

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL REVIEW  
PANEL AT 10AM ON TUESDAY 10 MARCH 2015  
IN ROOM 241 PARLIAMENT BUILDINGS**

**Present:** Mr Pat McCartan, Chairperson  
Mr Alan McQuillan  
Dr Etta Campbell

**In attendance:** Mrs Cathy McGowan, Ms Marion Johnson, Mr R Stewart was present for Items 4.5, 4.6 & 5, Mr Hugh Widdis and Mr Jonathon McMillen were present for Item 6 and Dr Barry was present for Item 7.

**1. APOLOGIES**

No apologies were noted for the meeting.

**2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

No interests were declared

**3. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS IFRP MEETING**

The minutes of the meetings held on 18<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> February 2015 were agreed without amendment.

**4. MATTERS ARISING**

**4.1 Consultation on the Employment of Assembly Members' Staff**

The Panel noted that a further ten responses had been received in relation to the consultation on the employment of Assembly Members' staff.

**4.2 Consultation on 'Prior Disclosure'**

The Panel noted that two responses had been received in relation to the consultation on prior disclosure.

**4.3 Issues arising from the Liaison meeting with Secretariat**

The Panel agreed that these meetings had proven very useful in clarifying and gaining further understanding on matters of mutual interest.

**4.4 Issues arising from Meeting with the Committee for Standards and Privileges**

The Panel noted and reviewed the Hansard transcript from their meeting with the Committee for Standards and Privileges.

**4.5 FAPP Scheme**

The Panel sought clarification from the Director of Corporate Services in relation to the detail and operation of the Financial Assistance to Political Parties Scheme.

#### **4.6 BBC Spotlight Programme**

The Panel confirmed that they had no further matters to raise at present in relation to the BBC Spotlight Programme.

#### **5. PENSIONS UPDATE**

The Panel noted that the timeframe for completion had not altered and agreed to consider further at their next meeting.

#### **6. PREPARATION FOR 2016 DETERMINATION**

The Panel considered the initial policy framework document prepared by Mr McMillen to assist a draftsman in the development of a new Determination for 2016. Mr McMillen highlighted that the document had been developed based on previous consultations and policy direction provided by the Panel.

#### **7. CONSULTATION MATTERS**

##### **7.1 CONSULTATION ON SALARIES AND OFFICE HOLDER ALLOWANCES**

The Panel considered and reviewed the draft consultation document on 'Salaries and Office Holder Allowances' and agreed that following amendments as agreed, that it should issue to Panel Members for final consideration.

##### **7.2 FUTURE CONSULTATION ON OFFICE COSTS EXPENDITURE**

The Panel considered the information provided by the Director of Corporate Services relating to a range of allowances. The Panel requested further information in relation to the operation of certain allowances.

#### **8. REFERENCE DOCUMENTATION**

The Panel noted copies of two research Papers relating to the 'Employment of/benefits received by "connected persons" in relation to elected representatives' and 'Developments related to lobbying in the UK and Ireland'.

#### **9. CORRESPONDENCE**

The Panel noted the correspondence received from the last meeting.

#### **10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

##### **10.1 Arrangements for meeting with Oireachtas Officials**

The Chairperson informed the Panel of the arrangements for the visit of Mr S Mooney and Ms P Cowen from the Oireachtas, scheduled to take place on 20 March 2015.

**10.2 Potential models to determine and administer financial support for Members**

The Panel agreed that they would consider the questionnaire from the Commission in relation to potential models to determine and administer financial support for Members at an early meeting.

**11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that IFRP would hold their next meeting on Friday 20 March 2015 at 10.00am in Room 241.

*The meeting ended at 3.02pm*