



*Minutes of Commission Meeting
Tuesday, 23 September, 2014*

1. The seventh 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), Senator Paddy Burke, Cathaoirleach of the Seanad (Deputy Chairperson), Deputy Bernard Durkan, Deputy Dan Neville and Deputy Jack Wall.

Apologies were received from Deputy Frank Feighan and Senator John Whelan.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting of 15 July 2014 were agreed by the Commission.

4. **CONDUCT OF DEFENCE OF LEGAL PROCEEDINGS ON BEHALF OF MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND OTHERS**

The Commission was briefed by the Acting Parliamentary Legal Adviser on the legal proceedings issued against members of the Committee of Public Accounts and others arising out of the performance by the members concerned of their parliamentary functions as members of Dáil Éireann.

The Commission sanctioned further legal advice on the matter and requested that this be prepared for consideration at its next meeting.

5. **CONDUCT OF DEFENCE OF LEGAL PROCEEDINGS CONCERNING THE PUBLIC PROCUREMENT PROCESS FOR THE PROVISION OF LEGAL SERVICES FOR THE INQUIRY INTO THE BANKING CRISIS**

The Commission was briefed by the Acting Parliamentary Legal Adviser on the legal proceedings relating to the nature of the public procurement process entered into for the procurement of legal services to support the Committee of Inquiry into the Banking Crisis.

The Commission noted that interim sanction for legal fees in respect of the legal proceedings was provided by the Assistant Secretary General in consultation with the Chair of the Finance Committee.

6. GUIDELINES IN RESPECT OF OIREACTHAS INQUIRY LEGAL EXPENSES

The Commission had before it revised draft guidelines for the information of witnesses and others in respect of the recoupment of legal expenses incurred in relation to Oireachtas inquiries, as prescribed by the Oireachtas Inquiries Act.

The Commission noted that a number of minor revisions had been made to the Guidelines, following consultation with relevant bodies, since they were last considered by the Commission.

The Commission approved the Guidelines on Inquiry Legal Expenses to be issued in accordance with section 53 of the Houses of the Oireachtas (Inquiries, Privileges and Procedures) Act 2013.

7. ENGAGEMENT OF SPECIALIST EXPERTISE TO SUPPORT THE COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY INTO THE BANKING CRISIS

The Commission was briefed on a proposal for the recruitment of persons with relevant expertise to support the Committee of Inquiry into the Banking Crisis.

The Commission agreed to seek the consent of the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform for the recruitment, by way of excluding orders under the Public Service Management (Recruitment and Appointments) Act 2014, of a number of persons with appropriate expertise to provide specialist services to the Committee.

The Commission underlined the importance of the efficient use of public resources in the inquiry process. It noted that, with effect from the commencement of the Inquiry, a quarterly report on the running costs of the Inquiry will be submitted to the Commission Finance Committee who will report thereon to the Commission. The quarterly report will also be laid before both Houses and placed on the Oireachtas website.

The Commission requested that a contribution towards the cost of running the Inquiry be sought from the financial institutions involved in it.

8. CORRESPONDENCE

The Commission noted correspondence regarding the following:

- establishment of an Oireachtas budgetary and research office;
- the proposed development of the site of the former Siopa.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Commission requested that papers be prepared on the following matters for consideration at the next meeting:

- The Parliamentary Internship Programme in the Houses;
- Travel and accommodation under the Parliamentary Standard Allowance.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 1.30 p.m.

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

Dated: