



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee on Standards and Privileges

Minutes of Proceedings

23 November 2021

Meeting Location: Virtual Meeting via Microsoft Teams

Present by Video or Teleconference:

Ms Linda Dillon MLA (Chairperson)
Ms Sinéad Bradley MLA
Mr Stewart Dickson MLA
Mr Declan McAleer MLA
Mr Patsy McGlone MLA
Ms Áine Murphy MLA

Apologies: Dr Steve Aiken MLA OBE MLA
Ms Pam Cameron MLA

In Attendance by Video or Teleconference:

Mr Shane McAteer (Assembly Clerk)
Ms Marie Austin (Senior Assistant Clerk)
Ms Karen Barry (Assistant Clerk)
Mr Jim Nulty (Clerical Supervisor)
Dr Simon Gallaher (Clerical Supervisor)
Ms Alison Ferguson (Clerical Officer)



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Agreed: The Committee agreed to commence the meeting in closed session.

The meeting commenced at 1.31pm in closed session.

1. Apologies

As noted above.

2. Declaration of Interests

Members were advised of the ongoing requirement to declare relevant financial or other interests as and when they arise on the Committee.

Members noted that Steve Aiken has recused himself from agenda items 5 and 6.

3. Draft Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 17 November 2021.

4. Matters Arising

It was noted that, under temporary Standing Order 115(9), the Committee agreed, via correspondence on 17 November 2021, to apply necessary redactions/anonymisation to a Committee report and accompanying documents in accordance with legal advice.



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5. Complaint against a Member – Draft Committee report

Patsy McGlone joined the meeting at 1.38pm.

Members considered a draft Committee report on a complaint against a Member, which had been developed in line with the Committee's decisions on the complaint case taken at the meeting on 13 October 2021.

Members undertook formal consideration of the draft report as follows:

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Title Page, Committee Powers and Membership page and Table of Contents page, stand part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the 'Introduction' section at paragraphs 1 to 5 of the report, stand part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the 'Background' section at paragraphs 6 to 13 of the report, stand part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the 'Commissioner's investigation' section at paragraphs 14 to 16 of the report, stand part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the 'Committee's considerations and conclusions' section at paragraphs 17 to 32 of the report, stand part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the 'Examination of the allegations' subsection at paragraphs 33 to 40 of the report, which refer to Allegation 1, stand part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the 'Examination of the allegations' subsection at paragraphs 41 to 43 of the report, which refer to Allegation 2, stand part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the 'Examination of the allegations' subsection at paragraph 44 of the report, which refers to Allegation 3, stands part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the 'Examination of the allegations' subsection at paragraphs 45 to 56 of the report, which refer to Allegation 4, stand part of the report.



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Agreed: The Committee agreed that the ‘Examination of the allegations’ subsection at paragraphs 57 and 58 of the report, which refer to Allegation 5, stand part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the ‘Examination of the allegations’ subsection at paragraphs 59 to 62 of the report, which refer to Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights and a summary of the Committee position on the allegations, stand part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the ‘The Respect Principle’ subsection at paragraphs 63 to 67 of the report, stand part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the ‘Links to Appendices’ at pages 33 and 34 of the report, subject to any necessary redactions, stand part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that this report be the Fourth Report of the Committee on Standards and Privileges in the 2017-22 Mandate.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Chairperson will agree an extract of today’s minutes regarding the agreement of this report so it may be included in the Minutes of Proceedings section of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the report be published on-line on the Assembly’s webpages.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the report be embargoed until noon on Thursday, 25 November 2021 to provide time for it to be uploaded to the Assembly webpages.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to provide the complainant and the respondent with a copy of the embargoed report in advance of publication.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that, if there are any media queries, the Committee will respond to say that it will not be making any further comment.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that, in line with protocol, a copy of the report will be laid in the Business Office within 24 hours (the Committee noted that it will be made available for viewing by Members once the embargo has expired and a link to the Report will also be emailed to all MLAs following publication).



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6. Complaint against a Member – Draft Committee report

Members considered a draft Committee report on a complaint against a Member, which had been developed in line with the Committee's decisions on the complaint case taken at the meeting on 17 November 2021.

Members undertook formal consideration of the draft report as follows:

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Title Page, Committee Powers and Membership page and Table of Contents page, stand part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the 'Introduction' section at paragraphs 1 to 5 of the report, stand part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the 'Background' section at paragraphs 6 to 13 of the report, stand part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the 'Commissioner's investigation' section at paragraphs 14 to 16 of the report, stand part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the 'Committee's considerations and conclusions' section at paragraphs 17 to 35 of the report, stand part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the 'Examination of the allegations' subsection at paragraphs 36 to 47 of the report, which refer to Allegation 1, stand part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the 'Examination of the allegations' subsection at paragraphs 48 to 50 of the report, which refer to Allegation 2, stand part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the 'Examination of the allegations' subsection at paragraphs 51 to 53 of the report, which refer to the Committee's overall conclusions, stand part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the 'Annex – Apology from the respondent to the complainant' at page 28 of the report, stands part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the 'Links to Appendices' at pages 29 to 31 of the report, subject to any necessary redactions, stand part of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that this report be the Fifth Report of the Committee on Standards and Privileges in the 2017-22 Mandate.



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Agreed: The Committee agreed that the Chairperson will agree an extract of today's minutes regarding the agreement of this report so it may be included in the Minutes of Proceedings section of the report.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the report be published on-line on the Assembly's webpages.

Agreed: The Committee agreed that the report be embargoed until noon on Thursday, 25 November 2021 to provide time for it to be uploaded to the Assembly webpages.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to provide the complainant and the respondent with an embargoed copy of the report in advance of publication.

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5. Correspondence

The Committee noted a letter from the Chairperson to Steve Aiken which explained the Committee's decision regarding his request for future meeting agenda to be reconfigured.

The Committee noted correspondence from the Clerk to the Committee for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs regarding the draft Green Growth Strategy.

6. Any Other Business

There was no other business.



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7. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The Committee noted that the next meeting will be on Wednesday, 8 December 2021.

The meeting was adjourned at 1.50pm.

**Linda Dillon MLA,
Chairperson, Standards and Privileges Committee**

8 December 2021