

Business Committee

Minutes BC(3)23-08

Date: Tuesday 23 September 2008

Time: 8.30 a.m.

Venue: Meeting Room 4th Floor, Corporate Unit

Assembly Members in Attendance

Dafydd Elis-Thomas, Presiding Officer (Chair)

Carwyn Jones, Leader of the House

Jocelyn Davies, Plaid Cymru Business Manager

William Graham, Welsh Conservatives Business Manager

Kirsty Williams, Welsh Liberal Democrats Business Manager

Officials in Attendance

Adrian Crompton, Director of Assembly Business

Marion Stapleton, Office of the Leader of the House

Aled Eirug, Constitutional Consultant

Sulafa Halstead, Head of Committee Service

Marc Wyn Jones, Clerk of the Business Committee

1. Apologies & announcements

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

(i) BC(3)22-08 (Draft minutes) - Tuesday 16 July 2008

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

Action: Business Committee Secretariat

3. Forthcoming Business

This Week's Business - BC(3)23-08(p1)

3.1 The Committee considered and agreed to amend Standing Orders 6.2, 7.8 and 7.9, to effect changes to plenary times. The Committee noted that a motion to change Standing Orders would be taken in Plenary on Tuesday so that the new times (1.30 - 6pm on both days) could take effect from 30 September.

3.2 The Committee agreed that a motion to suspend Standing Orders would be tabled to bring forward the following motions on Tuesday:

To elect Nick Ramsay as a member of the Equality of Opportunity Committee in place of Mark Isherwood;

To elect Chris Franks as a member of the Finance Committee in place of Alun Ffred Jones;

To elect Mark Isherwood as a member of the Subordinate Legislation Committee in place of Andrew RT Davies; and

To elect Rhodri Glyn Thomas as a member of the Sustainability Committee in place of Alun Ffred Jones.

3.3 The Leader of the House said that the following statements would be made in Plenary on Tuesday:

Minister for Heritage on sharing the success of the Olympics;

Minister for Rural Affairs on Bluetongue; and

Legislative Statement by the Minister for Rural Affairs on the proposed National Assembly for Wales (Legislative Competence) (Agriculture and Rural Development) Order 2008 "(previously the Red Meat Levy Board Legislative Competence Order)"

3.4 The Leader of the House said that the debate on the Historic Environment scheduled for Tuesday had been postponed to 30 September.

3.5 The Committee agreed that Voting Time would take place no earlier than 4.30pm on Wednesday.

3.6 The Committee noted the organisation of business for 23 and 24 September 2008.

3 Week Timetable of Government Business - BC(3)23-08(p2)

3.7 The Committee noted the 3 Week Timetable of Government Business.

3 Week Timetable of Assembly and Non-Government Business - BC(3)23-08(p3)

3.8 The Committee agreed to schedule a debate on 1 Oct on the Rural Development Sub-Committee's Report on Poverty and Deprivation in Rural Wales.

3.9 The Committee determined the organisation of Assembly Business.

3.10 The Committee determined the organisation of non-government Business.

4. Organisation of Business

Paper on the Organisation of Plenary Business - "Standing Order changes required to enable the agreed changes to plenary times -" BC(3)23-08(p4)

4.1 The Committee agreed the proposed amendments to Standing Orders in relation to the organisation of Plenary meetings.

Paper on Permanent Legislation Committees - BC(3)23-08(p5)

4.2 The Committee considered a paper on options for establishing permanent committees to scrutinise proposed Legislative Competence Orders and Assembly Measures. Business Managers also discussed the proposal of having permanent, non-voting chairs for legislative committees and for Stage 2 Measure committees in particular. The Committee agreed to return to the issues following further consultation with groups.

Paper on the Allocation of Non-Government Time for individual AMs - BC(3)23-08(p6)

4.3 The Committee considered opportunities for individual Members to bring forward business in non-government time. The Committee suggested that this could be linked with existing procedures, such as Statements of Opinion, and asked officials to provide further details on how this could be achieved. The Committee agreed to return to the issue following further consultation with groups.

5. Legislation

Covering paper from the Minister and Illustrative Timetable on the "National Assembly for Wales (Legislative Competence) (Agriculture and Rural Development) Order 2008" - BC(3)23-08(p7a & 7b)

5.1 The Committee agreed to refer the LCO to a Committee for detailed consideration, with a deadline to report of 5 December. The Committee noted that a motion would be tabled as soon as membership details were provided.

Covering paper from the Minister and Illustrative Timetable on the "Proposed Local Government (Wales) Measure" - BC(3)23-08(p8a & 8b)

5.2 The Committee agreed that the general principles of the Proposed Measure should be referred to a Stage 1 Measure Committee for consideration and the deadline to report of 23 January. The Committee noted that the Measure Committee would need to be established and elected on 24 September, if the Government's Illustrative timetable was to be met.

Letter from Dai Lloyd on his Member Proposed Measure - "Proposed Playing Fields (Community Involvement in Disposal Decisions) Measure "

- BC(3)23-08(p9a)

Background paper from the Legislation Office - BC(3)23-08(p9b)

Illustrative Timetable - BC(3)23-08(p9b)

5.3 The Committee agreed the request by Dai Lloyd to establish a committee to report on his Measure. It was noted that the deadline for the Committee to report would be 13 sitting weeks from the date of its first meeting.

Letter from the Chair of the Proposed Affordable Housing LCO Committee and Supplementary Report - BC(3)23-08(p10a & 10b)

5.4 The Committee noted the letter from the Chair of the Proposed Affordable Housing LCO Committee and its supplementary report on the revised proposed Order.

6. Assembly Committees

Letter from Alun Davies - Recommendation to establish a Committee on Communications - BC(3)23-08(p11)

6.1 The Committee discussed the letter regarding the report of the Broadcasting Committee and its recommendation to establish a Committee on Communications. Business Managers agreed that the work the Broadcasting Committee had undertaken had been extremely effective. However, the Committee felt that communications fell within the remits of existing Scrutiny Committees and that any future work would be better undertaken by those Committees. Business Managers also noted the current pressures on the Committee system. It was agreed that, for these reasons, the Business Committee could not support the establishment of a further specific committee. It was agreed that the Presiding Officer should write to Alun Davies to convey the Committee's view.

Request from the Enterprise and Learning Committee to hold a formal off-site meeting at Barry Memorial Hall on 8 Oct 08 - BC(3)23-08(p12)

6.2 The Committee agreed the request by the Enterprise and Learning Committee to hold a formal off-site meeting at Barry Memorial Hall on 8 October, to consider the "Pride in Barry" petition that was referred to them by the Petitions Committee.

Request from the Rural Development Sub-Committee to hold a formal meeting on Monday 13 Oct 08 - BC(3)23-08(p13)

6.3 The Committee agreed the request by the Rural Development Sub-Committee to hold an additional meeting on Monday 13 October, to hold a scrutiny session on the draft budgetary proposals 2008/09.

Request from the Children and Young People Committee to hold an additional meeting on Tuesday 14 Oct 08 - BC(3)23-08(p14)

6.4 The Committee agreed the request by the Children and Young People Committee to hold an additional meeting on Tuesday 14 October, to consider the Government's draft budget.

BUSINESS COMMITTEE SECRETARIAT