



**Coimisiún Thithe
an Oireachtais
Houses of the
Oireachtas Commission**

*Minutes of Commission Meeting
Tuesday 12 June 2018*

1. The fourth meeting of the Commission of 2018 took place at 11.30 a.m. in Room 160, Leinster House.

2. **MEMBERS PRESENT**

Deputy Seán Ó Fearghaíl, Ceann Comhairle (Chairperson), Deputy Marcella Corcoran Kennedy, Deputy Timmy Dooley, Mr. Peter Finnegan (Secretary General) and Senator Ned O’Sullivan.

Apologies were received from Senator Paudie Coffey, Senator Gerard P. Craughwell, Deputy Martin Heydon, Deputy Catherine Murphy and Senator Denis O’Donovan, Cathaoirleach of the Seanad (Deputy Chairperson).

3. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting of 15 May 2018 were agreed by the Commission.

4. **PROGRAMME OF STRUCTURAL AND UPGRADE WORKS FOR GEORGIAN LEINSTER HOUSE: STATUS REPORT ON THE PROGRAMME OF WORK**

The Commission received an update presentation from the Office of Public Works (OPW) on progress in relation to the programme of structural and upgrade works for Georgian Leinster House.

The Commission was informed that the project is progressing on schedule. Installation of the final part of the specialist scaffolding to the south facade of the building will be completed in the short-term. Structural strengthening and fire-proofing works to floors are ongoing. Work is progressing on repairs to windows, ceiling restraint works, restoration of stone masonry and repairs to chimney pieces. Planning has also begun for a series of related projects to prepare the House for reoccupation following completion of the structural project.

The Commission noted progress to date and thanked the OPW staff for their work.

5. MATERNITY LEAVE FOR MEMBERS OF THE HOUSES OF THE OIREACHTAS

Provision of support for members who wish to take leave of absence in the case of child birth or adoption of a child

The Commission considered a draft policy on the provision of support for members who wish to take leave of absence in the case of child birth or adoption of a child.

The Commission requested the Head of Human Resources to consult with members of the Houses and the Oireachtas Women's Parliamentary Caucus on the draft policy and to submit a final version of the policy, following the consultation process, for consideration and approval at its meeting on 10 July.

6. HOUSES OF THE OIREACHTAS TOURS SERVICE

The Commission considered a proposal on extending the guided tours service in the Houses to enhance public access and engagement.

The Commission:

- (i) approved the introduction of guided public tours at weekends to enable more people to visit when the Georgian House is officially reopened following completion of the structural project;
- (ii) approved a proposal to include a special art tour in the guided tours service, to focus on the artwork displayed across the precinct;
- (iii) agreed that the Superintendent of the Houses would work with the Royal Irish Academy and the OPW Art Management Office on commissioning a public art project for Leinster House, funded through the *Per Cent for Art Scheme* allocation included in the OPW budget for the Georgian House structural project, and a public art project to commemorate the centenary of the First Dáil. It requested that proposals on the latter be presented to the working group of the Commission overseeing the commemorative programme for the centenary of the First Dáil.

7. HOUSES OF THE OIREACHTAS COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2017

The Commission approved the draft annual report on its activities in 2017 to be laid before the Houses in accordance with section 6 of the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission Acts.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(i) Correspondence:

(a) Letter from the Seanad Committee on Procedure and Privileges

The Commission noted the correspondence.

(b) Letter from Deputy Catherine Martin

The Commission noted that HR Services are currently consulting with members of the Houses and the staff Administrators Group on developing a draft Statement of Principles on Dignity and Respect in the Parliamentary Workplace. Subject to completion of this consultation, a final draft Statement of Principles will be submitted to the Commission for approval at its meeting on 10 July.

(ii) Information item for noting:

Appointment of External Advisory Group by the Parliamentary Budget Office

The Commission noted that the Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) had established an External Advisory Group, comprised of six independent experts, to provide technical and methodological advice on economic and fiscal matters to the PBO.

The meeting adjourned at 12.30 p.m.

SEÁN Ó FEARGHAÍL, T.D.

Ceann Comhairle and Chairperson of the Commission

Dated: