

**NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY  
BUSINESS COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2013  
IN ROOM 106, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

**MINUTES**

*The meeting began at 12.35pm.*

**Present:**

**The Speaker  
Mr S Dickson  
Mr G Kelly  
Mrs K McKevitt  
Mrs S Overend  
Ms C Ruane  
Mr P Weir**

**In attendance:**

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| <b>Ms L Gordon</b>   | <b>Clerk of Business</b>                  |
| <b>Dr G McGrath</b>  | <b>Director of Clerking and Reporting</b> |
| <b>Ms N Dunwoody</b> | <b>Clerk Assistant</b>                    |
| <b>Mr R Ramsey</b>   | <b>Adviser to the Speaker</b>             |
| <b>Mr H Widdis</b>   | <b>Director of Legal Services</b>         |
| <b>Mr C McNickle</b> | <b>Assistant Assembly Clerk</b>           |

**Observers:**

**Principal Deputy Speaker McLaughlin  
Deputy Speaker Beggs  
Deputy Speaker Dallat  
Junior Minister Bell  
Junior Minister McCann  
Mr A Rogers                      OFMDFM**

**1.     Apologies**

1.1     Apologies were noted from Mr Pat Ramsey and Mr Robin Swann.

**2.     Minutes of previous meeting**

2.1     The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 12 November were **agreed** and signed by the Speaker.

**3.     Matters arising**

3.1 There were no matters arising.

4. **Finalisation of the Order Papers for the plenary meetings in week commencing 25 November**

Executive Business

4.1 Members **noted** that there was no change to Executive Business scheduled for Monday 25 November.

4.2 Members **noted** that the following additional Executive Business was scheduled for Tuesday 26 November:

- Ministerial Statement on the North South Ministerial Council Meeting in Education Sectoral Format;
- Motion: Accelerated Passage: Road Races (Amendment) Bill;
- Second Stage: Road Races (Amendment) Bill.

Committee Business

4.3 Members **noted** that, the Committee for Employment and Learning had requested two hours for the debate on its report on Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance. Members **agreed** to the request.

4.4 Members **noted** that there was no Committee Business scheduled for Tuesday 26 November.

Private Members' Business

4.5 Members **noted** that there was no change to Private Members' Business scheduled for Monday 25 November and Tuesday 26 November.

4.6 Junior Minister Bell advised that no further business was expected at this stage.

4.7 Mr Weir indicated that the DUP motion on 'Review of Decisions of Single Farm Payments', scheduled for Tuesday 26 November, coincided with a meeting of the Committee for Agriculture and Rural Development. He raised the possibility of exchanging places with the Sinn Féin motion on the 'Transfer of Broadcasting Powers', scheduled for Monday 25 November.

- 4.8 Ms Ruane indicated that the party would prefer its motion to remain scheduled on Monday 25 November. It was **agreed** that the Committee for Employment and Learning would be asked whether it would be content to reschedule the motion on its report to accommodate the DUP motion on Monday 25 November.
- 4.9 Junior Minister Bell indicated that, in the event of an exchange, the relevant Ministers were available to respond. Mr Weir indicated that, whilst he would welcome an exchange, he was content for the DUP motion to remain scheduled on Tuesday 26 November if a change could not be facilitated.
- 4.10 The draft Order Papers were **agreed** on that basis.

5. **Provisional arrangements for the plenary meetings in week commencing 02 December 2013**

Executive Business

- 5.1 Members **noted** that the following business was scheduled for Monday 02 December:
- Question Time to the Minister of Education and to the Minister of Enterprise, Trade and Investment;
  - Consideration Stage of the Road Races (Amendment) Bill.

- 5.2 Members further **noted** the possibility of statements.

- 5.3 Members **noted** that the following business was scheduled for Tuesday 03 December:

- Question Time to the Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety and to the Minister of Finance and Personnel;
- Consideration Stage of the Tobacco Retailers Bill.

Committee Business

- 5.4 Members **noted** that there was no Committee Business requested for either day.

Private Members' Business

- 5.5 Mr Dickson drew attention to the cross-party motion on 'Small Business Saturday' and enquired about the possibility of scheduling it during the week commencing 02 December. Ms Ruane indicated that she had not previously been made aware of this motion, and it was **agreed** to discuss the motion again at the next meeting.
- 5.6 The Speaker reminded members to ensure that all other whips are aware of the content of any cross-party motions before they are proposed at meetings.
- 5.7 Members **agreed** to schedule one Private Members' Motion on Monday 02 December and one on Tuesday 03 December.
- 5.8 Under the system of allocation, the selections lay with the DUP and Sinn Féin.
- 5.9 Mr Weir undertook to inform the Business Office of his party's selection for Monday 02 December.
- 5.10 Ms Ruane expressed concern at Private Members' business being selected and notified after meetings.
- 5.11 The following motion was selected for Tuesday 03 December:
- 'School Hours' (Mr C Hazzard, Ms M Boyle and Mr P Sheehan).
- 5.12 Members **agreed** that up to 1 hour 30 minutes should be allocated for each motion, with the usual speaking times.
- 5.13 Members **agreed** to schedule an Adjournment Debate on Tuesday 03 December. Under the system of allocation, the selection lay with the DUP and the following topic was selected:
- 'Tourism in East Belfast' (Mr R Newton).
- 5.14 Junior Minister Bell advised that the Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister would not be available to respond to business on Monday 02 December and that all other Ministers were available.
- 5.15 The provisional Order Papers were **agreed**.

6. **Question Time rota - January 2014 to April 2014**

6.1 Members considered the proposed rota for Question Time from January 2014 to April 2014. Members noted that, due to the impact on timings of topical questions, a change to convention was proposed. Previously, where there was no sitting on a Monday, those Question Time slots were rescheduled to the Tuesday sitting. It was **agreed** that it would be preferable not to have Question Time lasting three hours, and that beginning on Tuesday 18 March 2014 ie the day after the St. Patrick's Day holiday, the normal arrangements for scheduling Question Time would apply. Members noted that no Minister would be missed out by the arrangement, as the rota continued running for the whole mandate.

6.2 Members **agreed** the Question Time rota from January 2014 to April 2014

7. **Any other business**

7.1 There was no other business

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

8.1 Members **agreed** to meet at approximately 12.30pm on Tuesday 26 November 2013 in Room 106.

*The Speaker brought the meeting to a close at 12.47pm*

**The Speaker**  
**Chairperson**