



## **COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS AND PRIVILEGES**

**WEDNESDAY, 2<sup>ND</sup> JULY 2014**  
**ROOM 106, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

- Present:** Mr Alastair Ross (Chairperson)  
Mr Steven Agnew  
Mr Cathal Boylan  
Ms Paula Bradley  
Mr Declan McAleer  
Mrs Sandra Overend
- In Attendance:** Mr Paul Gill (Assembly Clerk)  
Mrs Ashleigh Mitford (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Jonathan Watson (Clerical Supervisor)
- Apologies:** Mr Colum Eastwood  
Ms Anna Lo (Deputy Chairperson)

*The meeting commenced at 1.36pm in closed session.*

### **Chairperson's Introduction**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the meeting should be held in closed session.

The Chairperson welcomed Committee members to the meeting.

### **1. Apologies**

As above

### **2. Declaration of Interests**

The Chairperson reminded Members of their obligation to declare any relevant financial or other interests before and during each Committee meeting.

No interests were declared.

**3. Draft minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2014**

*Agreed:* The draft minutes of the meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2014 were agreed by the Committee.

**4. Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

**5. Correspondence from the Commissioner for Standards on Complaints against a Member**

The Committee noted a Clerk's paper and correspondence in relation to a number of complaints against a Member.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr Douglas Bain, Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards, and invited him to brief the Committee on his items of correspondence. Following the briefing the Commissioner answered Members' questions.

The Chairperson thanked Mr Bain who left the meeting.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed with the conclusion of the Assembly Commissioner for Standards that each of the complaints against the Member were inadmissible.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the Clerk write to the Member complained of and the complainants enclosing a copy of the Commissioner's correspondence and informing them of the Committee's decision.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the Clerk write to the Commissioner informing him of the Committee's decision.

**6. Consideration of draft Committee Report on the conduct of Mr Jimmy Spratt MLA**

The Chairperson referred members to the tabled draft report.

*Agreed:* The Committee considered the draft report paragraph by paragraph and agreed it, as amended.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the Commissioner's report, including all evidence, should be appended to its report.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that Mr Spratt should receive an advance copy

of the embargoed report.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to order its report to print.

*1.56pm :* Mr McAleer joined the meeting.

## **7. Any other business**

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed to delegate authority to the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson to submit views on releasing or withholding information in any non-routine or contentious FoI requests received during the summer recess period.

*Agreed:* The Clerk should inform the Ministry of Justice that the Committee expects the GRECO recommendations to be implemented by the Assembly through the adoption of the new Code of Conduct by December 2014.

*Agreed:* The Clerk should seek to arrange for the Committee to meet with its Standards counterparts at the National Assembly for Wales and at the Dáil Éireann, as part of its Review of the Code of Conduct.

## **8. Time, date and place of next meeting**

The Chairperson advised Members that the next meeting will take place in September 2014. Committee staff will confirm details in due course.

*The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 1.55pm*

**Mr Alastair Ross MLA**  
**Chairperson, Committee on Standards and Privileges**  
**10<sup>th</sup> September 2014**