

# **COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS AND PRIVILEGES**

**WEDNESDAY, 10<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2015**

## **ROOM 21, PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

Present: Mr Jimmy Spratt (Chairman)  
Mr Steven Agnew  
Mr Cathal Boylan  
Mr David Hilditch  
Mr Declan McAleer  
Mr Robin Newton

In Attendance: Mr Paul Gill (Assembly Clerk)  
Mrs Hilary Cleland Bogle (Assistant Assembly Clerk)  
Miss Alison Ferguson (Clerical Officer)

Apologies: Ms Anna Lo (Deputy Chairperson)  
Mr Tom Buchanan  
Mr Colum Eastwood  
Mr Fra McCann  
Mrs Sandra Overend

### **Chairman's Introduction**

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

*The meeting commenced at 1.41pm in closed session.*

The Chairman welcomed Committee members to the meeting.

### **1. Apologies**

As above.

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

The Chairman reminded Members of their obligation to declare any relevant financial or other interest before or during each Committee meeting.

### **3. Draft minutes**

*Agreed:* The draft minutes of the meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2015 were agreed by the Committee.

### **4. Matters arising**

There were no matters arising.

### **5. Report from the Assembly Commissioner for Standards on a complaint against a Member**

Members noted the Clerk's Paper; the draft Committee Report; and previous correspondence.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the tabled draft extract of minutes of today's meeting should form part of the Report.

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

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the Committee's report should be embargoed until the commencement of the debate.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the draft Committee Motion.

The Committee noted it was likely that the motion would be scheduled for debate on either the 29<sup>th</sup> or 30<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

*Agreed:* Following discussion the Committee agreed that Mr Agnew would assist Ms the Deputy Chairperson in relation to either the moving or the winding of the motion.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the Clerk should draw all Members' attention to the embargo on the report and to the fact that breaching the embargo could amount to a breach of the Code of Conduct.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that the Clerk should write to the complainant and the Member complained of informing them of the Committee's decision and forwarding a copy of the Committee's embargoed Report.

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

Members noted the Clerk's Paper, the agreed new Code of Conduct and Guide to the Rules, and a draft Press Release.

*1.56 Mr Agnew left the meeting.*

The Committee noted the tabled version of the draft report and the Clerk drew members' attention to the amendments contained within it.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed it was content with the agreed version of the Code and Guide.

*Agreed:* The Committee considered and agreed the final amendments to the updated version of the draft Committee Report.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed the Committee Powers and Membership should form part of the Report.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that Annexes 1 and 2 and Appendices 1 – 7 should form of the Report.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that an extract of today's Minutes of Proceedings, should be included in the report.

The Committee ordered the Report on the Review of the Northern Ireland Assembly Code of Conduct and the Guide to the Rules Relating to the Conduct of Members to be printed.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that an embargoed copy of the report be sent to each of the witnesses who gave oral evidence.

Members noted that the Report would be embargoed until the commencement of the Committee debate in Plenary.

*Agreed:* Members agreed the draft Press Release, as amended, to be released following the debate of the Committee's Report in Plenary.

*Agreed:* The Committee agreed that, following the Assembly's agreement of the new Code and Guide, it is content that the Chairperson should write, drawing attention to the relevant sections of the report, to the following:

- The Committee on Procedures;
- The Assembly Commission;
- The Executive;
- OFMdfM
- The Assembly Commissioner for Standards;
- The Independent Financial Review Panel;
- The Electoral Commission; and
- The Committee for Social Development

## **7. Any other business**

There was no other business.

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

Members noted that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> June 2015 at 1.30pm in room 21, Parliament Buildings.

*The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 2.08pm.*

**Mr Jimmy Spratt MLA**

**Chairman, Committee on Standards and Privileges**

24<sup>th</sup> June 2015