

Minutes – Business Committee

Meeting Venue:

Presiding Officer's office, 4th floor – Tŷ

Hywel

Meeting date: 20 June 2017

Meeting time: 08.30 – 09.15

Private

Attendance

Category	Names
Committee Members:	Elin Jones AM (Chair) Jane Hutt AM Paul Davies AM Rhun ap Iorwerth AM Neil Hamilton AM
Committee Staff:	Aled Elwyn Jones (Clerk)
Others in attendance	Ann Jones AM, Deputy Presiding Officer Christopher Warner, Head of Policy and Legislation Committee Service Siân Wilkins, Head of Chamber and Committee Service Helen Carey, Welsh Government Manon Antoniazzi, Chief Executive & Clerk of the Assembly Rhuaneidd Richards, Policy Adviser to the Llywydd



1 Introductions, apologies and substitutions

Neil Hamilton was present as a substitute for David Rowlands.

2 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes for the meeting were agreed by the Committee for publication.

3 Organisation of Business

3.1 This Week's Business

Tuesday

- Business Managers agreed that a Motion to allocate Committee Chairs to political groups would be added to today's agenda after the BSA.
- Jane Hutt informed the committee that two statements would be added to today's agenda:
 - Statement by the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children: Fire Safety in Wales – Steps being taken following the Grenfell Tower fire (30 minutes)
 - Statement by the First Minister: Brexit and Devolution: Securing Wales' Future (60 minutes)
- Business Managers agreed that all votes in relation to the Landfill Disposals Tax (Wales) Bill would take place during Stage 3 proceedings.
- Business Managers agreed that voting on all other items of business would take place before Stage 3 proceedings begin.
- The Llywydd informed Business Managers that there would be a 10 minute break before Stage 3 proceedings began.

Wednesday

- Business Managers agreed that if the motion to allocate chairs on Tuesday's agenda is agreed, the Llywydd would invite nominations for Committee Chairs at the start of Wednesday's meeting.

- The Llywydd informed Business Managers that two other motions have been added to Wednesday's agenda in relation to Finance Procedures and the Budget Protocol; they would be grouped together for debate but with separate votes.
- Business Managers agreed that voting Time would take place before the Short Debate.

3.2 Three Week Timetable of Government Business

Business Committee noted the 3 Week Timetable of Government Business.

3.3 Three Week Timetable of Assembly Business

- Business Committee determined the organisation of Assembly business and agreed to schedule the following items of business:

Wednesday 12 July 2017 –

- Motion to approve the Official Languages Scheme for the Fifth Assembly and note the compliance report for the period 2015–2017 (60 mins)
- Debate by Individual Members under Standing Order 11.21(iv) (60 mins)
- Debate on the 'Live Music Protection in Wales' Petition (60 mins)

4 Legislation

4.1 Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill – revised timetable

- Business Managers agreed a revised timetable for the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Bill – that the deadline for Stage 2 committee proceedings be revised from 21 July 2017 to 20 October 2017.

5 Committees

5.1 The Effect of a Member Leaving a Political Group

Business Managers discussed the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee (CCERA) Chair vacancy, the membership vacancy on the Finance Committee and whether the new balance of party groups should lead to membership or chairing changes on any other committee.

The Llywydd reminded Business Managers that the chair had been vacant since early April. As Business Managers had considered on several occasions since then, she wanted the Committee to come to a decision on the vacancy. The Llywydd drew Business Managers' attention to the relevant Standing Orders, principally:

- 17.2R and 17.13, requiring the Committee to consider the effect of vacancies on the balance of Chairs and memberships between political groups; and
- 17.2B, requiring the Committee to have regard to the need to ensure that the balance of chairs across committees reflects the political groups to which Members belong.

Jane Hutt proposed to swap the allocation of the CCERA and Petitions Committee chairs, the former going to Labour and the latter to UKIP. Rhun ap Iorwerth stated that he supported this proposal. Neil Hamilton's stated that he would support the proposal if Business Managers agreed not to reduce UKIP's allocation of time in Plenary. Paul Davies did not support the proposal as it did not address the issue of the Conservatives having fewer chairs than Plaid Cymru.

Two Business Managers requested a brief suspension of the meeting so that they could consider the proposal privately. Having confirmed there was no objection to a suspension, the Llywydd suspended the meeting at 08.53 in accordance with Standing Order 17.47. The meeting was re-convened at 08:56.

The Committee voted on the proposal to swap the allocation of the CCERA and Petitions Committee chairs: Jane Hutt, Rhun ap Iorwerth and Neil Hamilton voted in favour, and Paul Davies voted against. The proposal was therefore agreed.

The Llywydd then asked Business Managers to consider whether they wished to make any further changes to the allocation of committee chairs in view of the new political balance in the Assembly.

Paul Davies proposed that one of Plaid Cymru's chairs should be re-allocated to the Welsh Conservative group to reflect the fact that they were now the larger of the two groups. For the avoidance of doubt, the Llywydd reiterated her decision that, for the purposes of the organisation of Assembly business, and hence this discussion, Mark Reckless was a member of the Welsh Conservative group in the Assembly.

Jane Hutt, Rhun ap Iorwerth, and Neil Hamilton opposed that proposal, citing the need to maintain the stability of the committee system, and avoid having to re-allocate chairs each time a Member changes group, as over-riding considerations. The proposal was therefore not agreed.

Business Committee decided:

- That a motion be added to today's Plenary agenda to allocate Committee Chairs to political groups; proposing that the Chair of the Climate Change, Environment and Rural Affairs Committee (CCERA) be allocated to the Labour group, and that the Chair of Petitions Committee be allocated to the UKIP group;
- That the UKIP group be invited to nominate a new member to the Finance Committee;
- If the motion is agreed, the first item of business on tomorrow's Plenary agenda would be nominations for Committee Chairs;
- If there are multiple nominations, or a nomination is opposed, and a secret ballot is required, that would be held tomorrow afternoon, and the result be announced in Plenary before Voting Time;
- That separate motions be tabled as soon as possible proposing consequential changes the memberships of the Petitions, CCERA and Scrutiny of the First Minister committees;
- That the allocation of time to opposition groups in Plenary remain at 2:2:1 to the Conservatives, Plaid Cymru and UKIP respectively.

6 Standing Orders

6.1 Paper to note – Considering the UK Government's Legislative Programme

- Business Managers noted the paper.