

## **COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURES**

### **MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS**

**WEDNESDAY 8 JUNE 2016  
ROOM 21, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr Gordon Lyons MLA (Chairperson)  
Mr Edwin Poots MLA (Deputy Chairperson)  
Mr Steven Agnew MLA  
Mrs Rosemary Barton MLA  
Mr Thomas Buchanan MLA  
Mr Conor Murphy MLA  
Mr Pat Sheehan MLA  
Mr Mervyn Storey MLA

In attendance: Alison Ross (Clerk)  
Neil Currie (Assistant Clerk)  
Bronagh Irwin (Clerical Supervisor)  
Lesley Johnston (Clerical Officer)

**2.02pm** The meeting opened in public session.

The Chairperson welcomed Members to the first meeting of the Committee.

#### **1. Apologies**

Mr Chris Lyttle MLA  
Mr Fra McCann MLA  
Mr Colin McGrath MLA

#### **2. Committee Membership**

Members noted the Committee membership.

**2.03pm** Mr Poots joined the meeting.

### **3. Staff Contact Details**

Members noted the contact details for the Committee Office staff.

### **4. Declaration of Interests**

The Chairperson reminded Members that all Assembly Members are required to register relevant interests in the Register of Members' Interests, and that the deadline for registering interests is 9 June 2016.

In line with Standing Order 69(5), the Chairperson reminded Members that a Member who has a financial interest in any matter; or a relevant interest in any matter, must declare that interest before taking part in any proceedings of the Assembly relating to that matter.

The Chairperson asked if Members had any interests to declare which are relevant to the work of the Committee. No interests were declared.

### **5. Protocols and Procedures**

Members noted the following guidance papers:

- Guide to the Powers and Operation of Standing and Ad Hoc Committees for Chairpersons and Members
- Guide to the Role of Committee Chairpersons
- Guide for Members on the Role and Functions of the Committee Office
- Providing an Effective Research Service to Committees – Good Practice Guidelines

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed a number of protocols and procedures on the operation of the Committee.

*Agreed:* It was agreed to hold future meetings on a Tuesday at 1.15pm, and that the next meeting would be held on 21 June 2016.

### **6. 2011-2016 Legacy Report**

The Committee noted the 2011-2016 Legacy Report summarising the work of the committee during the previous mandate.

### **7. Draft Forward Work Programme and proposed meeting dates**

The Committee considered a briefing paper prepared by the Clerk (reflecting the issues contained in the 2011-2016 Legacy Report) outlining some issues the incoming committee may wish to take forward.

**2.16pm** The meeting moved into closed session to consider legal advice on three further issues.

**2.17pm** Jonathan McMillen from the Legal Services Office joined the meeting and briefed the Committee and answered Members' questions on the legal advice and briefing papers in relation to the Official Opposition, the Undertaking and Hybrid Bills.

*Agreed:* It was agreed to give further consideration at the next meeting to the options on the way forward in relation to the Official Opposition.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that it was content to formalise the interim procedure used by the Speaker at the start of the mandate in relation to the signing of the Undertaking and Roll of Membership. It was agreed that the Clerk should seek legal advice on the procedure, and that draft amendments to Standing Orders should be prepared for the Committee's consideration.

*Agreed:* The Committee considered the work done by its predecessor in respect of Standing Orders to facilitate consideration of Hybrid Bills in the Assembly, and it agreed to take the matter forward in accordance with its recommendations. It was agreed that draft amendments to Standing Orders should be prepared for the Committee's consideration.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the items of business to be included on the Forward Work Programme and the priority to be given to each.

**2.34pm** The Chairperson thanked Mr McMillen for his attendance and he left the meeting.

## **8. Correspondence**

i) The Committee considered correspondence from the Head of the Assembly Research and Information Service in relation to Standing Order 23(3) which relates to papers deposited in the Assembly Library.

*Agreed:* It was agreed to seek legal advice on the suggested amendment to Standing Order 23(3).

ii) The Committee considered correspondence from Mairaid McMahon, inviting Members to a session she will be running at the Xchange Summer School on 16 June 2016, in relation to the introduction of the Assembly's e-Petitions facility. The Chairperson asked Members to contact the Clerk if they plan to attend the event.

**9. Any other Business**

None.

**10. Date, time and place of next meeting**

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Tuesday, 21 June 2016 at 1.15pm in Room 21, Parliament Buildings.

**2.38pm** The Chairperson adjourned the meeting.

Gordon Lyons  
Chairperson, Committee on Procedures

21 June 2016