).
- 2.5 If I am not satisfied that a complaint is admissible because not all the required information has been provided, I will write to the complainant requiring him or her to send me what is missing. If I do not receive all

the required information within 21 days then the complaint is not admissible and will not be investigated.

- 2.6 In any case in which I decide that a complaint is not admissible I will inform the Committee on Standards and Privileges of my decision. If the Committee does not agree with my decision they may ask me to reconsider it.
- 2.7 If the Committee agrees that a complaint is not admissible the Clerk of Standards will write to the complainant and the MLA whose conduct was the subject of the complaint telling them of the Committee's decision.

### **3. My Investigation**

- 3.1 My investigation starts when I am satisfied that a complaint submitted to me meets the admissibility criteria set out in Direction 3.2 of the General Procedures Direction. At that stage I will write to the complainant, the Clerk to the Committee on Standards and Privileges and to the Member whose conduct is the subject of the complaint advising them of my investigation.
- 3.2 In the course of my investigation I will seek to ingather all relevant evidence both oral and documentary. This will normally be done on a voluntary basis but on occasion it may be necessary for me to use my statutory powers (see section 5 below) to call for witnesses or documents.
- 3.3 Once I have completed my investigation I will draft my report to the Committee on Standards and Privileges. Before I submit that report to the Committee I will give the Member whose conduct is the subject of the complaint an opportunity to challenge any finding of fact I have

made. If I accept such a challenge I will amend my findings. If I reject it, I will include a copy of the challenge in my report to the Committee.

3.4 The Committee will consider my report and may ask me questions about it. It is for the Committee, and ultimately for the Assembly, to consider what action, if any, to take on my report.

3.5 As Commissioner for Standards I have no role in determining any sanction that may be imposed where there has been a breach of the Code of Conduct.

#### **4. Interviews**

4.1 It is important that I hear from those with information relevant to my investigation. A meeting or interview will often be the best way of gathering that information.

4.2 Normally such interviews will be on a voluntary basis and will take place at a mutually convenient place and time.

4.3 Before interviewing or requesting evidence from any person for the first time I will notify them in writing of the purpose of the interview. This will be done either in my letter inviting the person to arrange a meeting with me or, where my statutory powers are being used, in the formal notice. I will also tell the person of my powers to call for witnesses and evidence and the procedure to be followed for my investigation. Normally that will be done by giving them a copy of this note.

4.4 Where it is necessary for me to exercise my statutory powers to require a person to attend for interview I will issue a formal notice setting out the time and place of the interview, the particular matters about which that person is required to give evidence and the documents, if any,



which that person is required to produce. The notice will also draw attention to the consequences of failure to comply with the notice.

- 4.5 Whilst the Act makes provision for me to take evidence on oath that is not my normal practice.
- 4.6 At the interview the interviewee, in addition to answering my questions, will be given an opportunity to say anything else he or she wishes that is relevant to my investigation.
- 4.7 At the interview I will usually be accompanied by a note taker. Alternatively, a recording of the interview may be made.
- 4.8 As soon as possible after the interview I will send the interviewee a full note of the meeting and allow them at least 14 days to suggest any revisions to it. If no revisions are received within the specified period the note will be treated as final. I will consider and accept or reject any proposed revisions received on time. If I accept them, the note will be amended and treated as final. If I reject them the un-amended note will be treated as final but I will include a copy of the proposed revisions in my report to the Committee.

## 5. **Statutory Provisions**

- 5.1 Section 31 of the Act makes it a criminal offence for a person who has been sent a formal notice to attend for interview or to produce documents to –
  - (a) refuse or fail to attend;
  - (b) refuse or fail to answer questions;
  - (c) refuse or fail to produce a document specified in the notice;
  - (d) refuse to take the oath; or

(e) alter, suppress, conceal or destroy any document specified in the notice.

5.2 A person convicted of that offence is liable to a fine of up to £5,000 or imprisonment for a period of not more than three months or to both.

5.3 Section 33 of the Act prohibits me, and any person who has assisted me in my investigation, from disclosing any information contained in the complaint or given to or provided by me in connection with my investigation. Persons from whom I seek information or documents or who are interviewed by me are assisting me in my investigation.

5.4 The Code of Conduct imposes on Members a duty to co-operate at all times with any investigation into their conduct. It further provided that any substantiated allegation of non-compliance with an investigation will constitute a breach of the Code.

## **6. Further Information**

6.1 If you are unclear about anything in this note or if you have any questions regarding my investigation please do not hesitate to contact me. As my post is part-time this is best done by email to [douglas.bain@niassembly.gov.uk](mailto:douglas.bain@niassembly.gov.uk). Alternatively you may contact my Personal Secretary, or write to me at Room 283, Parliament Buildings, Ballymiscaw, Stormont, Belfast BT4 3XX.



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

6  
**COMMISSIONER FOR STANDARDS**

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Email: [standardscommissioner@niassembly.gov.uk](mailto:standardscommissioner@niassembly.gov.uk)

**Mr Jim Allister QC MLA  
TUV  
38 Henry Street  
Harryville  
BALLYMENA  
Co Antrim  
BT42 3AH**

**29 July 2013**

Dear Mr Allister

**YOUR COMPLAINT AGAINST MR PHIL FLANAGAN MLA**

Thank you for your letter of 25 July 2013.

I am satisfied that your complaint meets the admissibility criteria as set out in Direction 3.2 of the Assembly Members' (Independent Financial Review and Standards) Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (General Procedures) Direction 2012. Accordingly I have commenced my investigation.

At a later stage of the process it is likely that I will wish to meet with you to take your views on any matters that arise in the course of my investigation but, in the meantime, if you have any information that may be relevant, perhaps you could send this on to me.

I enclose a note outlining the procedure for my investigation and for any interviews that I conduct. It draws attention also to certain statutory provisions.

Yours sincerely

**Douglas Bain CBE TD Advocate  
Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards**

**Enc**

**COMMISSIONER FOR STANDARDS PROCEDURES AND STATUTORY  
PROVISIONS**

**1. Introduction**

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- 1.2 For further details of these matters please refer to sections 24-33 of the Assembly Members' (Independent Financial Review and Standards) Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 ('the Act') and to the Assembly Members' (Independent Financial Review and Standards) Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (General Procedures) Direction 2012 ('the General Procedures Direction').

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- 2.2 In the course of my investigation I will seek to ingather all relevant evidence both oral and documentary. This will normally be done on a voluntary basis but on occasion it may be necessary for me to use my statutory powers (see below) to call for witnesses or documents.
- 2.3 Once I have completed my investigation I will draft my report to the Committee on Standards and Privileges. Before I submit that report to

the Committee I will give the Member whose conduct is the subject of the complaint an opportunity to challenge any finding of fact I have made. If I accept such a challenge I will amend my report. If I reject it, I will include a copy of the challenge in my report to the Committee.

- 2.4 The Committee will consider my report and may ask me questions about it. It is for the Committee, and ultimately for the Assembly, to consider what action, if any, to take on my report.
- 2.5 As Commissioner for Standards I have no role in determining any sanction that may be imposed where there has been a breach of the Code of Conduct.

### **3. Interviews**

- 3.1 It is important that I hear from those with information relevant to my investigation. A meeting or interview will often be the best way of gathering that information.
- 3.2 Normally such interviews will be on a voluntary basis and will take place at a mutually convenient place and time.
- 3.3 Before interviewing or requesting evidence from any person for the first time I will notify them in writing of the purpose of the interview. This will be done either in my letter inviting the person to arrange a meeting with me or, where my statutory powers are being used, in the formal notice. I will also tell the person of my powers to call for witnesses and evidence and the procedure to be followed for my investigation. Normally that will be done by giving them a copy of this note.
- 3.4 Where it is necessary for me to exercise my statutory powers to require a person to attend for interview I will issue a formal notice setting out the time and place of the interview, the particular matters about which

that person is required to give evidence and the documents, if any, which that person is required to produce. The notice will also draw attention to the consequences of failure to comply with the notice.

- 3.5 Whilst the Act makes provision for me to take evidence on oath that is not my normal practice.
- 3.6 At the interview the interviewee, in addition to answering my questions, will be given an opportunity to say anything else he or she wishes that is relevant to my investigation.
- 3.7 At the interview I will usually be accompanied by a note taker. Alternatively, a recording of the interview may be made.
- 3.8 As soon as possible after the interview I will send the interviewee a full note of the meeting and allow them at least 14 days to suggest any revisions to it. If no revisions are received within the specified period the note will be treated as final. I will consider and accept or reject any proposed revisions received on time. If I accept them, the note will be amended and treated as final. If I reject them the un-amended note will be treated as final but I will include a copy of the proposed revisions in my report to the Committee.

