



*Minutes of Commission Meeting
Wednesday 15 July 2015*

1. The eighth meeting of the Commission of 2015 took place at 2.00 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 John Browne, Deputy Bernard Durkan, Deputy Dan Neville, Deputy Jack Wall and Senator John Whelan.

Apologies were received from Senator Marc MacSharry and Deputy Olivia Mitchell.

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

The minutes of the meetings of 23 June 2015 and 1 July 2015 were agreed by the Commission.

4. **PROGRAMME OF STRUCTURAL AND UPGRADE WORKS FOR GEORGIAN LEINSTER HOUSE**

The Commission received an update presentation from the Office of Public Works (OPW) on essential structural and upgrade works for Georgian Leinster House. The focus of the project is to address structural deterioration and to upgrade services in the building.

The Commission noted that the timeframe for commencing the project was March 2016 which coincides with the statutory deadline for the dissolution of the current Dáil. Following the dissolution it is proposed that the building will be vacated and the planned works will commence, thereby ensuring minimal disruption to the business of the Houses and to members in the performance of their parliamentary functions. The Commission requested that contingency plans be prepared to avoid a delay in commencing the project should the Dáil be dissolved at an earlier date.

In view of the fact that parts of the building will be closed off for the duration of the works, the Commission requested the OPW to prepare a comprehensive accommodation plan for consideration at its meeting in October. The Commission noted that, during the course of the refurbishment works, the Dáil Chamber could remain in operation but the Seanad Chamber would be closed off. It also noted that the Seanad Committee on Procedure and Privileges had requested the OPW to investigate options for suitable alternative accommodation for relocating the Seanad,

other than the shared use of the Dáil Chamber for sittings of both Houses. It further noted that public access to Leinster House would be temporarily restricted while the structural work is underway.

The Commission also noted that the costs associated with the project are to be met by the OPW and that procurement requirements and deadlines apply to all stages of the project.

5. NECESSARY MAINTENANCE WORKS IN LEINSTER HOUSE

The Commission noted the progress in relation to necessary maintenance works in Leinster House.

6. UPDATE ON LEGAL PROCEEDINGS AND OTHER RULINGS INVOLVING THE HOUSES OF THE OIREACHTAS

The Commission was briefed by the Office of the Parliamentary Legal Adviser on legal proceedings and other rulings involving the Houses of the Oireachtas.

7. 2016 CENTENARY YEAR: COMMEMORATIVE INITIATIVE FOR THE HOUSES OF THE OIREACHTAS

The Commission agreed to examine the feasibility of commissioning the production of a co-produced documentary on the Houses of the Oireachtas to commemorate the 2016 Centenary Year. It also agreed that the Communications Unit would report back to the Commission in the autumn on the proposed content of the documentary.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(i) Correspondence from the Working Group on Ethics

The Commission considered a letter from the Chairman of the Working Group on Ethics presenting the first and second reports of the Working Group and the minutes of its meetings to the Commission.

It noted that the Working Group had forwarded its reports to the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform and to the Joint Committee on Finance and the Public Service for consideration in the context of the Committee's pre-legislative scrutiny of the General Scheme of the Public Sector Standards Bill.

The Commission also noted that the Working Group on Ethics had concluded its work in accordance with its terms of reference.

(ii) Proposal for an Electric Car Charging point in Leinster House Car Park

The Commission considered a proposal for an electric car charging point in Leinster House car park. It agreed to the installation of a charging point at an appropriate location in the complex on a trial basis.

(iii) *Proposed schedule of Commission meeting dates to end of 2015*

The Commission approved a schedule of future meetings for the period September to December 2015.

(iv) *Letter from Secretary to Seanad Committee on Procedure and Privilege*

The Commission noted a letter from the Secretary to the Seanad Committee on Procedure and Privileges regarding the relocation of the Seanad Chamber for the duration of the structural works in Leinster House.

There being no other business, the meeting adjourned at 4.30 p.m.

SEÁN BARRETT, T.D.

Ceann Comhairle and Chairperson of the Commission

Dated: