



## **COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS AND PRIVILEGES**

**MONDAY, 10<sup>TH</sup> MARCH**  
**ROOM 21, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

**Present:** Mr Alastair Ross (Chairperson)  
Mr Steven Agnew  
Mr Cathal Boylan  
Ms Paula Bradley  
Mr Colum Eastwood  
Mr Fra McCann  
Mr Ian McCrea  
Mr Mervyn Storey

**In Attendance:** Mr Paul Gill (Assembly Clerk)  
Ms Ursula McCanny (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Mr Jonathan Watson (Clerical Supervisor)

**Apologies:** Ms Anna Lo

*The meeting commenced at 12.16pm 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.

Mr Mervyn Storey declared an interest as the subject of a complaint at agenda item 6.

**3. Draft minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2014**

*Agreed:* The draft minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2014 were agreed by the Committee.

**4. Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

**5. Consideration of a Report from the Acting Assembly Commissioner for Standards on complaints against Mr Gerry Kelly MLA**

The Chairperson referred Members to the tabled draft Report.

*Agreed:* Members discussed and agreed the draft Committee Report, as amended, and ordered that the report be printed today.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the Clerk should write to Mr Kelly, Mr Allister, Mr Bloomer and Mr Buchanan informing them of the Committee's decision and enclosing a copy of the embargoed Committee Report.

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

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the Clerk should deal with any media enquiries on behalf of the Committee.

*Mr Steven Agnew joined the meeting at 12.20pm.*

**6. Correspondence from the Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards on a complaint against a Member**

*Mr Cathal Boylan and Mr Mervyn Storey left the meeting at 12.21pm.*

Members noted the Clerk's Paper and correspondence dated 26<sup>th</sup> February 2014 from the Assembly Commissioner for Standards.

The Chairperson welcomed Mr Douglas Bain, Northern Ireland Assembly Commissioner for Standards, and invited him to brief the Committee on this correspondence.

Following discussion the Chairperson asked Mr Bain to remain in his place for the next agenda item.

## **7. Review of the Code of Conduct**

The Chairperson referred Members to the Clerk's Paper and the draft issues paper in the regular pack.

Members discussed the draft issues paper and suggested some amendments to it.

*Ms Paula Bradley left the meeting at 12.42pm.*

Following discussion, the Chairperson thanked Mr Bain who left the meeting.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that it was content for the issues paper, as amended, to be published on the Committee's webpage.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the Clerk should write to the stakeholders detailed in the Clerk's Paper, enclosing a copy of the issues paper and asking for comment.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the press notice and signposting notice should be issued as drafted.

The Chairperson referred the Committee back to agenda item 6.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed with the Commissioner's conclusion that the complaint is inadmissible.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the Clerk should write to the complainant on behalf of the Committee, enclosing the Commissioner's correspondence and setting out the Committee's position. The Committee also agreed that the Clerk should write to Mr Storey and the Commissioner.

## **8. Any other business**

The Clerk advised the Committee that a briefing folder was available for those members attending the Committee visit to Washington DC on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> March 2014.

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

The Chairperson advised Members that Committee staff will be in touch to confirm the date, time and place of the next meeting.

*The Chairperson adjourned the meeting at 1.09pm.*

**Mr Alastair Ross MLA**

**Chairperson, Committee on Standards and Privileges**