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  - (c) refuse or fail to produce a document specified in the notice;
  - (d) refuse to take the oath; or

- (e) alter, suppress, conceal or destroy any document specified in the notice.
- 4.2 A person convicted of that offence is liable to a fine of up to £5,000 or imprisonment for a period of not more than three months or to both.
- 4.3 Section 33 of the Act prohibits me, and any person who has assisted me in my investigation, from disclosing any information contained in the complaint or given to or provided by me in connection with my investigation. Persons from whom I seek information or documents or who are interviewed by me are assisting me in my investigation.
- 4.4 The Code of Conduct imposes on Members a duty to co-operate at all times with any investigation into their conduct. It further provided that any substantiated allegation of non-compliance with an investigation will constitute a breach of the Code.

5. **Further Information**

- 5.1 If you are unclear about anything in this note or if you have any questions regarding my investigation please do not hesitate to contact me. As my post is part-time this is best done by email to [douglas.bain@niassembly.gov.uk](mailto:douglas.bain@niassembly.gov.uk). Alternatively you may contact my Personal Secretary, or write to me at Room 283, Parliament Buildings, Ballymiscaw, Stormont, Belfast BT4 3XX.



7

**COMMISSIONER FOR STANDARDS**  
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**Mr Paul Gill**  
**Clerk to the Standards & Privileges Committee**  
**Room 254**  
**Parliament Buildings**  
**Ballymiscaw**  
**Stormont**  
**Belfast**  
**BT4 3XX**

**29 July 2013**

Dear Paul

**COMPLAINT BY JIM ALLISTER MLA AGAINST PHIL FLANAGAN MLA**

I write to advise you that I have commenced an investigation into the above complaint which I have determined meets the admissibility criteria as set out in Direction 3.2 of the General Procedures Direction.

I enclose a copy of the complaint.

Yours sincerely

**Douglas Bain CBE TD Advocate**  
**Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards**

**Enc**



Personal, Professional, Protective Policing



**ROBIN DEMPSEY**  
**STAFF OFFICER TO DEPUTY CHIEF CONSTABLE**

8

Our Ref: Com Sec 13\8326

11<sup>th</sup> September 2013

*Dear Commissioner,*

**COMPLAINT AGAINST MR PHIL FLANAGAN MLA**

Thank you for your letter, dated 8 August 2013, which the Deputy Chief Constable has asked that I reply to on her behalf.

I can advise you that police are not currently undertaking an investigation in relation to this matter and having considered the matter no investigation is contemplated.

I trust that this is of some assistance.

*Yours sincerely*

**ROBIN DEMPSEY**

Douglas Bain  
NI Assembly Commissioner for Standards  
Room 283  
Parliament Buildings  
Ballymiscaw  
Stormont  
Belfast  
BT4 3XX

Private Office, PSNI Headquarters, 65 Knock Road, Belfast, Northern Ireland BT5 6LE



PROTECT - INVESTIGATION

9



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

## INVESTIGATION INTO COMPLAINT – PHIL FLANAGAN MLA

### Meeting with Mr Phil Flanagan MLA

14 October 2013  
Room 283

Start: 13.15 hrs      End: 13.50 hrs

Present: Douglas Bain, Commissioner for Standards  
Phil Flanagan MLA  
Sheila McCaughley (Note taker)

1. Mr Bain reminded Mr Flanagan of the contents of his letter of 29 July 2013 which had included a note outlining the procedure for this investigation. Mr Bain sought clarification on whether Mr Flanagan had understood the contents of the note including his legal obligations. Mr Flanagan stated that he was unsure what his legal obligations were and sought clarification on this. Mr Bain informed Mr Flanagan that he will have committed a criminal offence if he refused to answer any questions that were put to him or if he gave a false or misleading answer. Further to this, Mr Flanagan was prohibited from disclosing anything that was said by both parties during the interview. Mr Flanagan asked if the disclosure prohibition was to be enforced at any stage or just until the report was published. Mr Bain advised that the Act sets out 'at any stage' but that realistically when the report is published it is in the public domain. Mr Bain set out his intention of asking Mr Flanagan a series of questions to which Mr Flanagan would have the opportunity to add anything at the end of the interview. Once a note of the meeting was drawn up it would be issued by email to Mr Flanagan who then would have an opportunity to suggest any revisions via tracked changes. The time period allowed for this was 14 days. Mr Bain then advised Mr Flanagan that he would look at any proposed changes and, if accepted, the note would be amended accordingly. If they were not accepted then the note would not be amended but the unaccepted revisions would be brought before the Committee and an

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explanation given to the Committee on why these revisions were not accepted. Mr Flanagan acknowledged his understanding of the process.

2. Mr Flanagan was asked to outline the circumstances surrounding the retweeting incident on 22 July 2013 and to provide details of the time the retweet occurred, what Mr Flanagan was doing at the time and to confirm if he knew the person 'user@Threepwood 2012' who sent the tweet.
3. Mr Flanagan could not recall what time of day the retweet was sent or what he had been doing at the time. He said that he knew the person who had sent the tweet as Terry McHugh, a starting stand-up comedian.
4. When asked about the reference to the word 'balls' at the end of the tweet and what Mr Flanagan thought that this referred to, Mr Flanagan explained that he understood this to mean that, at the time, there had been a media scrum for several hours outside a hospital and where, openly, one reporter from the BBC had actually said 'there may be no news until tomorrow but in that event we'll continue to make stuff up in respect of it.'
5. When asked to clarify how he (Mr Flanagan) made a decision on which of the tweets he receives he retweets Mr Flanagan provided some background information on how Twitter works. He explained that he would follow around 4000 people and when he looks at Twitter on his phone only the most recent tweets that everyone has said would show up on his timeline. He said that some people would read these very quickly and either ignore them or reply to them. He went on to say that if he was following someone and retweeted one of their tweets then anyone who would follow him would also share the tweet. When pressed on how Mr Flanagan decides on which tweets to retweet, Mr Flanagan said he would retweet something if it was interesting, if someone was making a point, if he was sympathetic towards another person's cause or if he found something funny. In other circumstances, for example, if there was a business in Mr Flanagan's constituency that is just getting off the ground and wishes to attract followers then Mr Flanagan would retweet these to share with his own followers.
6. When asked if retweeting to him was a conscious decision or done automatically Mr Flanagan said that it was really a split-second decision. Mr Flanagan was asked if, when retweeting something, he applied his mind to whether the retweet was amusing or something that other people might find amusing or of interest. Mr Flanagan responded saying that it was something that he did not give much thought to but that since this incident happened he has started to give it more consideration.
7. Mr Flanagan was asked why this particular 'retweet' was subsequently removed from his twitter page by 27<sup>th</sup> July 2013. Mr Flanagan said that

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when he had actually realised what the retweet meant he felt that it was important to remove it from his twitter feed and had subsequently un-retweeted it. When asked if he spoke to someone for advice before doing this Mr Flanagan indicated that he had not spoken to anybody. It was then suggested to Mr Flanagan that he had in fact spoken to senior Sinn Fein officials before removing it. He responded that when the query came in from the journalist from the Impartial Reporter it had been sent to both him and the Sinn Fein Press Office. He had subsequently contacted the Press Office informing them that he would handle this himself advising them of what his response would be. The Press Office were satisfied with this. Mr Flanagan was asked if the Press Office had suggested to him that he should remove it from his twitter feed. Mr Flanagan said that he couldn't remember whether this was the case or not but that it was something he felt was important to do at the time.

8. When asked how many tweets/retweets Mr Flanagan would receive on his twitter page everyday Mr Flanagan said that he had moved house recently and didn't have access to the internet or broadband and also did not have any mobile phone coverage so his usage on twitter had been restricted. He added that he would usually tweet/retweet a lot and in fact added that he has had up to 11,000 tweets since he started as an MLA which he said was more than anybody else had done which had been referenced in the recent Stratagem poll. He said that a lot of these tweets would not be political in nature as twitter was also used as a personal communications method with people.
9. Mr Flanagan was asked in what capacity he was retweeting the tweet. Mr Flanagan responded saying that he was not doing it in his capacity as an MLA for Fermanagh and South Tyrone and was retweeting it on an individual basis. It was put to Mr Flanagan that at the top of his twitter feed was a picture describing him as Sinn Fein MLA for Fermanagh and South Tyrone and that a reasonable person looking at this would assume that the comments on it were in fact from the Sinn Fein MLA for Fermanagh and South Tyrone. Mr Flanagan advised that this was the bio part of the twitter feed and that if you looked at his username it does not say Phil Flanagan MLA but only Phil Flanagan. He went on to say that a lot of MLAs and MPs use the MLA or MP bit in what you would call 'your handle' but that he did not which indicated that this was his own personal account. He added that he described himself as a Sinn Fein MLA because that is a role that he holds but that this did not indicate that he only tweeted in this capacity.
10. He was then asked if this was the case then why the contact number that was given was the number of his constituency office. Mr Flanagan responded say that anyone who wished to contact him in his role as an MLA would have access to do so through that number adding that anyone

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was also free to contact him through Twitter, Facebook or his own mobile telephone number. Mr Flanagan was then pressed on whether he would agree that a reasonable person looking at his page would assume that it was the page of Phil Flanagan MLA with the constituency office telephone number on it and that any views on this page would be his views as an MLA. Mr Flanagan responded saying that he did not believe this was the case and added that if he were to put his mobile number on the page, and which he has done in the past, then what usually happens is that he would receive a lot of angry and abusive calls from people. This was the reason he did not have his mobile number on the page and added that he definitely would not put his home telephone number on it in case his wife received abusive calls. Mr Flanagan said that he felt it important that he was approachable and that if anybody wants to contact him, they can but added that more people would in fact contact him using the private messaging option on Twitter than would actually telephone the constituency office number.

