

Business Committee

Meeting Venue: **Presiding Officer's office, 4th floor – Ty Hywel**

Meeting date: **Tuesday, 26 June 2012**

Meeting time: **08:30 – 08:55**

Cynulliad
Cenedlaethol
Cymru

National
Assembly for
Wales



Minutes:

Committee Members:

**Jocelyn Davies
William Graham
Jane Hutt
Aled Roberts
David Melding (Chair) (In place of Rosemary Butler)**

Committee Staff:

Anna Daniel (Clerk)

Others in attendance:

**Adrian Crompton, Director of Assembly Business
Sulafa Thomas, Head of Assembly Committees
Siân Wilkins, Head of Legislation and Chamber Services
Craig Stephenson, Principal Private Secretary to the Presiding Officer
Peter Greening, Welsh Government**

1. Apologies & announcements

The Deputy Presiding Officer was substituting for the Presiding Officer, who sent her apologies.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes were noted by the Committee for publication.

3. Organisation of Business

3(i) This Week's Business

The Business Committee agreed to postpone the following item on Wednesday:

- **NDM5024 Leanne Wood (South Wales Central):** Putting the brakes on traffic to ensure the safety of our school children (30 mins)

On Tuesday and Wednesday, Voting Time would be after the final item of business.

3(ii) **Three week timetable of Government Business**

The Committee noted the 3 Week Timetable of Government Business.

3(iii) **Three week timetable of Assembly Business**

The Business Committee agreed to schedule the following items of business:

Wednesday 18 July 2012–

- Stage 3 Standing Order 26.44 debate on the National Assembly for Wales (Official Languages) Bill (60 mins)

In accordance with Standing Order 26.36, amendments will be disposed of in the order which the sections and schedules to which they relate, arise in the Bill.

At the conclusion of Stage 3 the Commissioner may propose that the Bill be passed in accordance with Standing Order 26.47. If the proposition is agreed:

Stage 4 Standing Order 26.47 motion to approve the National Assembly for Wales (Official Languages) Bill.

- Debate on the Enterprise and Business Committee's report: Influencing the Modernisation of EU Procurement Policy (60 mins)

The Committee determined the organisation of Assembly Business.

3(iv) **Individual Member Debate: Selection of Motion for Debate**

The Business Committee considered the no named day motions tabled by individual Members and selected the following motion for debate on Wednesday 4 July:

NNDM5023

Julie Morgan (Cardiff North)

Aled Roberts (North Wales)

Bethan Jenkins (South Wales West)

Paul Davies (Preseli Pembrokeshire)

To propose that the National Assembly for Wales:

Supports lowering the voting age to 16 years in all elections and referendums held in Wales.

Supported by:

Keith Davies (Llanelli)

Christine Chapman (Cynon Valley)

Kirsty Williams (Brecon and Radnorshire)
Vaughan Gething (Cardiff South and Penarth)
Mark Drakeford (Cardiff West)
Julie James (Swansea West)
Peter Black (South Wales West)
Mick Antoniw (Pontypridd)
Jenny Rathbone (Cardiff Central)

The Business Committee agreed to schedule the next Individual Member Debate on Wednesday 17 October 2012.

4. Committees

4(i) Review of Committee Structure

The Business Committee considered a paper outlining the experience of the committee structure during the first year of the fourth Assembly.

Committee Structure

The Business Committee agreed that the dual legislative and policy scrutiny role has yet to be fully tested and concluded that no change to the structure is necessary at this point. They agreed to keep the system under review as the volume of legislation increases.

The Business Committee also agreed that European issues should continue to be mainstreamed across the work of all committees, noting that the approach had worked well, producing a more thorough scrutiny of European matters as a result.

Business Managers noted the role of Committee Chairs and agreed to invite feedback from chairs on the existing role description (as issued by the Business Committee in June 2011).

Committee Timetable

Business Managers considered changes to the committee timetable to accommodate a request from the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC) for a longer, more regular meeting slot. The Business Committee recognised the difficulty of timetabling. They agreed that PAC would continue to have a weekly Tuesday morning slot and could also meet on Monday afternoons when their workload so demanded, as other meeting slots would lead to significant membership clashes. The Business Committee also acknowledged that there might need to be flexibility with political group meetings on Tuesday mornings to accommodate longer meetings where necessary.

Business Managers noted that Plaid Cymru experience PAC membership challenges given that many of its Members have held ministerial positions. Standing Order 18.8 does not allow a Member of PAC to participate in its consideration of any matters if he/she was a member of the government at that time.

The Business Committee also agreed to schedule a meeting slot for the Committee for the Scrutiny of the First Minister once a term on a Thursday (alongside Children and Young People/Communities, Equality and Local Government/Environment and Sustainability).

Business Managers agreed to retain the Monday afternoon meeting slot for the Constitutional and Legislative Affairs Committee, noting that Monday meetings place restrictions on the potential membership of the Committee resulting in routine substitutions.

Other Business

The Deputy Presiding Officer noted that recently there have been a number of questions withdrawn for various reasons. He reminded Business Managers of the need to avoid these occurrences where possible.