

MINUTES OF MEETING

Date: 20th May 2003
Time: 9 a.m.
Venue: Committee Room 2

Present: Jenny Randerson (Chair)
Karen Sinclair, Business Minister
Jonathan Morgan, Conservative Business Manager
Kirsty Williams, Liberal Democrat Business Manager
Jocelyn Davies, Plaid Cymru Business Manager
John Marek, Deputy Presiding Officer

Paul Silk, Clerk to the Assembly
Peter Jones, Presiding Office Legal Unit
Andrew George, Clerk to the Business Committee
Marion Stapleton, Assembly Business Unit
Marie Knox, Head of Committee Secretariat (agenda item 6)
Marc Wyn Jones, Business Committee Secretariat
Catherine Morris, PS to Deputy Presiding Officer

1. Apologies & announcements

2. Minutes of the previous meetings

(i) BC161-03 (Final) Tuesday 25th March 2003

2.1 The minutes were presented to the Committee in their final format. Since there were no comments they would be translated in readiness for publication.

Action: Chamber Secretariat

(ii) BC178-03 (Final) Tuesday 1st April 2003

2.2 The minutes were presented to the Committee in their final format. Since there were no comments they would be translated in readiness for publication.

Action: Chamber Secretariat

3. Matters Arising

3.1 **Paragraph 12.1 (BC34-03 - 28/1/03)** The Chair said that the Committee needed to agree dates for the Summer Recess as soon as possible. The Committee discussed whether the Assembly should sit for two weeks in September before Party Conferences. Business Managers agreed to return to the issue at the next meeting following consultation with groups.

Action: Marion Stapleton to prepare paper

3.2 **Paragraph 12.1 (BC161-03 - 25/3/03)** The Business Committee endorsed the dates for a Whitsun recess which had been provisionally agreed

by the Committee before the Assembly Elections.

4. Subordinate Legislation

(a) Orders for consideration

(b) Orders made under the Executive Procedure; papers to note.

BC180-03 & BC181-03

4.1 The Committee noted the letters to Members from Cabinet Secretariat on the use of the Executive procedure for two Orders.

BC182-03 - BC191-03

4.2 The Business Committee noted the e-mails from Cabinet Secretariat to Members notifying them about the use of the Executive procedure for various Orders. The Chair said that some e-mails had been sent to Members up to seven days after the Orders had been made. However, Members were entitled to 40 working days to table a motion of revocation under Standing Order 22.29. The Committee agreed that Members should be notified promptly once an Order was made.

4.3 In response to a question from the Deputy Presiding Officer, Marion Stapleton confirmed that the Permanent Secretary had written to the Presiding Officer to inform him that no subordinate legislation had been made by the Permanent Secretary during the period between the Assembly elections and the election of the First Minister.

5. Advice to Assembly on procedures

6. Committees

BC193-03

6.1 The Committee considered the paper on party balance on committees. Business Managers provisionally agreed that each Subject Committee should be made up of 10 members. Marie Knox said that she would be in a position to consider potential timetable clashes once Business Managers had provided their proposed lists of names for each committee.

BC194-03 & BC195-03

6.2 The Business Committee considered the paper on the election of electoral region Assembly Members to Regional Committees and the paper on the charring of Regional Committees. Business Managers agreed to return to these issues at the next Business Committee meeting following consultation with groups.

7. Forthcoming Business

(i) This Week's Business

7.1 The Committee considered paper BC195-03 which detailed the Assembly's agreed business for the week.

7.2 The Business Minister said that there were some amendments to the week's business. She said that a motion would be proposed to suspend Standing Orders so that the election of the Panel of Chairs could go ahead later that day. She said that no motions to elect members to subject committees, standing committees and any other committees had been tabled.

7.3 The Business Minister said that the Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning would make a statement on the Audit Committee report on Elwa on Wednesday 21 May.

(ii) Draft Business Statement

7.4 The Committee noted the Business Minister's proposed statement about the organisation of the Assembly's business for the weeks commencing 3 June.

8. Matters referred from plenary

9. Revisions to Standing Orders

10. Presiding Officer rulings

11. Any other business.

11.1 The Business Minister said that an alternative to the current Chamber seating plan had been put forward by her group. She said that further discussions were needed to resolve the situation. Business Managers said that they would not support any proposals for an alternative seating plan which did not conform to the principles which had been agreed in the Business Committee on 25 February 2003.

11.2 Jonathan Morgan said that a letter had been sent by the Leader of the Welsh Conservatives to the Minister for Economic Development in the week before the election recess. However, the reply had been written by a civil servant. The Business Minister confirmed that it was normal practice for Ministers to reply to correspondence from Members. However, it had been agreed that Ministers would not issue substantive replies to correspondence during the election period.

11.3 In response to a request from the Chair, the Business Minister said that a detailed list of Ministers' functions and responsibilities would be circulated before the end of the week.

11.4 The Business Minister confirmed that a paper on the programme for Minority Party Debates would be submitted to the Committee at its next meeting on 3 June.

CHAMBER SECRETARIAT