11. Mr Flanagan was asked if it would be fair to say that as a Republican he was not a supporter of the monarchy and in fact on the same day as the 'tweet' in question he had in fact retweeted other adverse comments about the monarchy and the Royal birth. Mr Flanagan responded saying that it was fair to say that he was not a supporter of the monarchy and that it would not surprise him that he had in fact retweeted other comments surrounding the monarchy and the Royal birth. It was put to Mr Flanagan that there had been a tweet to him from a Chris Adason about 'a woman entirely financially dependent on the State has chosen to have a baby and that Mr Flanagan had retweeted this which was also an adverse comment about the monarchy. Mr Flanagan responded saying that he did not think this was an adverse comment about the monarchy and that it could have been about anybody. Mr Flanagan was then referred to one of his own emails which said 'big story around here certainly isn't about the arrival of another mouth we all have to feed' and asked if this was a reference to the Royal Family. Mr Flanagan indicated that it was.
12. It was put to Mr Flanagan that another tweet regarding 'Prince William's heir (sic) is falling out' was also an adverse comment about the monarchy and in fact did he accept that he had been making adverse comments about the monarchy and comments that could be perceived by many in the PUL Community as being adverse.
13. Mr Flanagan responded by saying that he felt the word 'adverse' was a bit strong and that a better way of describing it was 'non-supportive' or 'poking fun' but could understand, on reflection, what was being said.
14. Referring back to the original 'tweet' Mr Flanagan was asked if he thought it was amusing. Mr Flanagan said that he did but for a different reason

## PROTECT - INVESTIGATION

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from the perceived meaning. He added that he found it funny from an innocent point of view.

15. Mr Flanagan was asked what he found amusing about a joke around a father entering a hospital by the front door. Mr Flanagan responded saying that he thought Prince William had been spotted going into the front of the hospital and that there had been a big handle on trying to get Kate in through the back door so she would not be seen by the media scrum that was there and that he thought he had been spotted going into the front door and that was why there was a big media circus following the whole incident. Mr Flanagan was asked what was amusing about this. Mr Flanagan responded saying that maybe he had a different sense of humour from others but added that it follows the perception or commentary that some in the Royal Family do things a bit daft now and again.
16. It was put to Mr Flanagan that some would say that his explanation was contrived and lacking in credibility and asked if Mr Flanagan stood by his explanation of what he honestly believed, at the time, the tweet meant. Mr Flanagan said he did.
17. Referring to the statement which was issued after this incident Mr Flanagan was asked who he had spoken to before issuing this and asked if it had been issued only to the Impartial Reporter. Mr Flanagan said that he had spoken to David in the Sinn Fein Press Office and it was a direct response to a request from a journalist in the Impartial Reporter. Referring to the words in the statement 'in a split second error of judgement' it was put to Mr Flanagan that this would suggest that he had in fact applied his mind to it, albeit, for a split second and had made a conscious decision to retweet the message. Mr Flanagan said that you make a judgement on whether you retweet about something or don't and it was not something that just happens. You have to move your thumb to the right place and hit it twice and this would not be something that you would do without thinking about it. Mr Flanagan was further asked if, when taking the decision to press the button to retweet the message, did he apply his mind to the meaning of the tweet. Mr Flanagan said that he did not give it any thought at all. Mr Flanagan was then asked if he hadn't given it any thought then why that did not tally with the account given in his statement ie that at the time he had thought it was a joke about Prince William entering the front door. Mr Flanagan responded saying that it was something he had read but had not thought about what it had meant and had retweeted it without thinking about it in any great detail.
18. Referring to the part in the Statement 'in hindsight I can now understand the potential double meaning' Mr Flanagan was asked at what time did he

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first realise that there was another meaning to it. Mr Flanagan said this was when he was contacted by the journalist.

19. Mr Flanagan was asked whether if it was suggested to him that a reasonable person reading the tweet would assume that it was a joke about anal intercourse rather than the interpretation that he had put on it, did he accept that proposition as correct. Mr Flanagan said he would not accept that proposition. . He added that he couldn't honestly say what interpretation he would have given if he had thought more about it because when he had retweeted it he did so based on the meaning of an innocent joke and that it wasn't until it had been brought to his attention by a journalist that he realised there was any other meaning to it.
20. Mr Flanagan was asked what his interpretation would be if he applied his mind to it now. Mr Flanagan insisted that he still regarded this as an innocent joke but that he could clearly see why there would be a double meaning but that would not be where his mind would immediately go. It was pointed out to Mr Flanagan that the alternative interpretation is pretty obvious and anyone putting that interpretation on it would find it offensive. Mr Flanagan replied saying that he did not think the interpretation was obvious as his mind would not be immediately drawn to it but could understand that some people would find it offensive.
21. Mr Flanagan was asked why he apologised in his statement for any offence this may have caused rather than the offence it undoubtedly did cause. Mr Flanagan said he could not answer this. He added that it wasn't a line in his statement that he had given much consideration to but that obviously the apology was a big part of his response and he had not thought much about the grammatical make-up of the sentence and the fact remained that he had apologised.
22. Mr Flanagan was asked if he agreed that many in the PUL Community would have found the retweet grossly offensive. Mr Flanagan said that you did not need to go into the Protestant, Unionist or Loyalist Community to find someone who found it offensive as his own mother when reading it in the paper and the way it could have been perceived, found it offensive. He added that if he had understood the actual meaning of it he should have and probably would have understood that it would have offended some people, not even from a political or a pro-Royal Family point of view but just from the sense of having good manners and this, he added, had not been his intention.
23. Mr Flanagan was then asked if he thought that cruder interpretation of the retweet would have had any impact on community relations. Mr Flanagan said that he did not think so but he was aware that it had annoyed people from all sections of the community whether they are in favour of the Royal

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Family or not. He went on to say that he knew he had annoyed members of his own political party, not from a political or Royal Family point of view but because of the under-lying current that runs through it. This, he added, had damaged relations between him and a lot of people.

24. Mr Flanagan was asked if he thought that the retweet had improved public confidence in the Assembly or tended to undermine it. Mr Flanagan said that he did not think it had any impact on it and wasn't tweeting in his role as a legislator or as MLA for Fermanagh/South Tyrone but only in a personal capacity as an individual.
25. Mr Flanagan was asked if he thought about it now did he accept that he shouldn't have retweeted it. Mr Flanagan responded by saying yes and that was the reason why he un-retweeted it.
26. Mr Bain thanked Mr Flanagan for attending the meeting and asked if there was anything he wished to add. Mr Flanagan referred to the concerns surrounding the last sentence of his statement and thought it important that he apologise for any offence that this 'has caused' rather than 'may have caused'. This, he added, was not a deliberate snub that he had deliberated and put into the Press and wasn't something that he had thought about but he wished to apologise to anybody that had been offended. Mr Bain thanked him for his clarification.
27. The meeting ended.

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10



Northern Ireland  
Assembly

## INVESTIGATION INTO COMPLAINT – PHIL FLANAGAN MLA

### Meeting with Mr Jim Allister QC MLA

7 November 2013  
Room 283

Start: 14.00 hrs      End: 14.10 hrs

Present: Douglas Bain, Commissioner for Standards  
Jim Allister QC MLA  
Pauline Wilson (Note taker)

1. Mr Allister confirmed that he had read and understood the note outlining procedures and the statutory provisions sent under cover of Mr Bain's letter dated 29 July 2013.
2. Further to the first point in Mr Bain's letter of 14 October 2013, Mr Allister explained his reasoning for stating that Mr Flanagan was acting in his capacity as an MLA was that on Mr Flanagan's twitter page it states 'Phil Flanagan Sinn Féin MLA' and gives the telephone number of his consistency office. If he was acting as Phil Flanagan on a private twitter account basis it would not show Sinn Féin MLA on his twitter feed. Mr Allister pointed out that there was no disclaimer in terms of what was private and what was tweeted as Mr Flanagan in his role as an MLA. Mr Allister showed the Commissioner the banner from Mr Flanagan's twitter page. Mr Allister accepted that not all the tweets were of a political nature but opined that given the matters to which he had referred anyone reading the page could reasonably assume that the tweets were those of Mr Flanagan in his capacity as an MLA.

