



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

*Minutes of Commission Meeting
Monday 21 June 2021*

The seventh meeting of the Commission of 2021 took place at 11.00 a.m. via MS Teams.

1. MEMBERS PRESENT

Deputy Seán Ó Feargháil, Ceann Comhairle (Chairperson), Senator Mark Daly, Cathaoirleach of the Seanad (Deputy Chairperson), Deputy Francis Noel Duffy, Deputy Joe Carey; Senator Seán Kyne; Deputy Jennifer Murnane O'Connor; Deputy Louise O'Reilly; Senator Ned O'Sullivan; Deputy Duncan Smith; and Senator Mark Wall; and Mr. Peter Finnegan (Secretary General).

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of 31 May 2021 were agreed by the Commission.

3. REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE SYSTEM FOR RECORDING MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE AT LEINSTER HOUSE

The Commission resumed consideration of the report of the Independent Review of the System for Recording Attendance, aligned to the payment of the travel and accommodation parliamentary allowance.

It also considered related correspondence from the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform and from Senator Malcolm Byrne.

The Commission endorsed the report and its findings. It agreed in principle to implement the review's recommendation Option 1(b), *VisionTime system observed by CCTV*, and requested the Service to prepare an implementation plan for consideration at its next meeting.

The Commission thanked Mr. Trevor Reaney for undertaking the review.

4. USE OF SERVICES AND FACILITIES PROVIDED OUT OF PUBLIC FUNDS IN RELATION TO A BYE-ELECTION TO DÁIL ÉIREANN

Draft guidelines and charges under the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission Acts 2003 to 2018

The Commission had before it for consideration draft Guidelines in respect of the use of services and facilities in relation to a bye-election to Dáil Éireann in accordance with section 4(4A) of the Commission Acts.

The Commission:

- (i) approved the statutory Guidelines, charges and charging approach, regarding the use of services and facilities provided out of public funds in respect of Dáil bye-elections;
- (ii) agreed that the Guidelines be circulated to Senator candidates contesting the Dáil bye-election due to be held in July 2021;
- (iii) agreed that the Guidelines be published in accordance with the Commission Acts.

5. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR MEMBERS

The Commission was briefed on the professional development training available to members of the Houses through the Training and Development Unit.

The Commission requested that a paper be prepared for its meeting in September on the professional development programmes available to parliamentarians in other jurisdictions.

6. HOUSES OF THE OIREACHTAS COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2020

The Commission approved the draft annual report on its activities in 2020 to be laid before the Houses in accordance with section 6 of the Houses of the Oireachtas Commission Acts.

7. UPDATE FROM FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

The Commission received an update from the Head of Facilities Management and approved the following:

- a plan presented by OPW for the provision of 36 covered bicycle spaces and the consequential reorganisation of car-parking spaces;
- a plan presented by OPW for further wilding of the Leinster House Lawn; and
- the removal of the ATM from Leinster House 2000.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- (i) *Information items and updates*

The Commission:

- (a) noted an update on the SIPTU pay claim submitted for staff employed under the Scheme for Secretarial Assistance for Members;
- (b) noted an update on the provision of support to the Women's Parliamentary Caucus;
- (c) approved a draft letter to be issued to FedNet broadcast news organisation;

- (d) noted that an update on cyber security would be provided at the next meeting
- (e) noted that an outline plan for the return of Dáil sittings to Leinster House would be provided at the next meeting.

(ii) *Correspondence*

The Commission noted the following correspondence:

- (a) letter from the Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform on the Report of the Independent Review of the System for Recording Members' Attendance;
- (b) letter from Minister Catherine Martin on the all-party Consultation Group on the Decade of Centenaries Programme 2021;
- (c) letter from Senator Ivana Bacik on the provision of covered bicycle parking in the Leinster House campus;
- (d) letter from the Irish Heart Foundation – ASH Ireland on implementing a tobacco-free Leinster House campus;
- (e) email from Ms Dorothy Dowling in relation to a memorial for Lord Edward Fitzgerald;
- (f) email from Mr. Fergal MacCabe in relation to car parking in front of Georgian Leinster House;
- (g) email from Deputy Francis Noel Duffy in relation to incremental pay for Secretarial Assistants;
- (h) email from Deputy Michael Ring in relation to Dáil sittings;
- (i) email from Senator Malcolm Byrne in relation to the Independent Review of the System for Recording Attendance.


(iii) *Nomination to Working Group on the Oireachtas Decade of Centenaries Commemorative Programme*

The Commission nominated the Leas-Cheann Comhairle to serve as an ex officio member of the Working Group on the Oireachtas *Decade of Centenaries* Commemorative Programme.

(iv) *Nomination to the Print Users' Council*

The Commission appointed Mr. David O'Neill BL to serve as a member of the Print Users' Council in place of Ms. Lisa Maher BL.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 12 July 2021



SEÁN Ó FEARGHAÍL, T.D.

Ceann Comhairle and Chairperson of the Commission

Dated: