



Northern Ireland
Assembly

Committee on Standards and Privileges

Minutes of Proceedings

25 September 2024

Meeting Location: Room 106, Parliament Buildings

Present:

Carál Ní Chuilín MLA (Chairperson)

Stewart Dickson MLA (Deputy Chairperson)

Connie Egan MLA

Paul Frew MLA

Harry Harvey MLA

Brian Kingston MLA

Present by video or teleconference:

Jemma Dolan MLA

Cathy Mason MLA

Apologies:

Colin McGrath MLA

In Attendance:

Shane McAteer, Committee Clerk

Nick Mitford, Senior Assistant Clerk

Elaine Farrell, Assistant Clerk

Laura Gourley, Clerical Supervisor

Alison Ferguson, Clerical Officer

Helen Smyth, Legal Advisor (agenda item 5)

The meeting commenced at 10:00 a.m. in closed session

1. Apologies

As noted above.

2. Declaration of interests

The Chairperson advised Members of the ongoing requirement to declare relevant financial or other interests as and when they arise and before taking part in any Assembly proceedings, including Committee proceedings, relating to that matter.

Mr Harvey declared an interest that he is a member of the All-Party Group (APG) on Cycling, which would be discussed under agenda item 7.

3. Minutes

Agreed: The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2024.

4. Matters Arising

None.

Agreed: The Committee agreed to take Agenda Item 6: Adjudication of complaints against Ministers of alleged breaches of the Ministerial Code of Conduct – draft consultation paper next.

5. Adjudication of complaints against Ministers of alleged breaches of the Ministerial Code of Conduct – draft consultation paper

The Senior Assistant Clerk briefed the Committee on the draft consultation paper on the adjudication of complaints against Ministers of alleged breaches of the Ministerial Code of Conduct.

Ms Dolan joined the meeting at 10:23 a.m.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the draft consultation paper for issuing to the Assembly parties, via the Chief Whips, and independent MLAs (and copied to the Committee on Procedures for information), with a deadline for response by Friday 1 November 2024.

6. Review of Standing Order 70 – briefing by Legal Services

Helen Smyth, Assembly Legal Advisor, joined the meeting at 10:31 a.m.

Ms Smyth briefed the Committee on the requested legal advice in respect of the Committee's review of Standing Order 70.

Agreed: The Committee agreed, in principle, to seek to repeal Standing Order 70.

Agreed: The Committee agreed, in principle, to seek to amend the title of the Committee to remove the reference to "Privileges".

Agreed: The Committee agreed for the Clerk to liaise with Legal Services on preparing draft amendments to Standing Orders which address the issues raised in the legal advice.

7. Correspondence

Noted: The Committee noted the correspondence from the Chairperson of the APG on Cycling, which proposes a name change to the APG to become the APG on Active Travel.

8. AOB

None.

9. Date, Time and Place of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Committee on Standards and Privileges was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 9 October 2024 at 10.00 a.m. in Room 106.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:11 a.m.

Carál Ní Chuilín MLA

Chairperson, Committee on Standards and Privileges

23 October 2024