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3. Mr Allister informed Mr Bain that Mr McHugh (it was Mr Terry McHugh's tweet that Mr Flanagan had retweeted) has on his twitter page banner that -
4. *'elected representatives should retweet me with caution'*.
5. Mr Allister showed the Commissioner the banner from Mr McHugh's twitter page. Mr Allister accepted that it was not possible to say whether those who received the tweet in question had ever visited Mr McHugh's twitter page. He asserted, however, that as Mr Flanagan had elected to become a follower of Mr McHugh he had more than likely visited his twitter page and that he would have seen the warning to which he had referred. Mr Allister accepted that he was unsighted as to whether Mr McHugh's twitter page contained that warning in July 2013 or whether the text had been added as a result of the complaint under investigation.
6. In relation to the second point set out in the Commissioner's letter of 14 October 2013 (whether the Code can be broken recklessly or only deliberately) Mr Allister drew attention to that part of the Code that states -
7. *"Members should keep in mind that rude and offensive behaviour may lower the public's regard ..."*.
8. Mr Allister said that Members are obligated to keep this in mind at all times.
9. Mr Allister went on to comment that not only should the Member have been thinking of the Code but also the warning on Mr McHugh's twitter banner.
10. Mr Bain asked Mr Allister whether he had reported the retweet in question to the police. Mr Allister said he had not because he thought the proper forum for an investigation was through the Commissioner as the issue related to the Code.

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11. Mr Bain put it to Mr Allister that if he believed the tweet was grossly offensive (and so potentially in contravention of the criminal law) he had a duty under the Code to uphold the law by drawing the tweet to the attention of the police. Mr Allister responded that his complaint did not prevent any police investigation but that it was not for him to decide whether the tweet was grossly offensive or simply offensive. The tweet had caused offence to him and probably to many others. It was in breach of the Code.
  
12. Mr Allister declined the opportunity to add anything to the responses and comments given.
  
13. The meeting ended with Mr Bain saying that a note of the meeting would be drawn up and issued by email to Mr Allister who then would have an opportunity to suggest any revisions via tracked changes.

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11

### **NOTE OF TELECON BAIN:MCHUGH 13 NOVEMBER 2013**

Following Mr Allister's contention that Mr Flanagan should have been put on his guard about retweeting anything from the comedian Terry McHugh by the warning that appeared on Mr McHugh's twitter feed I telephoned Mr McHugh. I explained who I was and the reason for my call.

I asked him when and in what circumstances the warning had been put on his twitter feed. Mr McHugh responded that he had added it to the page as a joke after all the fuss about the retweet. He could not be certain about the date but thought it was probably August 2013 when he added it. He was certain that it was after the controversy about the retweeting of his Royal birth joke had become public. He pointed out that prior to that he would have had no reason to add the warning as a joke.

Mr McHugh asked if I wished him to remove the warning. I responded in the negative making clear that it was a matter entirely for him.

Douglas Bain  
13 November 2013

(1) Phil Flanagan (PhilFlanagan) on Twitter

*Printed 29/07/2013*

Page 1 of 17

12

- Tweets
- Following
- Followers
- Favourites
- Lists

**Follow Phil Flanagan**

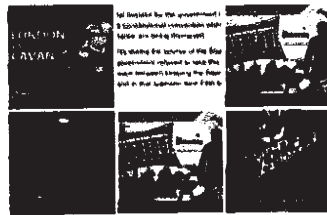
Full name

Email

Password



**Photos and videos**



**Worldwide Trends** [Change](#)

- Lana Del Rey
- #Google
- Big Brother
- #RamadanPrayerLine
- #fashion
- #UNFOLLOWIYENHAYRANGRUPLARITAKIPL
- #AcilKarsiikliTakipleiyoruz
- China
- Apple
- Australia

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**Phil Flanagan**  
 @PhilFlanagan

Sinn Féin MLA for Fermanagh & South Tyrone. Tel: 02866328214  
 Email: phil.flanagan1@gmail.com

12,832 **1,000** 2,572 **1,000** 3,691 **1,000** **Follow**

**Tweets**

1 new Tweet

- 

**@PhilFlanagan** hope you don't let your county be ruined by the vandalism that is fracking.  
 Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
[View conversation](#)
- 

**Phil Flanagan**@PhilFlanagan  
 Internal EPA report highlights disputes over fracking and well water [latimes.com/news/nationwor](#) (from @latimes)  
[View summary](#)
- 

**Phil Flanagan**@PhilFlanagan  
 No idea. I'm sure he can speak for himself.  
[View conversation](#)
- 

**Phil Flanagan**@PhilFlanagan  
 You say it stops you taking a legal challenge. I'm asking you to clarify under which grounds  
[View conversation](#)
- 

**Phil Flanagan**@PhilFlanagan  
 None of that explains the grounds under which you cannot take a legal challenge  
[View conversation](#)
- 

**Fermanagh GAA**@FermanaghGAA  
 Dates for next round #SFC and #IFC [pic.twitter.com/oYrCSrwTZs](#)  
 Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
[View photo](#)
- 

**Phil Flanagan**@PhilFlanagan  
 So do you want to have a referendum on every planning application then?  
[View conversation](#)
- 

**Phil Flanagan**@PhilFlanagan  
 everyday language  
[View conversation](#)
- 

**stpatgfcfermanagh**@stpatgfcfdonagh  
 Well done @TempoMaguires on your victory today best of luck in the remainder of the League and Championship.

<https://twitter.com/philflanagan>

29/07/2013

- Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
Expand
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
@impartialrep report: Champions @TempoMaguires stroll into last eight & @BelcooGAA shock @Lisnaskeaemmett  
impartialreporter.com/news/roundup a  
Expand
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
grounds are now ruled out? So what  
View conversation
-   
Would like all S/markets to have a local aisle as you walk into the shop giving consumers the first choice of #BuyingLocal RT my nxt project  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
Expand
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
grounds are your rights to being a legal challenged being brought to an end? Under what  
View conversation
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
Special powers? Economically significant planning applications are cross cutting n should be an Executive matter anyway  
View conversation
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
amendments in particular? Which  
View conversation
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
Some celebrations after the final whistle. Never mind the second half!  
View conversation
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
Half Time: @TempoMaguires 0-09 @stpatsgfdonagh 0-04 #farrmanaghSFC  
Expand
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
Full Time: @BelcooGAA 1-12 @LisnaskeaEmmett 0-10. Last year's beaten finalists are out at the first stage  
Expand
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
Egyptian... I'm neither Italian nor  
View conversation
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
What for?  
View conversation
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
pity I can't retweet that!  
View conversation
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
Brilliant diagonal ball from @McCabe16 sets up @PMcG10 for a well taken goal. It's @belcoogaa 1-08 @lisanaskeaemmett 0-07  
Expand

-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan 17h  
Don't be so miserable. You not following the world tiddlywinks championships in the forum?  
[View conversation](#)
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan 17h  
A great win I hear!  
[View conversation](#)
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan 17h  
Rain starts to pour at the start of the second half. Cue men running for the dugout for gloves. #FermanaghSFC  
[Expand](#)
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan 17h  
What about @TeemoreGFC last night?  
[View conversation](#)
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan 17h  
All square at half time in Brewster Park. @lisnaskeaemmett 0-07 @BelcooGAA 0-07 #FermanaghSFC  
[Expand](#)
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan 17h  
What was he sent off for?  
[View conversation](#)
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan 19h  
Nearly 20 minutes gone in the 1st half. @lisnaskeaemmett 0-06 @belcoogaa 0-03. Some fine points being kicked  
[Expand](#)
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan 19h  
Is there such a thing as a 'UK citizen'? Are they not all subjects?  
[View conversation](#)
-  **MWAdvocate** @mwadvocate 21h  
Kennedy Summer School, New Ross, Co. Wexford 12th-14th September, looks excellent. kennedysummerschool.ie/programme/#kennedy #gathering  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
[Expand](#)
-  **Paul Cromie UTV** @paulcromie\_utv 21h  
On #U105 News at 1pm: A man is arrested for allegedly making threats to kill in Irvinestown.  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
[Expand](#)
-  **Tempo Maguires GAC** @TempoMaguires 22h  
Good luck to our senior team - tempomaguiresgac.com/good-luck-to-0...  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
[Expand](#)
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan 22h  
@FermanaghGAA Championship Round 1 in Brewster Park today. @BelcooGAA v @lisnaskeaemmett @ 2:30 & @TempoMaguires v @stpatgfcdonagh @ 4:00  
[Expand](#)
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan 22h  
So are @foe\_ni suggesting that Irish citizens currently living abroad shouldn't be allowed to vote or donate to parties?  
[View conversation](#)
-  **Steven McCaffery** @SMcC\_TheDetail 22h

