



*Minutes of Commission Meeting  
Tuesday, 15 July, 2014*

1. The sixth meeting of the Commission of 2014 took place at 12.00 p.m. in Room 2, Leinster House.

2. **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Deputy Seán Barrett, Ceann Comhairle (Chairperson), Deputy John Browne, Senator Paddy Burke, Cathaoirleach of the Seanad (Deputy Chairperson), Deputy Bernard Durkan, Deputy Frank Feighan, Deputy Dan Neville, Senator Tom Sheahan and Deputy Jack Wall.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting of 24 June 2014 were agreed by the Commission.

4. **DRAFT ESTIMATE FOR 2015**

The Commission resumed consideration of the Draft Statement of Estimate for 2015.

The Cathaoirleach and Chairman of the Finance Committee, Senator Paddy Burke, reported on the review of the Draft Estimate undertaken by the Finance Committee at its meeting on 1 July.

The Commission noted, in particular, that the Finance Committee would give further consideration to efficiencies and value for money in the maintenance contracts for the Leinster House campus and had invited the Office of Public Works to a meeting in the autumn to facilitate the Committee's consideration of these matters.

The Commission agreed to:

- (i) increase the expenditure allocation for the North/South Inter-parliamentary Association;
- (ii) transfer a sum from the Consultancy Services allocation to the subhead for Oireachtas Committees for allocation, as appropriate, for engagement of specialist expertise by committees; and
- (iii) include a footnote to indicate that the increase in the expenditure allocation for salaries, wages and allowances for members of staff of the Houses of the Oireachtas includes provision for the costs of the Banking Inquiry by the Oireachtas Commission pending their recoupment from Government.

The Commission approved the Statement of Estimates for 2015 and noted that it would be presented to the Dáil for noting by way of motion in accordance with the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission Acts.

**5. OIREACHTAS INQUIRIES: DRAFT GUIDELINES ON LEGAL COSTS AND EXPENSES**

The Commission had before it draft guidelines in respect of the payment by the Commission of inquiry legal costs and expenses incurred in relation to Oireachtas inquiries as prescribed by the Oireachtas Inquiries Act.

The Commission agreed to include further categories of legal fees in the draft guidelines on legal costs including, in particular, a daily rate for legal representatives. The Commission noted that the legal expenses rates set out in the draft guidelines were based on current civil service subsistence rates.

In noting that a process of consultation would be undertaken on the draft guidelines in accordance with the legislation, the Commission agreed to give further consideration to the guidelines on completion of the consultation process.

**6. OIREACHTAS CHANNEL: PROPOSAL ON ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EDITORIAL BOARD**

The Commission considered a proposal on establishment of an Editorial Board in the Houses to have responsibility for overseeing the broadcasting of parliamentary proceedings on the Oireachtas Channel.

The Commission approved the proposal subject to an amendment to the proposed membership of the Board. It was agreed that membership of the Board would consist of:

- the Ceann Comhairle (Chair of the Board);
- the Cathaoirleach of the Seanad;
- the Chairman of the Working Group of Committee Chairmen;
- one member of the Oireachtas Commission who shall be appointed from among the opposition members of the Commission; and
- three members of the Houses, one of whom shall be a member of Seanad Éireann.

The Commission further agreed to the appointment of Deputy John Browne to the Editorial Board as the representative of the Commission.

**7. UPDATE ON PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE SITE OF THE FORMER SIOPA**

The Commission noted an update on the development of the site of the former Siopa in Leinster House and agreed to the conversion of the premises into an on-site souvenir shop for the sale of Houses of the Oireachtas souvenir products.

**8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- (i) The Commission approved a schedule of future meetings for the period September to December 2014.
- (ii) The Commission agreed to consider matters relating to the process for recruitment and appointment of catering and usher staff in the Houses at a future meeting.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 1.15 p.m.

SEÁN BARRETT, T.D.,  
Ceann Comhairle and Chairperson of the Commission.

Dated: