

NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY
BUSINESS COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 26 MAY 2016
IN ROOM 106, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS

MINUTES

The meeting began at 1.04pm.

Present:

The Speaker (Chairperson)
Mr A Attwood
Mr T Clarke
Mr S Dickson
Mr G Lyons
Mr D McAleer
Mr C McGrath
Ms C Ní Chuilín
Mr R Swann

In attendance:	Dr A McGarel	Clerk of Business
	Mr T Reaney	Clerk/Chief Executive
	Mr D Martin	Clerk Assistant
	Mr P Gill	Clerk Assistant
	Ms T Caul	Director of Legal Services
		and Governance
	Mr J McMillen	Legal Services and
		Governance
	Mr R Ramsey	Adviser to the Speaker
	Ms F Leneghan	PS/Speaker
	Mr G Ervine	Assistant Assembly Clerk

Observers:

1. Apologies

- 1.1 There were apologies from Mrs Sandra Overend and Mr Peter Weir.
- 1.2 The Speaker welcomed Ms Ní Chuilín and Mr McAleer as new members to the Business Committee.

2. Minutes of previous meetings

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 17 May were **agreed**.

3. Matters arising

3.1 In relation to point 5.5 of the minutes, Members **noted** that they had agreed by email after the meeting the provision for debate during the nomination of a Minister of Justice on Wednesday 25 May.

3.2 In relation to point 5.13 of the minutes, Members **noted** that the Order Paper for Wednesday 25 May was confirmed by email on Friday 20 May before being issued.

4. **Speaking lists**

4.1 Members were referred to the advice paper regarding speaking lists.

4.2 Mr Attwood stated that he supported option 2, which would give a speaking slot to each of the two-member parties at the end of round 4.

4.3 Mr Swann stated that he also supported the use of option 2.

4.4 Ms Ní Chuilín stated that she would like to discuss this issue further with her party before making a decision.

4.5 Members **agreed** to discuss this issue further at the Business Committee meeting on Tuesday 31 May.

5. **Rota for Private Members' Business**

5.1 Members were referred to the advice paper regarding the rota for Private Members' Business.

5.2 Mr Clarke stated his concern that the transient arrangements agreed by the previous Business Committee on 8 March provided more time to opposition and opposition parties than it did to larger parties.

5.3 Mr Attwood stated that he supported the arrangements as agreed by the previous Business Committee on 8 March, noted that because the Executive can schedule as much business as it requires gives the approach balance and that this model should be used until the situation became clear in relation to the Assembly and Executive Reform (Assembly Opposition) Act. Mr Swann also stated his support for these arrangements.

5.4 Ms Ní Chuilín proposed that the transient arrangements remained for the selection of private members' business at this meeting but that the Committee re-visit this issue at the next meeting.

5.5 Members **agreed** to this proposal.

6. **Finalisation of the Order Paper for the plenary meeting on Tuesday 31 May 2016**

- 6.1 Members **agreed** that there should be no sitting on Monday 30 May as it is a Bank Holiday.

Assembly Business

- 6.2 Members **agreed** to schedule a motion to suspend Standing Order 20(1) for Tuesday 31 May.
- 6.3 Members **agreed** to schedule a motion from the DUP to change Committee Membership for Tuesday 31 May.
- 6.4 Members **agreed** to schedule a motion to appoint members to the Assembly Commission for Tuesday 31 May.
- 6.5 Members **agreed** to schedule two motions to appoint members to Statutory Committees and Standing Committees for Tuesday 31 May.
- 6.6 Members **agreed** to meet at 9:30am on Tuesday 31 May to consider the two reports that provide the details of committee membership.
- 6.7 The draft Order Paper was **agreed**.

7. **Provisional arrangements for the plenary meetings in week commencing 06 June 2016**

Assembly Business

- 7.1 Members **agreed** to schedule a motion to suspend Standing Orders 20(1) for Monday 06 June.
- 7.2 Members **agreed** to schedule a motion to suspend Standing Orders 20(1) for Tuesday 07 June.

Executive Business

- 7.3 Members **noted** that there was no Executive Business for either day at this time.

Opposition Business and Private Members' Business

7.4 Members **agreed** to schedule three Motions on Monday 06 June. Under the system of allocation agreed at agenda item 5, there would be one Opposition Motion and two Private Members' Motions, falling to DUP and Sinn Féin. The following motions were selected:

- 'Manufacturing Strategy for Northern Ireland' (Mr R Swann and Mr S Aiken)
- 'Protection of Woodburn Forest' (Mr O McMullan and Mr G Kelly)

7.5 Mr Clarke undertook to inform the Business Office of his party's selection following the meeting.

7.6 Members **agreed** to schedule three Motions on Tuesday 07 June. Under the system of allocation agreed at agenda item 5, there would be one Opposition Motion and two Private Members' Motions, falling to DUP and UUP. The following motions were selected:

- 'Childcare' (Ms C Hanna and Mr A Attwood)
- 'Review of the Schools Estate' (Mrs S Overend and Mr D Kennedy)

7.7 Mr Clarke undertook to inform the Business Office of his party's selection following the meeting.

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

7.9 Members **agreed** to schedule an Adjournment Debate on Tuesday 07 June. Under the system of allocation, the selection lay with the DUP.

7.10 Mr Clarke undertook to inform the Business Office of his party's selection following the meeting.

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

8. **Referendum on UK Membership of the EU**

8.1 Members were referred to the advice paper regarding the Referendum on UK Membership of the EU.

8.2 Members **noted** the position in respect of section 125 of the PPERA and its application to the Commission in relation to the EU referendum.

8.3 Members **noted** that proceedings of the Assembly should continue to be published during the relevant period.

8.4 Members **agreed** that the Business Committee should not schedule for debate during the relevant period either any Private Members' Motions or Adjournment Debates which are explicitly concerned with the question of whether the United Kingdom should remain a member of or leave the EU.

8.5 Mr Attwood requested that the legal advice in relation to this paper is circulated. It was **agreed** that this would be forwarded to all Members following the meeting.

9. **Recess Dates**

9.1 Members were referred to the advice paper regarding the recess dates for 2016/17.

9.2 Members **agreed** that plenary sittings should continue as normal during the week of the EU Referendum.

9.3 Members **agreed** the recess dates for 2016/17.

10. **Any Other Business**

10.1 Following Ms Claire Sugden's appointment as Minister of Justice, Members **agreed** to reconsider seating arrangements at the next meeting. Mr Swann requested that the issue of the official opposition is taken into account when reconsidering seating arrangements.

10.2 Members **noted** correspondence from the Minister of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs and **agreed** to swap the date of her Question Time slot with Education from Monday 13 June to Monday 20 June.

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

11.1 Members **agreed** to meet at 9:30am on Tuesday 31 May 2016 in Room 106, followed by a meeting at 1:00pm on Tuesday 31 May 2016 in Room 106.

The Chairperson brought the meeting to a close at 1.45pm

The Speaker
Chairperson