- 

Free gig in St Kevin's Hall, Belfast. Seo Beal Fairsite. This is Belfast from 4pm. See [mhicreachtaim.com/ineachtaiseo](#) via [@McCrackenSS13](#)  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
Expand
- 

**Belmore Court** [@belmorecourt](#)  
Visit fabulous #Fermanagh and stay at Belmore Court & Motel from only £19.50pps (quad room) [motel.co.uk](#) [pic.twitter.com/SpnRFktsNF](#)  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
View photo
- 

**NI Water** [@niwater](#)  
Supply interruption Ballygawley BT70 Richmond Lane - a2u.co/DZ265p  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
Expand
- 

**Malachy O'Rourke** [@malachyork](#)  
Just heard [@PaddyMcBrearty](#) is a major doubt for the laois game tomorrow. Rumour has it he's still in [@cwalshe7](#) back pocket #lethimoutwalshe  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
Expand
- 

**Conor Quigley** [@conorquigley](#)  
Teemore are a real championship team always get past the first round and will be a handful for any team #countrymen #senderinhughy#  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
Expand
- 

**Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#)  
" @FermanaghGAA: Another Fantastic @KelloggsIreland Cul Camp was had in @TempoMaguires this week... fb.me/2gnhOuxpJ"  
View conversation
- 

**Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#)  
aye the wrong angle? :)  
View conversation
- 

**Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#)  
Yes but his comment was congratulating the teams that won today not the Ulster teams...  
View conversation
- 

**Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#)  
Result  
@FermanaghGAA SFC  
@DevenishGAA 1-09 v @TeemoreGFC 0-14."  
View conversation
- 

**Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#)  
today...  
View conversation
- 

**Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#)  
" @GeorgeBeacom: Latest score Fermanagh SFC  
@DevenishGAA 1-09 v @TeemoreGFC 0-13"  
View conversation
- 

**Ryan Mc Govern** [@Ryan\\_McGov](#)  
Teemore up by 1 not long left!  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
View conversation
- 

**Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#)



- 

**@tullyx1** [@seamiequigley](#) [@FermanaghGAA](#) [@TeemoreSFC](#) [@DevenishGAA](#) [twitter.com/fermanaghgaa/s](https://twitter.com/fermanaghgaa/s) 27 Jul 2013

View tweet

Sign in
- 

**Fermanagh GAA SFC** [@FermanaghSFC](#)

[@KinawleyGFC](#) 0-10 [@ErneGaelsGAC](#) 2-5 FT

Retweeted by Phil Flanagan

Expand

27 Jul
- 

**Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#)

[@FermanaghGAA](#) SFC H/T

[@TeemoreGFC](#) 0-8 [@DevenishGAA](#) 1-04" [@tullyx1](#)

View conversation

27 Jul
- 

**Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#)

All Ireland Quarter Final 4 Mayo v Donegal

Expand

27 Jul
- 

**Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#)

All Ireland Quarter Final 3 Kerry v Cavan

Expand

27 Jul
- 

**Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#)

All Ireland Quarter Final 2 Monaghan v Tyrone

Expand

27 Jul
- 

**Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#)

All Ireland Quarter Final 1 Dublin v Cork

Expand

27 Jul
- 

**RTÉRadio1** [@RTERadio1](#)

Here we go! All-Ireland Football Quarter Final draw

Retweeted by Phil Flanagan

Expand

27 Jul
- 

Some messer has gotten to the 2013 Football All-Ireland Wikipedia page... [@GAAscores](#) [@unofficialgaa](#)

[pic.twitter.com/2x1jGihvP7](https://pic.twitter.com/2x1jGihvP7)

Retweeted by Phil Flanagan

View photo

27 Jul
- 

**Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#)

Far from lost. Up for a ceilí.

View conversation

27 Jul
- 

**Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#)

you did...just leaving it now

View conversation

27 Jul
- 

**Derrygonnelly Harps** [@DgonnellyHarps](#)

New seating in the stand! [#harpsdeliver](#)

[pic.twitter.com/VEKVRil31w](https://pic.twitter.com/VEKVRil31w)

Retweeted by Phil Flanagan

View photo

27 Jul
- 

**Donegal Daily** [@DonegalDaily](#)

DONEGAL V LAOIS THROW IN TIME PUT BACK BY 15 MINUTES: The Round 4 qualifier between Donegal and Lao...

[donegaldaily.com/?p=91496](https://donegaldaily.com/?p=91496)

Retweeted by Phil Flanagan

Expand

27 Jul
- 

**Marty Morrissey** [@MartyM\\_RTE](#)

Under broadcasting contract with GAA, RTE is only allowed to show one Qualifier Live on a Saturday. See H'lites of all 2moro night @9.30

Retweeted by Phil Flanagan

Expand

27 Jul

(1) Phil Flanagan (PhilFlanagan) on Twitter

- Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 21 Jul 2013

Peter Canavan is the right man to take Fermanagh forward says skipper [@Clucker60](#) - Belfast Telegraph bit.ly/141vMx9 [Expand](#)
- togetherforsam** [@togetherforsam](#) 21 Jul 2013

Getting ready to cut the ribbon at 'Cycle for Sam' Good luck to all the cyclists and may the rain stay off and the wind be at your back! [Retweeted by Phil Flanagan](#) [Expand](#)
- Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 21 Jul 2013

[@enniskillengaa](#) Good luck to everybody taking part in the [@togetherforsam](#) cycle today [View conversation](#)
- Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 21 Jul 2013

EU to own drones as part of spy agency independent.ie/worldnews/euf [View summary](#)
- Shane Connolly** [@shaneconnolly](#) 21 Jul 2013

Great quality GAA glove [@murphysgloves](#) in support of a great cause [@togetherforsam](#) #getbuying #GAA please retweet pic.twitter.com/9HoOBv1jy4 [Retweeted by Phil Flanagan](#) [View photo](#)
- Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 21 Jul 2013

Seán South and Feargal O'Hanlon memorial vandalised | An Phoblacht bit.ly/13joulp [Expand](#)
- Conor Murphy** [@conormurphy](#) 21 Jul 2013

[@UTVNews](#) Reason the economic picture here is "confusing" is that there are no completely accurate economic figures available to us. [Retweeted by Phil Flanagan](#) [Expand](#)
- nuzhound** [@nuzhound](#) 21 Jul 2013

DUP man condemns attack on memorial to IRA volunteers Fermanagh Herald bit.ly/14QZKYP #ireland #Ulster [Retweeted by Phil Flanagan](#) [Expand](#)
- Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 26 Jul 2013

I recently visited Clarke's Quarry, Lisnaskea to learn more about their business as part of an [@NIABT](#) fellowship [dearadheile.blogspot.com](#) [Expand](#)
- Enniskillen Rnli** [@EnnRnli](#) 26 Jul 2013

As easy as that :) To donate £5 text Rnli Enniskillen to 70300. Thank you pic.twitter.com/u6UqjN5aSa [Retweeted by Phil Flanagan](#) [View photo](#)
- Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 25 Jul 2013

[@OfficialLondonG](#) Details of the Live TV Coverage of London v Cavan - pic.twitter.com/KY1IGFNNbL" [View photo](#)
- Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 25 Jul 2013

[@IrishCancerSoc](#) Of course. I'd be delighted to. What do I have to do? [View conversation](#)
- Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 25 Jul 2013

(1) Phil Flanagan (PhilFlanagan) on Twitter

Page 7 of 17

- 

**@challenge2432** @IrishCancerSoc When are you in Fermanagh?  
[View conversation](#)
- 

**FermanaghAutismNAS** @FermanaghAutism  
 Fermanagh folks please RT  
 Summer Camp 19-23 Aug in @ShareVillage for #ASD kids Email  
 westenniskillen@nas.org.uk for details & application  
 Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
[Expand](#)
- 

**William Crawley** @williamcrawley  
 Aren't you glad that you never get a tweet from me telling you  
 that "The William Crawley Daily is out"??  
 Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
[Expand](#)
- 

**Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
 Sinn Féin to support Seanad abolition - @PearseDoherty  
 pic twitter.com/VW7KYCSHFx  
[View photo](#)
- 

**togetherforsam** @togetherforsam  
 Anyone want to order a pair before they go live on my website let  
 me know Even my daddy would catch ball in these  
 pic twitter.com/Snz4Yp9Zzc  
 Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
[View photo](#)
- 

**@PhilFlanagan** @UTVNews @ConalMcD This is why we need  
 enhanced in NI and removing the only service is NOT the answer  
 m u tv/News/Boys-deat  
 Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
[View summary](#)
- 

**Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
 I never seen that before  
[View conversation](#)
- 

**#DUP** clir condemns attack on IRA volunteers memorial. He  
 calls for sectarian-motivated attacks to stop. Union flag spray painted  
 on monument  
 Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
[Expand](#)
- 

**Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
 Figures released today show a 5.4% increase in overseas  
 visitors to 26 counties from Jan-June. North's figures won't be out until  
 7th Nov!  
[Expand](#)
- 

**Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
 You should keep a book of names  
[View conversation](#)
- 

**Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
 I know. You've already shouted at me for it before  
[View conversation](#)
- 

**Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
 Look at you mister angry! Surely you know on it's  
 twitter it's a mention. A tag is on Facebook. Tut tut  
[View conversation](#)
- 

**Invest NI** @InvestNINews  
 Call 0800 1814422 to find out how #InvestNI can help boost your  
 business or visit [bit.ly/sgMHhc](http://bit.ly/sgMHhc)  
 Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
[Expand](#)

<https://twitter.com/philflanagan>

29/07/2013

(1) Phil Flanagan (PhilFlanagan) on Twitter

- Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 23 Jul 2013 · 12:00 · 100%

No, but it was the EU candidate that tweeted it!  
[twitter.com/mattcarthy/sta](#)  
View tweet
- Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 23 Jul 2013 · 11:57 · 100%

Hi [@mattcarthy](#) could you RT this for the Ederney Gathering Festival (Fermanagh) [thagatheringireland.com/View-Gathering-pic](#) [twitter.com/MKckyX9WLK](#) [@dingy6178](#)  
View photo
- Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 23 Jul 2013 · 11:56 · 100%

If residents tolerate such behaviour, what would be the motivation to change it?  
View conversation
- Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 23 Jul 2013 · 11:54 · 100%

Ah go on [youtu.be/MBSxAAJ\\_2Si](#)  
View media
- Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 23 Jul 2013 · 11:53 · 100%

Twitter via text message  
[support.twitter.com/articles/14014](#)  
Expand
- Republic** [@RepublicIre](#) 23 Jul 2013 · 11:52 · 100%

It's interesting that BBC never ask royals on for serious interviews, never tell us they refuse to do serious interviews  
**#bbcshame**  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
Expand
- Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 23 Jul 2013 · 11:51 · 100%

[@MeritInIreland](#) [@siema\\_skip](#) you'll find such behaviour is much less frequent in rural areas  
View conversation
- Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 23 Jul 2013 · 11:50 · 100%

[@MeritInIreland](#) [@siema\\_skip](#) Antagonising behaviour is not always illegal. Playing sash, famine song, behaviour outside chapels etc  
View conversation
- Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 24 Jul 2013 · 11:49 · 100%

Leitrim done too I think.  
View conversation
- Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 24 Jul 2013 · 11:48 · 100%

Kildare Street, National Library exhibition marking 50th anniversary of JFK's visit. National Archaeology Museum always good  
View conversation
- Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 24 Jul 2013 · 11:47 · 100%


Lodge & silver band march past my front door & don't offend me. Same in most areas except where they seek to offend  
View conversation
- Visit Enniskillen** [@visitourtown](#) 21 Jul 2013 · 11:46 · 100%

Only 6 days to go until [#cycleforsam](#) Pls RT for 1 last push. [#specialcause](#) [#togetherforsam](#) [#community](#) [#enniskillen](#)  
[pic.twitter.com/KJ2QoppmDV](#)  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
View photo
- Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 24 Jul 2013 · 11:45 · 100%

What do you mean Eddie?  
View conversation


(1) Phil Flanagan (PhilFlanagan) on Twitter

Page 9 of 17

- 


**Men's Shed Fermanagh** @FermanaghSheds 29 Jul 2013 11:41 AM · Sign up

The Men's Shed Apple and Berry tart!  
pic: [twitter.com/CB7w0qVVJt](https://twitter.com/CB7w0qVVJt)

Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
[View photo](#)
- 


**Coa O Dwyers** @CoaODwyers 29 Jul 2013 11:37 AM · Sign up

@FermanaghGAA plz RT CoaGfc Golf Classic 10th Aug  
Springhill Golf Club Trillick £100per team of 4 Call  
Colm07938000425 Liam07763247755

Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
[Expand](#)
- 


**#FEARLESS Oscar Knox** @Osc\_Knox 29 Jul 2013 11:36 AM · Sign up

Best pic of the night & one everyone is tweeting about is from  
[pic: twitter.com/5hdOv01EH2](https://twitter.com/5hdOv01EH2)

Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
[View photo](#)
- 


**Stevie** @dingy2178 29 Jul 2013 11:35 AM · Sign up

Ederney Gathering Festival 2013 for Sam and  
Tilly. Check and like on Facebook!! [facebook.com/ederneyfestival](https://facebook.com/ederneyfestival)

Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
from Fermanagh: [Fermanagh](#)
- 


**Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan 29 Jul 2013 11:34 AM · Sign up

[twitter.com/MKokyX9WLK](https://twitter.com/MKokyX9WLK)

[View photo](#)
- 


**Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan 29 Jul 2013 11:34 AM · Sign up

Abuse? Wise up would ya

[View conversation](#)
- 


**Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan 29 Jul 2013 11:34 AM · Sign up

on

[View conversation](#)
- 


**Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan 29 Jul 2013 11:34 AM · Sign up

Gery, do you resent the birth of this child to his parents?

[View conversation](#)
- 


**Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan 29 Jul 2013 11:34 AM · Sign up

But someone swearing an oath of allegiance to an unelected monarch  
hardly fits the bill

[View conversation](#)
- 


**Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan 29 Jul 2013 11:34 AM · Sign up

Where did I bully anyone?

[View conversation](#)
- 


**BelfastCelticSociety** @CelticBallast 29 Jul 2013 11:34 AM · Sign up

If Celtic Park's favourite son has inspired you -  
get behind : fight being fought!! He can do it  
too.

Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
[Expand](#)
- 

**Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan 29 Jul 2013 11:34 AM · Sign up





asking about me or Martin McGuinness tweeting 'today'

[View conversation](#)
- 

**Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan 29 Jul 2013 11:34 AM · Sign up

<https://twitter.com/philflanagan>

29/07/2013

-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
Expanded  
23 Jul  
You claim someone else is involved in cyber bullying as you call them a scumbag. Confused?  
View conversation
-  **Short Strand** @ShortStrand  
23 Jul  
Don't forget & get following a wee Fermanagh fighter  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
Expanded
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
23 Jul  
are you calling a scumbag?  
View conversation
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
23 Jul  
a stretch. Do you resent the birth of a child to any parents?  
View conversation
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
23 Jul  
Looks like @Wee\_Oscar had a great night as official mascot @celticfc. Some brilliant photos on display  
Expanded
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
23 Jul  
You can't tar everyone with that brush. There are some very genuine people within that party  
View conversation
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
23 Jul  
Hope you enjoy political activism, regardless of any party differences.  
View conversation
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
23 Jul  
would you swear an oath of allegiance to an unelected monarch?  
View conversation
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
23 Jul  
SDLP is a party whose MP's swear an oath of allegiance to a monarch. The essence of non republican  
View conversation
-  **hoopythuddlehound** @hoopyhuddle  
23 Jul  
Thanks for making my year wee man @Wee\_Oscar #bestpicever pic.twitter.com/AwKhqqt6ud  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
View photo
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
23 Jul  
Was in Brookeborough this evening at the junior match. Looking forward to Sunday's double header. Can't make Saturday.  
View conversation
-  **joey heavey** @patsy\_bla5  
23 Jul  
Wkend not to be missed!! #getinvolved #gaa @Ferm\_Herald @FermanaghSF @PhilFlanagan pic.twitter.com/MSWkwAatTu  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
View photo

- 

**Phil Flanagan** [@Phil\\_Flanagan](#) 21 Jul 2014

@60acres Was checking to see if they'd report the scores from the Junior Championship matches. Unfortunately not

[View conversation](#)
- 

**Phil Flanagan** [@Phil\\_Flanagan](#) 21 Jul 2014

Tom Elliott "Fermanagh & South Tyrone is an area that the Royal Family is held in very high esteem " Really?

[tomelliottmla.net/newsdetail.asp](http://tomelliottmla.net/newsdetail.asp)

[Expand](#)
- 

**Phil Flanagan** [@Phil\\_Flanagan](#) 21 Jul 2014

Tina Campbell on BBC Radio Ulster News. The royal baby "appeared to take the media attention in his stride "

[Expand](#)
- 

**Phil Flanagan** [@Phil\\_Flanagan](#) 21 Jul 2014

HT in Brookeborough Fermanagh JFC

[Expand](#)
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**Phil Flanagan** [@Phil\\_Flanagan](#) 21 Jul 2014

Royalist or not (not) I'll happily take a wee bank holiday this week if there's one going.

