



Minutes of the Commission
Wednesday, 8th October, 2008

1. The sixth meeting of the Commission of 2008 took place at 5 p.m. in Room 2, Leinster House.

2. **MEMBERS PRESENT.**

Deputy John O'Donoghue, T.D., Ceann Comhairle (Chairperson), Senator Paul Bradford, Mr. Kieran Coughlan, Secretary General, Deputy Tom Hayes, Deputy Séamus Kirk, Senator Pat Moylan, Cathaoirleach of the Seanad, Deputy Michael Mulcahy, Deputy Dan Neville, and Senator Jim Walsh.

Apologies were received from Senator Cecilia Keaveney and Deputy Pat Rabbitte.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING.**

The minutes of the meeting of 9th July, 2008, were agreed by the Commission.

4. **REPORTS FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.**

Deputy Seamus Kirk, Chairperson of the Finance Committee, presented the following reports of the Finance Committee.

(a) Financial Report for Quarter ended September, 2008 [06-01-08]:

The Commission noted the report.

(b) Report on decisions on priority investments in the current 2007-09 budgetary cycle [06-02-08] and
(c) Statement of Estimates 2009 [06-03-08] (*taken together*):

The Commission –

(i) approved the recommendation of the Finance Committee that a figure of €137 million be provided to the Department of Finance for publication in the White Paper of Receipts & Expenditure; and

(ii) agreed to defer consideration of the detailed Statement of Estimates for 2009 (and the decisions on priority investments) until after budget day.

(c) Sanction for Virement [06-04-08]: The Commission granted sanction to vire monies between subheads 1(a), 1(b), 1(c), 1(d), 1(e), 1(g), 2(c), 2(f), 2(g), 2(j), 3(a), 3(b), 3(c), 4(a), 4(b), 5(c), 6(a) and 6(b) to meet excesses projected on subheads 1(f), 2(b), 2(i), 5(a) and 5(b): provided that no virement should occur in the case of subheads 2(d), 2(e) and 2(h).

The Commission delegated authority to the Secretary General to vire additional funds between subheads in respect of expenditure incurred before 31st December, 2008, and agreed to formally note the final position in relation to virement as soon as may be following the closure of the 2008 Account.

5. RATIONALISATION OF MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES.

The Commission heard a progress report on this matter and agreed to keep the matter under review.

6. CORPORATE BUSINESS PLAN 2008-09.

The Commission noted the Corporate Business Plan 2008-09 [06-05-08].

7. CONDUCT OF DEFENCE OF LEGAL PROCEEDINGS ON BEHALF OF NAMED MEMBERS OF THE HOUSES OF THE OIREACHTAS.

The Commission agreed to sponsor the tabling of motions in both Houses, in accordance with section 4(2)(f)(iv) and (v) of the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission Acts 2003 and 2006, to authorise the defence of proceedings on behalf of Deputy Jim McDaid and Senator Cecilia Keaveney arising out of the performance by the members concerned of their parliamentary functions as members of the Houses. The Commission was advised that a motion to strike out the proceedings has been issued, and agreed that security for costs should be sought against the plaintiff in the event that the motion is not successful.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Rest facilities for Office-holders' drivers

The Commission agreed that the Office should investigate the provision of appropriate rest facilities in the Leinster House complex for drivers.

Research services for Oireachtas Committees

The requirement for advance briefing to be provided to Committee members in the context of their meetings with external interest groups was raised. The Commission was informed that a protocol had been agreed between the Library & Research Service (L&RS) and the Committees secretariat, and that a Committees research team has been established in the L&RS.

9. ADJOURNMENT.

The meeting adjourned at 5.35 p.m.

JOHN O'DONOGHUE, T.D.,
Ceann Comhairle and Chairperson of the Commission.

Dated: