

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY
BUSINESS COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2016
IN ROOM 106, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

MINUTES

The meeting began at 1.00pm.

Present:

The Speaker (Chairperson)

Mr A Attwood

Mr T Clarke

Dr S Farry

Mr D McAleer

Mr C McGrath

Ms C Ní Chuilín

Mrs S Overend

Mr R Swann

In attendance:

Dr A McGarel

Dr G McGrath

Mr P Gill

Mr D Martin

Ms T Caul

Mr R Ramsey

Ms F Leneghan

Mr G Ervine

Clerk of Business

**Director of Parliamentary
Services**

Clerk Assistant

Clerk Assistant

**Director of Legal Services
and Governance**

Adviser to the Speaker

PS/Speaker

Assistant Assembly Clerk

Observers:

Junior Minister Fearon

Junior Minister Ross

Mr A Rogers

The Executive Office

1. Apologies

1.1 There was an apology from Mr S Dickson.

2. Minutes of previous meetings

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 15 November were **agreed**.

3. Matters arising

4. **Finalisation of the Order Paper for plenary meetings in week commencing 28 November 2016**

Public Petition

- 4.1 Members **agreed** to schedule the presentation of a Public Petition by Mr Jim Wells, on 'The Promotion of the Protection of Unborn Children in Northern Ireland', for Monday 28 November.

Executive Committee Business

- 4.2 Members **noted** that there was no change to Executive Committee Business previously scheduled for Monday 28 November.
- 4.3 Members **noted** that there was no change to Executive Committee Business previously scheduled for Tuesday 29 November.

Private Members' Business

- 4.4 Members **noted** that there was no change to Private Members' Business scheduled for Monday 28 November.
- 4.5 Members **noted** that there was no change to Private Members' Business scheduled for Tuesday 29 November.
- 4.6 Junior Minister Ross advised that no further Executive Business was expected at this stage.
- 4.7 The draft Order Papers were **agreed**.

5. **Provisional arrangements for the plenary meetings in week commencing 28 November 2016**

Executive Business

- 5.1 Members **noted** that the following Executive Business was scheduled for Monday 05 December:
- Motion on draft Water Meters Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016.
 - Motion on Pensions (2015 Act) (Consequential Amendments) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016.
 - Question Time to the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and the Minister for Communities.

5.2 Members **noted** that the following Executive Business was scheduled for Tuesday 06 December:

- Motion on draft Food Hygiene Rating (Fee and Fixed Penalty Amount) Order (Northern Ireland) 2016.
- Question Time to the Minister for the Economy and the Minister of Education.

Private Members' Business

5.3 Members **agreed** to schedule two Private Members' Motions on Monday 05 December and two Private Members' Motions on Tuesday 06 December.

5.4 Under the system of allocation, the selections for Monday 05 December lay with Sinn Féin and DUP and the selections for Tuesday 06 December lay with Alliance and UUP. The following motions were selected:

- 'International Human Rights Day' (Mr S Lynch, Mr P McGuigan and Mr C Boylan).
- 'Regulatory Reform and a Regionally Balanced Economy' (Mr M Storey, Mr T Buchanan, Mr G Lyons and Mr G Dunne).
- 'Social Investment Fund' (Mrs N Long, Dr S Farry, Mr S Dickson and Mr D Ford).
- 'Covenant Reference Group' (Mr D Beattie, Mr A Allen and Mr S Aiken).

5.5 Members **agreed** that up to 1 hour 30 minutes should be allocated for the motions, with the usual speaking times.

5.6 Members **agreed** to schedule an Adjournment Debate on Tuesday 06 December. Under the system of allocation, the selection lay with Sinn Féin and the following adjournment debate was selected:

- 'The Proposed Closure of Bushmills Outdoor Education Centre' (Mr P McGuigan).

5.7 Junior Minister Ross advised that all Ministers were available.

5.8 Members **agreed** that, as there will be no Business Committee on Tuesday 06 December, not to suspend for lunch that day.

5.9 The provisional Order Papers were **agreed**.

6. Business Committee Membership

- 6.1 Members were referred to an advice paper in relation to Business Committee membership.
- 6.2 Members **agreed** that one place on the Business Committee would be made available to a single agreed representative from the five members of the Green Party, People Before Profit Alliance and Traditional Unionist Voice.
- 6.3 Members put on record that this decision was made without prejudice and would not impact on discussions in relation to speaking rights for smaller parties. Members also noted that there is no provision for technical groups in Standing Orders.
- 6.4 Members also **agreed** to write to the Committee on Procedures to suggest that it may wish to consider a review of Standing Orders in relation to broadening Business Committee membership at some point in the future.

7. **Any Other Business**

- 7.1 Members were referred to a letter from Mr Jim Allister in relation to the list used for the selection of Private Members' Motions.
- 7.2 Members **agreed** to defer discussion on this item of business until next week.
- 7.3 Members were referred to a response from the Green Party in relation to speaking rights for smaller parties.
- 7.4 Members **noted** this response and **agreed** to defer discussion on this item of business until the other parties have replied.
- 7.5 The Speaker asked Whips to be as prompt and accurate as possible when submitting names for speaking lists, particularly for Members moving motions.

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

- 8.1 Members **agreed** to meet at 1:00pm on Tuesday 29 November 2016 in Room 106.

The Chairperson brought the meeting to a close at 1.18pm

The Speaker
Chairperson