[Retweeted by Phil Flanagan](#)

[Expand](#)
- 

**Phil Flanagan** [@Phil\\_Flanagan](#) 21 Jul 2014

The Voice Belcoo  
£100 prize money  
Contact [@ErneEntertain](#) to enter  
Limited spaces  
[pic.twitter.com/h6IX9XzrDg](http://pic.twitter.com/h6IX9XzrDg)

[View photo](#)
- 

**Senator Mark Daly** [@SenatorMarkDaly](#) 21 Jul 2014

Gov running country through the [@FineGaelToday](#) Press Office didn't even fill Oireachtas members in on the date for referendum of the #seanad

[Retweeted by Phil Flanagan](#)

[Expand](#)
- 

**Phil Flanagan** [@Phil\\_Flanagan](#) 23 Jul 2014

Attack on Altawark Memorial Pointless - McCaffrey

[fermanaghsouthtyronesf.com/news/24741](http://fermanaghsouthtyronesf.com/news/24741)

[Expand](#)
- 

**Fermanagh Herald** [@Ferm\\_Herald](#) 23 Jul 2014

[@TempoMaguires](#) Don't miss our 16 page Fermanagh Club Championship supplement in tomorrow's Fermanagh Herald.

[Retweeted by Phil Flanagan](#)

[Expand](#)
- 

**Sean Quigley** [@Sean\\_Quigley15](#) 23 Jul 2014

some celebrations going on around monaghan. Can't imagine what it will be like when fermanagh finally win an ulster title #believe #2014

[Retweeted by Phil Flanagan](#)

[Expand](#)
- 

**Castledearg Sinn Féin** [@DergSinnFein](#) 23 Jul 2014

Reminder: Tyrone Volunteers Day will be held in Castledearg this year on the 11th August. Main speaker [@GerryKellyMLA](#)


[pic.twitter.com/1J8tjRtOnH](http://pic.twitter.com/1J8tjRtOnH)

[Retweeted by Phil Flanagan](#)

[View photo](#)
- 


**Stratagem NI** [@StratagemNI](#) 23 Jul 2014


Stratagem is currently recruiting for its internship programme. For more details click here: [bit.ly/nkGb1L](http://bit.ly/nkGb1L)


- Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
Expand
-  **Des Mac antSionnaigh** @DesMac19  
@CaralNiChuilin As Liofa 2015 numbers soar, the no of GCSE Irish entries drop 35% in 5/6 years? School campaign needed!  
@PhilFlanagan  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
Expand
-  **Darren Hughes** @darrenh02  
Jose ain't happy with Big John missing preseason!  
pic twitter.com/Dkysv13X1N  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
View photo
-  **Barry McElduff MLA** @BarryMcElduff  
which one ? I'm sure you know that Sinn Fein MLAs receive average industrial wage. Unfair to label all the same  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
View conversation
-  **Belfast News Letter** @NewsLetter  
Sinn Fein member condemns Orange Hall graffiti - Regional - Belfast Newsletter - newsletter.co.uk/news/regional/ #bellaghy  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
Expand
-  **Europe must know**  
that people is still arrested in Spain for speaking in Catalan > vilaweb.cat/noticia/413525 RT please  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
Expand
-  **@EamonnMallie A** said earlier, Loyalists noted in every decade from the 60's - they had PLENTY of jobs then. More woe is us nonsense.  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
View conversation
-  **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
The Centre for Cross Border Studies is recruiting a Research and Policy Manager [crossborder.ie/?p=4177](http://crossborder.ie/?p=4177)  
Expand
-  **Tempo Maguires GAC** @TempoMaguires  
Gaelic4Mothers & Others Programme Concluded - Well done Everyone! ... fb.me/RcKtW7Hd  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
Expand
-  **Enda's Jobs "Plan"** is very ambitious. #vinb #todaypk  
pic twitter.com/RhxLx9pUN2  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
View photo
-  **The BBC Championship** @bbcchampionship  
The referee for Donegal v Laois on Saturday is Marty Duffy (Sligo). Live coverage of all the Ulster qualifiers on BBC Radio Ulster MW. #GAA  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
Expand
-  **@BBCPeterHunt** Royal doctor Marcus Setchell says "wonderful baby Beautiful baby". How's it wonderful can it talk and walk already?  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan





- [View conversation](#)
-  I feel like the episode of Fr. Ted on the day Craggy Island Newspaper produced an entire extra supplement on 'Whistles'  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
[Expand](#)
-  **Phil Flanagan**@PhilFlanagan  
Peter Robinson quick off the mark  
[Expand](#)
-  @PhilFlanagan it's all duper's that seems fascinated by new wain, the shinners don't seem to care why's that  
[Expand](#)
-  **Phil Flanagan**@PhilFlanagan  
Can't figure it out at all. We must have put the kitty on the child being a girl.  
[Hide conversation](#) [Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favourite](#) [More](#)  
2:03 PM · 22 Jul 13 · [Details](#)
-  **Visit Enniskillen**@visitourtown  
Pls RT  
[@FermanaghGAA pic twitter.com/TLP4dZnTf1](#)  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
[View photo](#)
-  **Republic**@RepublicStaff  
Time all babies were #bornEqual Time for a republic. If you agree join us at [republic.org.uk/join](http://republic.org.uk/join) and make it happen.  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
[Expand](#)
-  **Phil Flanagan**@PhilFlanagan  
Peter Robinson quick off the mark  
[Expand](#)
-  **Phil Flanagan**@PhilFlanagan  
Won't be staying as it's too hard getting babysitters!  
[View conversation](#)
-  **Phil Flanagan**@PhilFlanagan  
Any good deals on this weather Mary? I've a few weddings coming up!  
[View conversation](#)
-  **Phil Flanagan**@PhilFlanagan  
California should consider starting a new tourism campaign because Phil Mickelson won the British Open. Seems to be how NITB thinks anyway  
[Expand](#)
-  **Phil Flanagan**@PhilFlanagan  
Of course this isn't the famine song, it's 'a pop song' m [youtube.com/watch?v=uxmdZQ](http://youtube.com/watch?v=uxmdZQ)  
[Expand](#)
-  **nuzhound**@nuzhound  
How can I avoid being charged for data roaming when close to the border? (Jul 11) :: Irish In ... bit.ly/13TO9Sg #Ireland #Ulster  
Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
[View summary](#)
-  **God**@TheTweetOfGod

 Does anyone know where I can find a live blog for the imminent birth of one of the 15,000 children born today who will die of starvation? [Retweeted by Phil Flanagan](#)


 **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
 Could make a smart comment about whether he brought any other briefs but I'll resist the temptation! Oops [View conversation](#)

 **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
 Good to see [@MickGerryKelly](#) is still working despite his much talked about honeymoon! bit.ly/14zdwX [Expand](#)

 **Not Gerry Kelly MLA** @MickGerryKelly  
 @sinnfeinireland #RoyalBaby name sweep I got Henry Joy Theobald and Bik @PhilFlanagan got Pearse @colummiskey got Gerry #winner [Retweeted by Phil Flanagan](#)

 **Father Ted** @Father\_Ted  
 #RoyalBabyNames  
 Spodo Komodo.  
 Canabramalamer.  
 Todd Unctious. [Retweeted by Phil Flanagan](#)

 **Austin O'Callaghan** @AustinOCallaghan  
 An opportunity for budding sports commentators - as Gaelge bit.ly/17xOFU1 #GAA [Retweeted by Phil Flanagan](#)


 **sickpediabot** @sickpediabot  
 Prince William's heir is falling out. (via Darren Walsh) [Expand](#)


 **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
 "sickpediabot Prince William's heir is falling out. (via Darren Walsh)" [Hide conversation](#) [Reply](#) [Retweet](#) [Favourite](#) [More](#)

1 FAVOURITES 


9:59 AM - 22 Jul 13 [Details](#)


 **Jamesie boy!** @CaJameson  
 @PhilFlanagan @skydavidblevins @BarryMcElduff Guardian has put a republican button on homepage (top right) guardian.co.uk haha! [Retweeted by Phil Flanagan](#) [View conversation](#)


 **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan  
 @skydavidblevins @BarryMcElduff Big story around here certainly isn't the arrival of another mouth we all have to feed [View conversation](#)


 **Phil Flanagan** @PhilFlanagan

[@skydavidblevins](#) [@BarryMcElduff](#) Le Monde newspaper spoke of the "mediatic frenzy around the Royal baby" David, the media is not 'the world'  
[View conversation](#)


 **Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 21 Jun  
 . [@PSNI](#) Fermanagh website claims that flags in Enniskillen have been removed [psni police uk/index/f-distrib](#) Or not maybe?  
 pic [twitter.com/U5Z0Dh6boN](#)  
[View photo](#)


 **Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 21 Jun  
 Irish students have warned that GAA teams from abroad will soon end up dominating the All-Ireland Championships  
[us1.ie/2013/07/gaa\\_teams](#)  
[Expand](#)


