

COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURES

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

**TUESDAY 26 FEBRUARY 2013
ROOM 144, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr Gerry Kelly MLA (Chairperson)
Mr Trevor Clarke MLA (Deputy Chairperson)
Mr Jim Allister MLA
Mr Samuel Gardiner MLA
Mr Chris Lyttle MLA
Mr Barry McElduff MLA
Mr Oliver McMullan MLA
Mr Alban Maginness MLA
Lord Morrow MLA
Mr George Robinson MLA

In attendance: Alison Ross (Clerk)
Neil Currie (Assistant Clerk)
Jonathan Watson (Clerical Supervisor)

1.00pm The meeting opened in closed session.

1. Apologies

None.

2. Draft Minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2013

Agreed : Members agreed the draft minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2013.

1.02pm Mr Allister joined the meeting.

3. Standing Order 60 – Establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee on Conformity with Equality Requirements

The Committee considered legal advice and a briefing paper on the genesis and application of Standing Order 60, which relates to the establishment of an ad hoc committee on conformity with equality requirements.

Agreed : It was agreed to consider this matter further at the next meeting scheduled for 19 March 2013.

1.09pm The meeting moved into public session.

4. Amending Bills after Further Consideration Stage

The Committee noted legal advice, which confirmed that there were no legal issues arising from the further briefing paper from the Bill Office regarding the proposals in relation to amending Bills after Further Consideration Stage.

The Committee considered a letter from the Speaker enclosing revised guidance for Members on amendments to Bills.

Agreed: It was agreed that the Speaker's correspondence should be forwarded to the Clerks in the Bill Office, asking them to give consideration to these matters in the preparation of draft amendments to Standing Orders.

5. Inquiry into Topical Questions

The Committee concluded its consideration of the issues under the Terms of Reference for the inquiry.

Agreed: It was agreed that the Clerk should prepare a draft report for consideration at the meeting scheduled for 19 March 2013.

6. Attorney General participation in the proceedings of the Assembly

The Committee considered a briefing paper on its inquiry into the extent to which Standing Orders should permit the Attorney General for Northern Ireland to participate in proceedings of the Assembly.

1.17pm Mr Lyttle joined the meeting.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the Terms of Reference for the inquiry.

Agreed: The Committee agreed the programme of work, and that a notice publicising the inquiry would appear on the Assembly website only.

7. Standing Order 32(2) – Reasoned Amendments to Bills

It was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting, as Party Whips and other stakeholders had not responded with their views on this matter.

The Chairperson asked Members to remind their Party Whips about responding to this matter.

8. Committee Stage of Bills

The Committee considered figures for this mandate so far on the number of requests to extend the Committee Stage of Bills.

1.24pm Mr Gardiner joined the meeting.

Agreed: It was agreed to consider this matter further in September 2013.

9. Family friendly practices and impact of late sittings

The Committee considered statistics on the number of late sittings in the last mandate and so far in this mandate.

Agreed: It was agreed to consider this matter further in October 2013.

10. Budget Scrutiny

The Chairperson advised Members that it is likely to be the autumn before the Committee for Finance and Personnel forms a view on whether Standing Orders should be amended in relation to the Assembly's input to the budget process.

Agreed: It was, therefore, agreed to consider this matter further in November 2013, unless developments mean that attention is required sooner.

11. Review of Committee Systems and Structures

The Chairperson advised Members of the work being undertaken by the project team reviewing committee systems.

Agreed: As the Clerk is a member of the project team, it was agreed that the Clerk should update Members as necessary, until the project team's report is finalised.

12. Forward Work Programme

The Committee was content with the Forward Work Programme.

13. Correspondence

There was no other correspondence.

14. Any other Business

None.

15. Date, time and place of next meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on 19 March 2013 at 1.00pm in Room 144, Parliament Buildings.

1.31pm The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Gerry Kelly
Chairperson, Committee on Procedures

19 March 2013