 **NI Water** [@niwater](#) 21 Jun  
 Supply interruption - Enniskillen. BT74 Drumclay Road and Coa Road - [e2u.co/RFeKxI](#)  
 Retweeted by [Phil Flanagan](#)  
[Expand](#)


 **BT in Ireland** [@btireland](#) 21 Jun  
[@PhilFlanagan](#) [@NIABT](#) Delighted you enjoyed [@BTCare](#) in Enniskillen. Thanks for taking the time to visit  
 Retweeted by [Phil Flanagan](#)  
[View conversation](#)


 **Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 21 Jun  
 I recently visited the BT Centre in Enniskillen, There's a brief report with photos here [dearcadheile.blogspot.com](#)  
[Expand](#)


 **QUB Pal Solidarity** [@QUB\\_PSS](#) 21 Jun  
 We would like to thank [@PhilFlanagan](#) for asking vital questions on Illegal Israeli Settlements to the DETI Minister  
 pic [twitter.com/sKDRSU32sH](#)  
 Retweeted by [Phil Flanagan](#)  
[View photo](#)

 **Matt Carthy** [@mattcarthy](#) 21 Jun  
 Sinn Féin MP calls for republican unity to help achieve Liam Lynch's vision of a republic [irishtimes.com/news/ireland/](#) via [@IrishTimes](#)  
 Retweeted by [Phil Flanagan](#)  
[View summary](#)

 A woman entirely financially dependent on the State has chosen to have a baby. The Daily Mail should be furious.  
 Retweeted by [Phil Flanagan](#)  
[Expand](#)

 **Teemore Shamrocks GFC** [@TeemoreGFC](#) 22 Jul  
 Notice: There is a blood donation day at St Aidans, Derrylin today from 2.30pm - 4pm and 5.15pm - 8pm, new donors are needed! Please RT  
 Retweeted by [Phil Flanagan](#)  
[Expand](#)

 **Phil Flanagan** [@PhilFlanagan](#) 21 Jun  
 JK Rowling unmasked: the lawyer, the wife, her tweet - and a furious author [independent.ie/entertainment/](#)  
[View summary](#)

 **Monaghan GAA** [@monaghgaa](#) 21 Jun  
 Ulster Minor & Senior Champions will do tour of County 2 morrow evening Carrickmacross @ 6pm - Castleblayney -Ballybay-Clones- Monaghan@10pm

(1) Phil Flanagan (PhilFlanagan) on Twitter

Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
Expand



**Phil Flanagan**@PhilFlanagan  
"I've got a library book that's like Kate and William's baby. It's overdue and I'll end up having to pay for it."

Collapse Reply Retweet Favorite More

8 Retweets 7 Favorites

10:47 PM · 21 Jul 13 · Details



**Irish Unity**@IrishUnity  
Official Twitter account for '1 Million Voices for Irish Unity' Please retweet this & follow us. #1MVFU

Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
Expand



**Phil Flanagan**@PhilFlanagan  
Welcome to twitter @IrishUnity

Expand



**Irish Unity**@IrishUnity  
Can we get 100 retweets? #Irishunity

Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
Expand



Went through Enniskillen on way home and can confirm #G8 has transformed it: tourists everywhere, skyscrapers and office parks galore

Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
Expand



**Phil Flanagan**@PhilFlanagan  
Did it to me on way to Fermanagh Cavan match. I thought it was overdrive for G8. Had to eat feed from Martin Rooney's dry!

View conversation



**Phil Flanagan**@PhilFlanagan  
Piece on Fermanagh published today in @TorontoStar by featuring @FermanaghGAA

Expand



**Phil Flanagan**@PhilFlanagan  
A clegg is a big dirty fly that bits ya. Even when you slap it, it doesn't die n comes back for more.

View conversation



Malachy O'Rourke's record as a manager is starting to look particularly good. He's achieved almost everywhere he's gone

Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
Expand



**Phil Flanagan**@PhilFlanagan  
Good to see sharing in a Fermanagh man's success. Well done to Malachy O'Rourke & Monaghan team. Better team & deserved champs

Expand



**Love Leitrim**@LoveLeitrim  
Pls Support, Vote & RT Love #Leitrim antifracking grp nominated 4 environmental award. @StevenAgnew @PhilFlanagan saveourplanetawards.com/love-leitrim/

Retweeted by Phil Flanagan

(1) Phil Flanagan (PhilFlanagan) on Twitter

Page 17 of 17

- 8 tweets
- Profile picture of Phil Flanagan
- Phil Flanagan @PhilFlanagan  
 @BANfrackingNI @StevenAgnew When you say people, do you mean the energy minister? Because she's the only one saying it  
 View conversation
- Profile picture of Phil Flanagan
- Phil Flanagan @PhilFlanagan  
 @BANfrackingNI @StevenAgnew won't burst your bubble then.  
 View conversation
- Profile picture of Phil Flanagan
- Phil Flanagan @PhilFlanagan  
 @StevenAgnew Don't forget that burning gas is good for the environment and will reduce carbon emissions. Oh & it's 'sustainable'  
 View conversation
- Profile picture of Phil Flanagan
- Phil Flanagan @PhilFlanagan  
 @StevenAgnew Now now. don't be cynical. Dave says reduction on tax on profits will reduce energy prices  
 View conversation
- Profile picture of Phil Flanagan
- Phil Flanagan @PhilFlanagan  
 Excellent piece in today's Sunday Life from @helenhamiltons son Fionn on living with Aspergers. Highlights his blog at autisticandproud.wordpress.com  
 View summary
- Profile picture of Phil Flanagan
- Phil Flanagan @PhilFlanagan  
 @AlexKane221b no straight answer yet I see Alex.  
 View conversation
- Profile picture of Phil Flanagan
- Martin McGuinness at Celtic Park with the real architect of the peace process pic twitter.com/55umyulEAQ  
 Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
 View photo
- Profile picture of Phil Flanagan
- Phil Flanagan @PhilFlanagan  
 piece on "Towards a New Ireland" socialistunity.com/towards-a-new-...  
 View conversation
- Profile picture of Phil Flanagan
- Sick saying it. Cavan most underrated team in Ireland. Nobody develops minors into seniors better than Cavan. Hyland a shrewd boy too  
 Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
 Expand
- Profile picture of The Westville Hotel
- The Westville Hotel @The\_Westville  
 Special offer! 5 rooms £50 each!! Check it out #fermanagh #enniskillen #Hotel #exclusive fe avvio.com/convert/site/T  
 Retweeted by Phil Flanagan  
 Expand
- Profile picture of Phil Flanagan
- Phil Flanagan @PhilFlanagan  
 Lady of the Lake Festival: Truck convoy tomorrow / Impartial Reporter / News / Roundup bit.ly/15UsHzy  
 Expand





Northern Ireland  
Assembly

Appendix 2

# Minutes of Proceedings of the Committee relating to the Report





## Wednesday, 15 January 2014

### Room 21, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Mr Alastair Ross (Chairperson)  
Ms Anna Lo (Deputy Chairperson)  
Mr Steven Agnew  
Mr Cathal Boylan  
Ms Paula Bradley  
Mr Declan McAleer  
Mr Fra McCann  
Mr Ian McCrea  
Mrs Sandra Overend

**In Attendance:** Mr Paul Gill (Assembly Clerk)  
Ms Hilary Cleland-Bogle (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Jonathan Watson (Clerical Supervisor)

**Apologies:** Mr Mervyn Storey

**1.30pm** The meeting commenced in closed session.

#### **6. Reports from the Assembly Commissioner for Standards on complaints against Members**

##### **Agenda items 6.3 and 6.4**

Members noted the Clerk's Paper and the Report dated 12th December 2013 from the Assembly Commissioner for Standards.

The Commissioner briefed the Committee on his Report and then answered members' questions.

*Agreed:* Following discussion the Committee agreed with the Commissioner's conclusion that the Member complained of had not breached the Code of Conduct.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the Clerk should prepare a draft report reflecting the Committee's views for consideration by the Committee at its next meeting.

**[EXTRACT]**

# Monday, 20 January 2014

## Room 21, Parliament Buildings

**Present:** Mr Alastair Ross (Chairperson)  
Ms Anna Lo (Deputy Chairperson)  
Mr Steven Agnew  
Ms Paula Bradley  
Mr Colum Eastwood  
Mr Ian McCrea  
Mrs Sandra Overend

**In Attendance:** Mr Paul Gill (Assembly Clerk)  
Ms Hilary Cleland-Bogle (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Jonathan Watson (Clerical Supervisor)

**Apologies:** None

### **5.1 Draft Committee Report on a complaint against Mr Phil Flanagan MLA by Mr Jim Allister QC MLA**

*Agreed:* Members discussed and agreed the draft Committee Report and ordered that the report be printed today.

**[EXTRACT]**





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